

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday

January 22, 2026

Council Chambers

Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor William McCormick, Chair
Deputy Mayor Paul Saulnier (Via Zoom)
Mayor Mike Bartlett, Vice Chair
Councillor Rick Foote
Councillor Shane Weir
Charles Haliburton, Citizen Representative
Ed Moore, Citizen Representative

STAFF PRESENT: Tom Ossinger, CAO/Development Officer
Leslie Brinton, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Chris Millier, Town Planner 4 Site Group (Via Zoom)
Karen Morrell, Administrative Assistant/Receptionist

REGRETS:

A. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

B. Agenda

B.1 Additions/Deletions
None

B.2 Approval

Motion:

Moved by Councillor Weir and seconded by Charles Haliburton, Citizen Representative that we accept the agenda as presented.

Motion Carried

C. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

C.1 November 27, 2025

Motion:

Moved by Councillor Foote and seconded by Councillor Weir that the minutes for November 27, 2025 be approved as presented.

Motion Carried.

D. Business Arising/Unfinished Business

D.1 None

E. Correspondence

E.1 None

F. New Business

F.1 Application for Development Agreement-Queen St

The application was submitted by RJL & KJL Development Inc., 186 Queen St. (PID 30231724) for a proposed 10-unit residential structure which was evaluated for compliance with municipal planning policies. The proposed development aligns with the Municipal Planning Strategy, aiming to support residential growth while addressing concerns about lot coverage and amenity space. A review of the proposed development, against relevant policies and criteria contained in the Municipal Planning Strategy, and in particular policy IM7, indicates that the existing municipal infrastructure and services are adequate to service the proposed development however, with the proposed development is too dense to fit the criteria.

Motion:

Moved by Charles Haliburton, Citizen Representative and seconded by Deputy Mayor Paul Saulnier that the Planning Advisory Committee recommend that the Town Council not enter into a Development Agreement with RJL & KJL Development Inc., 186 Queen St. (PID 30231724) for a proposed development of a ten (10) unit residential structure as proposed in the application dated July 16, 2025.

Motion carried

F.2 What we Heard-Commercial Document

Town of Digby's held its second public engagement meeting regarding the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law review "Planning for Growth, Charting Our Future." on October 23, 2025. The engagement focused on commercial and industrial development opportunities and challenges within the Town. Several community members discussed commercial and industrial development, facilitated by the Planning Advisory Committee and municipal planning consultants.

The Town identifies three distinct commercial areas—Downtown, Victoria Street Area, and Digby Pines Resort Area—each with unique characteristics and infrastructure needs.

Discussions focused on the importance of maintaining storefronts for commercial use while incorporating residential options in commercial areas.

Fishery-related activities were a primary concern and the Town aims to balance industrial and commercial uses, particularly near the waterfront. Prioritization of fishery uses and concerns about the location of industrial activities in relation to commercial zones.

Participants highlighted potential developments, such as the Digby Mall redevelopment and enhancing pedestrian infrastructure to support local businesses and tourism.

The character of commercial areas is vital for community identity, with suggestions for beautification programs and community space integration. Importance of protecting storefronts for commercial use while allowing for residential options in upper levels of buildings. Discussion on the characteristics defining a successful downtown and the need for initiatives to enhance community pride and accessibility making Downtown Digby an experience as opposed to an existence.

Discussion on the different commercial zones and their infrastructure needs. Support for expanding commercial uses and improving pedestrian connections was emphasized.

It was noted that the participants held a high importance of protecting Digby's storefronts for commercial use while allowing for residential options in upper levels of buildings.

It was asked if some consideration be given to some of Digby's competitive advantages in tourism and local business promotion, along with plans for waterfront development and community engagement. It has worked for other towns and why not pin point what our area has to offer.

The Planning Advisory Committee invites further comments and suggestions from community members, with a submission deadline of February 23, 2026.

F.3 Façade Program

The committee discussed forming an Ad Hoc Committee to talk about a usable Town Façade Program. More details to follow. If there is a committee formed Councillor Rick Foote, Ed Moore, Citizen Representative, Mayor Bartlett, Joanne Dunn and Rick Vantassel (Public Attendees) would like to be members.

G. Questions & Answers relating to the business discussed

Joanne Dunn- her question was query wondering if there was an existing by law concerning the Downtown Façade.

Answer: There is a bylaw for signage and residential by laws but nothing for commercial.

H. Date of next meeting.

Thursday February 26, 2026

Tuesday March 24, 2026

I. Adjournment

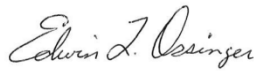
There being no further business the meeting was adjourned

Motion:

Moved by Councillor Weir and seconded by Councillor Foote that the meeting be adjourned at 7:45 PM

Motion Carried.

CHAIRPERSON



DEVELOPMENT OFFICER