

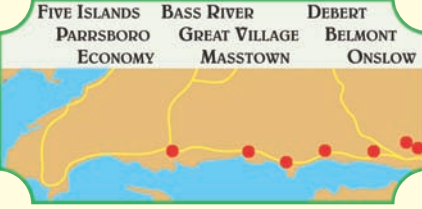
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Salmon River Site 40% Residential

By Maurice Rees

Discussion on future use of the Salmon River School property occupied over an hour of council's time at a committee meeting of Colchester Council on October 13th. The Municipality acquired the 16-acre parcel of land approximately 10 years ago when the Chignecto Regional School Board declared the property surplus. At one point the Salmon River Fire Department expressed interest in building

a new facility, which may have occupied anywhere from 6-10 acres. However, the brigades plans to move forward have not jelled.

Over the past 10 years, informal discussions ranged from possibly having the entire site as green space, nature trails and recreation area. Not that the potential capital cost for entire property to be recreation oriented, a consensus was reached to allocate the 16 acres for residential

and recreation uses. If it was solely for recreation purposes the estimated capital cost would be \$270,000 and an annual maintenance cost of \$7,000.

Since acquiring the land the municipality has been following the ideal of a passive recreational purposes which it encouraged by developing trails, installing waste receptacles and conducting general maintenance.

Council has always treated

discussions almost with "kid gloves" not because they were scared of it, but recognized the 16 acre property was very important to the future of Salmon River and they wanted to give plenty of time for all possible thoughts and desires of local residents to come forward if they had reached a consensus.

As time marched on, over the last couple of years, there has been interest in the property for both residential and/or recreational uses as the land falls within the Salmon River Sewer District and is currently zoned Institutional.

At its meeting in June 2021, Council was advised by staff they would begin organizing a community engagement session concerning future use of the old Salmon River School property in Salmon River.

A community engagement program was carried out over the last 10 months, consisting of a survey, community open houses, and most recently, stakeholder presentations. Staff have compiled community feedback and completed a review of current Council policies and documents that help guide decision making processes.

With the matter coming to the table for the final time, Deputy Mayor, Geoff Stewart was careful to permit each councillor to speak on the topic. Several spoke as many as three times, which is why it took approximately an hour to arrive at a decision.

Staff recommend Council reserve 40 to 50% of the Salmon River School property for trails and passive recreation purposes and issue a Request for Proposals on the remaining portion for residential development that should include an affordable / attainable housing component.

Council finally decided on 60% for passive recreation, with 40% for residential development. Staff will not prepare a Request for Proposals for residential development from the private sector.

One request from numerous councillors was areas should be set aside for community gardens. Staff estimate is that as a scaled back recreation area will have a capital cost of \$170,000 with annual maintenance costs of \$7,000.

ITEM: Former Salmon River School Property - Future Use

DATE PRESENTED:

continued on page 11

FRONT PAGE BRIEFS November 2022

Remembrance Day Service at Veterans Memorial Park, Bass River will be held Friday, November 11, 2022 starting at 10:45 a.m. Due to the continuing concerns regarding Covid, there will be no reception. To order a wreath for the service, please call (902) 647-2478. Deadline to place an order for a wreath is November 5.

The RCMP Provincial Internet Child Exploitation Unit and Colchester County District RCMP, have charged Gerald Paul Ward, 55, of Lower Truro, with sexual assault and breach of conditions related to investigations in Colchester County. Ward has been charged with: Sexual Assault; Obtaining Sexual Services for Consideration; Failure to Comply with a Prohibition Order; and Failure to Comply with Conditions of a Release Order (2 counts). On October 20, RCMP executed a search warrant at a motel on Truro Heights Rd. in Lower Truro. The man was safely arrested and during the search, RCMP officers located and seized computers, tablets, phones and other electronic devices, as well as documents.

Originally, we were thinking of using four or six pages in the centre of this issue to show the extensive damage from Hurricane Fiona. We changed our mind when we started receiving colour photos of a business celebrating 90 years in business; Onslow and Belmont and the Debert Fire Brigades making a special effort to celebrate Fire Prevention Week; plus other important local events. Hurricane photos are spread throughout the paper showing damage in West Colchester; clean up work being conducted by the Municipality of Colchester in Bible Hill and Brookside. A highlight of the photos is two of Linda Harrington's grandchildren pitching in to help clean up the Glenholme property.



One year old Kohen McCabe was enjoying a turn in the Onslow Belmont Fire Brigade mini fire truck during the open house on October 15th. More photos of the open house are on page 15. Also see photos of the Debert Fire Brigade's open house on page 17. (Harrington Photo)

Additional Funding to Assist Seniors

In the wake of hurricane Fiona, Nova Scotians are asked to check in on older Nova Scotians as cleanup continues. "We know that the impact of natural disasters can be particularly hard on older Nova Scotians," said Barbara Adams, Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care. "The Province moved quickly to put in place additional supports for our most vulnerable seniors, but we can all do our part in our own communities by checking in on older neighbours, friends and loved ones as communities rebuild following Fiona."

The Province recently announced an increase of \$250 to the Seniors Care Grant to help with storm-related damage and issues. Anyone who has previously received the grant will automatically receive this support. Others who meet the

eligibility requirements can apply for the grant at the program website: <https://beta.novascotia.ca/apply-help-household-healthcare-and-home-heating-costs-seniors-care-grant> by email: seniorsgrant@novascotia.ca and by calling toll-free: 1-800-670-4357.

The Seniors Care Grant helps cover the costs of services such as snow removal, small repairs, lawn care, transportation, and grocery and medication delivery. The list of eligible expenses was expanded in September to include phone and internet costs, and health services like eye exams, dental work, mental health supports, physical therapy and foot care, as well as a one-time, \$250 grant to help with heating costs this year.

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