

A regular monthly meeting of Middleton Town Council was held in-person at the Town Hall, via Facebook Live on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, starting at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Chairing the meeting, Mayor Sylvester Atkinson; Deputy Mayor Gail Smith, Councillors Michael Fairn, Bernadette Knapp, Chad Leblanc (arrived at 7:32pm), Gary Marshall and John Bartlett; Chief Administrative Officer, Ashley Crocker; and Recording Secretary, Sara Marceau

Regrets:

Also in Attendance: Adriana Teran, Englobe (Virtual), Andy Kerr, Director of Recreation, Sharon McAuley, Planning Services Coordinator, Lisa Fenton, Municipal Physical Activity Leader, Sandra Fournier, Audit Committee, Kris Stojic, Accessibility Advisory Committee, Robert and Laura Bright, Save Our Old Forests and three (3) members of the public.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Atkinson called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

240521.01 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the agenda as amended.
Motion carried.

3. PROCLAMATIONS

3.1 Parks and Recreation Month

Mayor Atkinson proclaimed June 2024 as Parks and Recreation month in Middleton.

3.2 National Indigenous History Month and National Indigenous Peoples Day

Mayor Atkinson proclaimed June 2024, as National Indigenous History Month and June 21, 2024, as National Indigenous Peoples Day in Middleton.

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Final Master Transportation Plan

Adriana Tran from Englobe gave a high-level overview of the Final Master Transportation Plan for the Town of Middleton.

1. Project Objectives and Background

- Develop a transportation master plan that addresses gaps in the transportation network, focus on multi-modal transportation, and improve accessibility for all users.
- Municipal Planning Strategy and Land-Use Bylaw (2018)
 - Biking Amendment (2023) Bicycle access and parking are encouraged where pedestrian access and parking is required for new developments.
 - Active Transportation Policy (2018) A call to action for the Town to better plan for active transportation (AT) which promotes a healthy lifestyle while being environmentally conscious.

2. Study Area Characteristics

- Traffic Analysis
 - Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) on main corridors
 - Main Street: 5700-8500 AADT
 - Commercial Street: 2100 AADT
 - Bridge Street: 4100 AADT
 - Brooklyn Road: 1900
 - Traffic analysis yielded a level of service results of B or higher.
- Collision Analysis
 - Main Street had the highest number of recorded collisions at 10 collisions over 2 years.
 - Marshall Street had the 2nd highest with 3 incidents over 2 years.
 - No fatalities were recorded at this time.
- Active Transportation Network
 - The two trails are popular around recreation, tourism, provincial travel, and getting through Town.
 - Sidewalks are common on arterial roadways (Commercial and Bridge Street)
 - Local streets tend to lack sidewalks or have gravel shoulders.
- Transit Network
 - King's Transit Authority Service (KTA) Route 3.
 - The route schedule features service every 2 hours through Town on Monday-Friday and Saturday's
 - Multiple stops through Town are located at popular destinations (i.e. Soldier's Memorial Hospital, Tim Hortons, NSCC Campus)

3. Community Engagement

- The project team organized a series of engagement activities, inviting community members to share their vision for the future of transportation in Middleton.
 - Public information session
 - Stakeholder engagement
 - Correspondence via email, social media, and phone.
- Key takeaways from engagement included support for:
 - Downtown one-way loop

- Enhanced pedestrian (sidewalk), cycling and accessibility treatments.
- Downtown parking and truck policy; and
- Traffic calming on residential streets.

4. Future Transportation Network

- Middleton Growth and Travel Mode
 - Growth: Stats Canada shows a modest population growth of 2.2% from 2016 to 2021 while provincial data shows an increase of traffic on Trunk 10 and decrease in traffic on Route 362 from 2012 to 2018. Highway 1 has maintained volumes overall.
 - Anticipated developments to be opened by 2040 predict a growth in traffic of 20%.
 - *A growth of 10% was used to project traffic growth to 2040 for the purpose of this analysis.*
- Traffic Calming Recommendations
 - Bridge Street
 - Traffic calming issue identified on Bridge Street is speeding. Changes to the driving environment that make the road feel narrower and introduce lateral shifts in the roadway that require steering input are typically recommended.
 - The southern half could be narrowed by adding a flexible delineator buffer alongside the bicycle accessible shoulder. Additionally, a gateway treatment could be added to the roadway near the existing “Town of Middleton” sign to further reinforce the change in driving environments.
 - Connaught Avenue
 - Traffic calming issue identified on Connaught Avenue is cut-through traffic. Mini roundabouts and speed humps are typically recommended in these instances to create friction for drivers diverting through the neighborhood with minimal impacts to residents.
 - King Street
 - Traffic calming issues identified on King Street is cut-through traffics, particularly trucks cutting through to Marshall Street. Both roadways have relatively large road widths. Speed bumps installed on King Street in the past cause more complaints of aggressive behavior. Speed humps are typically recommended in these instances to create friction for drivers diverting through the neighborhood.
 - Speed humps/cushions are quieter by design and force slower speeds. Speed cushions are easier for buses to

navigate but may also allow trucks to easily navigate them.

- Downtown One-Way Loop
 - The conversion of Commercial Street into a one-way roadway would mean:
 - Traffic would flow more efficiently, and volumes would decrease in a very active stretch of Commercial Street;
 - One travel lane should be removed and replaced with wider sidewalks, AT, and/or accessible parking (on one side only); and
 - A unique opportunity is presented to provide public spaces such as parkettes with benches or full bus shelters at transit stops.

5. Recommended AT Network

- Active Transportation Best Practices
 - Reprioritizing the right-of-way is a significant change when developing an effective AT network.
 - Ways to become more people centric in Middleton:
 - Restrict on-street parking to keep cars from being parked in bike lanes or shared spaces.
 - Post lower speed limits and being accepting of lower levels-of services (aka higher traffic).
 - Incorporate AT improvements in all ongoing road projects in Town.

6. Parking and Truck Policy

- Parking Downtown
 - Accessible Parking
 - Parallel accessible parking stall
 - Perpendicular accessible parking stall
 - Angled accessible parking stall
 - Curb ramps
 - Signage and pavement markings
- Proposed Downtown Parking and Restrictions/Loading Zones
 - Loading Zone Policy
 - Signage
 - Operating Hours
 - Alternative Loading Spaces
 - Accessibility and Safety
 - Truck Policy
 - Designated Truck Route
 - Weight and Oversized vehicles restrictions
 - Time restrictions

- Parking restrictions
- Loading restrictions

4.2 Save Our Old Forests

Laura Bright gave an overview of what Save Our Old Forests (SOOF) is all about and how we as a Town can help.

- SOOF is a registered nonprofit based in Kespukwitk, Mi'kma'ki with two primary objectives.
 - To engage the public in helping to protect the forests in keeping with the Government of Nova Scotia's commitment to protect 20% of Nova Scotia's lands and waters by 2030; and
 - To raise awareness of the ecological importance of protecting forests over 80 years old in particular.
- SOOF has a Petition to Protect Wilderness Areas
 - Therefore we, the undersigned residents of Nova Scotia, call upon the Government of Nova Scotia to designate for protection Beals Brook and Goldsmith Lake Wilderness Areas, two areas of 3900 hectares each on Crown land in Annapolis County. We request that the Government place a moratorium on all forestry, road building and industrial activities within the proposed Wilderness Areas while they are in the process of being designated for protection.
 - Beals Brook Wilderness Areas
 - Proposal to protect 3500 hectares of mature to old forests
 - Connection to Cloud Lakes Wilderness Areas
 - Habitat for Species at Risk and Endangered Species.
 - Goldsmith Lake Wilderness Area
 - Proposal to protect 3900 hectares including Goldsmith and Corbett Lakes,
 - Headwaters of the Round Hill River and Tupper Brook
 - Recognized old growth.
 - Habitat for special at risk
 - 62 confirmed species at risk.
- SOOF is asking that the Mayor and Council make the following request of the Government of Nova Scotia on behalf of the Town of Middleton
- Councillor Fairn started a brief discussion on crown land and as a private landowner, how will the wilderness affect others. Mrs. Bright stated that the crown land wouldn't be harvested.

4.3 Accessibility Advisory Committee

Kris Stojic gave an overview of the Accessibility Advisory Committee presentation.

- Year 1
 - In the first year of the Accessibility Plan a new pool lift was purchased and crosscuts were complete with tactile markers on the corner of Main and Commercial Street.
 - Several other projects were completed throughout the year including beginning the removal of the bricks along Commercial Street and grinding down high spots on sidewalks that were pointed out as hot spots by community members.
 - Pathways were extended to the table tennis and chess tables in Centennial Park.
 - Additional benches were added in Rotary Park and wheelchair-friendly picnic tables added around town.
 - Sidewalk work was completed on various streets in town including parts of Main Street, Gates Avenue and Church Street.
- Year 2
 - Unfortunately, the weather interfered with our Accessibility Day events in 2023.
 - Additional benches were purchased with the intention of adding them to the four corners of Centennial Park and adding some to the downtown core area.
 - The goal is to make the town a more walkable, barrier-free community for people of all abilities.
- Year 3
 - A new Provincial audit tool was presented for Built Environment which will allow us to audit our town buildings and parks to create a priority list of how to move forward.
 - The Nova Scotia Government updated the Built Environment Standards which we received in early 2024. This provided us with enough information to feel confident moving forward with our audits.
 - They also released new standards for Employment and Education, and they are working on the Goods and Services Standards. Public Transportation Standards are also in the works.
- Where We Are Now:
 - With 2030 fast approaching, we are in the process of looking closely at our buildings, parks, infrastructure, goods, and services.
 - We have done a lot, but we have a LONG way to go.
 - Things like signage, door handles, light switches, doorways, ramps, sidewalks and pathways, our parks and playgrounds all need evaluation. Training for staff, our website, online delivery system and print materials are all things that fall under the umbrella of “Town-owned and operated” and will need updating.
- The Accessibility Advisory Committee is requesting \$25,000 for capital project costs to put towards funding for a multi-year project towards an accessible playground. Utilizing whatever equipment we can salvage from the current playground.
 - This would include partnering with community organizations and applying for grant funding to complete the project over a 3–5-year plan.

- \$5,000 in operational budget monies for community events, professional development, educational funds, tools needed for us to continue the operation of the advisory committee.
- Councillor Leblanc asked if the Accessibility Advisory Committee has looked at other parks, besides Rotary Park.
- DRCD Kerr stated, some parks can be retro fit while a lot of other parks cannot be.

5. MINUTES

5.1 Council Meeting

240521.02 It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of April 15, 2024, as circulated. **Motion carried.**

5.2 Public Hearing Minutes

240521.03 It was moved and seconded to approve the Public Hearing minutes of May 6, 2024, as circulated. **Motion carried.**

5.3 Special Council Meeting

240521.04 It was moved and seconded to approve the special council minutes of May 6, 2024, as circulated. **Motion carried.**

6. ANYTHING BY CITIZENS

No comments given or received.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1 RFD 026-2024 Transportation Master Plan

240521.05 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the Transportation Master Plan. **Motion carried.**

7.2 RFD 027-2024 Capital Project Sewer Line Replacement

CAO Crocker recommended that council approve up to \$20,000 plus HST from the Sewer Capital Reserve, to fund the replacement of the sewer line by Bridge Street and install a new manhole.

240521.06 It was moved and seconded that Council approve full replacement of the Sewer Line Replacement. **Motion carried.**

7.3 RFD 028-2024 Capital Project Rotary Park Pavilion Roof

CAO Crocker recommended that the Council approve the utilizing up to \$16,000 plus HST from the General Capital Reserve, to fund the replacement of the Rotary Park Pavilion Roof.

Councillor Leblanc questioned if the roof replacement has already been approved?

CAO Crocker stated in the 2023-24 budget, yes it was approved and if council will accept the 5-year Capital budget but only approves the spending of year one, then we move it up to the 2024-25 budget.

240415.07 It was moved and seconded that Council approve the replacement of the Rotary Park Pavilion Roof. **Motion carried.**

8. REPORTS

8.1 Management Report

CAO Crocker gave an overview of some of the highlights of the Management report that was circulated.

8.2 Middleton Fire Department Dispatch Report for April

CAO Crocker noted that the report has been circulated.

8.3 Annapolis County Inter-Municipal Working Group Apr 25/24 DRAFT Minutes

Councillor Fairn noted the great success of the three counties. Suggested other Councillors should attend to see what the Inter-Municipal Working Group is working toward.

8.4 IMSA Board Special Meeting Apr 10/24 DRAFT Minutes

Mayor Atkinson noted that the minutes have been circulated.

8.5 IMSA Board Apr 17/24 DRAFT Minutes

Mayor Atkinson noted that the minutes have been circulated.

8.6 Accessibility Advisory Committee May 7/24 DRAFT Minutes

Councillor Fairn noted that the minutes have been circulated. Councillor Fairn mentioned that the Annual Accessibility Awareness Day is on June 2nd at the Bridgetown Regional Community School, and everyone is welcome to attend.

8.7 Mayor's Report

Mayor Atkinson noted that the report was circulated to Council members.

8 ANTHING BY MEMBERS

- Councillor Bartlett attended the NSFM conference. There is a new meat market opening, just outside of Middleton.
- Councillor Marshall mentioned he was speaking with Stanley Walker from Public Works and the lights by Bisto 300, someone had opened the box and turned the switches off. The Town is working with Berwick Electric Commission and happy to report all the lights are on in Town.
- Councillor Leblanc inquired about the Visitor Information Center building. CAO Crooked explained it was listed for sale. Public Works Director Verran is working to get it off the lot and the intent is to have it removed by winter.
- Councillor Knapp stated Connaught Avenue has some major potholes between Park Street and Maple Avenue.

9 ADJOURNMENT

20240521.08 It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 pm. **Motion carried.**

Mayor

Recording Secretary