

Community Plan Update: Campgrounds

Planning Advisory Committee
November 16, 2021

Planning & Development Department



EAST HANTS

Background

- Creating regulations for campground developments was not initially on the list of land uses needing review.
- However, during the Plan Update Open Houses and the Plan Update Community Survey, it became apparent that residents in more rural areas felt that campground regulations did need to be considered.
- Campgrounds are currently permitted as-of-right in the Rural Use (RU) Zone.
- Only minimum lot provisions have to be adhered to; there are no provisions related to campground development.
- Campgrounds located in the future planned area do not currently require a Development permit.

Discussion

- Feedback from Plan Update Open Houses and Community Survey include:
 - *No campgrounds within 1 km from a home.*
 - *Concerned with the number of RVs on a property.*
 - *RVs - yes, there should be a limit to unpermitted RVs on a lot that is not a campground.*
 - *No more campgrounds.*
 - *Suddenly allowing an 80-slot private campground to develop in a quiet rural small community where there was a cohesive mix of peaceful family living is not appropriate growth.*
 - *There has been a significant increase in private campgrounds being developed in rural residential areas, contributing to campfire smoke drift, noise, strain on water and septic systems, and bringing a transient nature to our communities. There are many lots and land that have sold and the buyers are installing Rvs and small travel trailers rather than build. There is a big shift towards viewing my part of East Hants as a recreational or vacation area, when there are many of us who live here year-round.*
 - *The campground at Selma was rumored to be just a family campground with a few sites. It appears to be a full-scale commercial campground. I haven't heard that noise is a problem, but it was surprising to see such a big development.*

Proposed Amendments

- Update the definition of campground to make it more clear and more in line with definitions used in Kings and Cumberland:
 - **Campground** means a building, structure, land, or part thereof used for a range of overnight camping experiences, including but not limited to tenting, recreational vehicle sites (serviced and un-serviced), and other camping structures. This includes accessory facilities that support camping, including, but not limited to, administration offices, laundry facilities, recreation halls and canteens, but does not include the use of mini-homes or recreational vehicles on a permanent year-round basis.
- Staff also recommend that a new definition is added to the Land Use Bylaw that describes camping structures such as geodomes, yurts, oTENTiks, and other similar structures.
 - **Camping structure** means a building or structure constructed for temporary or seasonal use and may include but is not limited to yurts, geodomes, oTENTiks, wood structures, or other camping structures.

Proposed Amendments Continued

- Staff are recommending that campgrounds be permitted by site plan approval, which will permit neighbouring residents to view the site plans and ask questions before a permit is issued for the campground use.
- Campground regulations from Kings and Cumberland have been taken into consideration.
- Staff recommend that the following matters be addressed by site plan approval:
 1. A single unit dwelling shall be permitted as an accessory use for the residence of the owner or operator of the campground.
 2. The minimum lot size of a campground shall be 2 hectares and the minimum lot frontage shall be 30 m.
 3. Where a neighbouring land use is residential and within 250 m of the campground, the campground shall be buffered with fencing, opaque vegetative strips (or existing substantive vegetation), or berms to minimize the transmission of noise.
 4. Fires are only permitted in fire pits, barbeques, wood burning stoves or other facilities.
 5. All elements, including parking, camp sites, public gathering areas, loading areas, and outdoor storage shall be setback 12 m from the side and rear lot boundaries.
 6. Refuse shall be enclosed and concealed.
 7. All disturbed areas not used for structures, refuse, parking and circulation shall be landscaped.
 8. The campground shall not create undue traffic or pedestrian hazards, traffic and pedestrian circulation shall be clearly marked.
 9. Campgrounds that existed on the date of the adoption of this Bylaw and that do not meet the above requirements shall be permitted provided any expansions are required to apply for site plan approval.

Conclusion

- Planning staff feel the proposed regulations will hopefully reduce conflicts between new campgrounds or the expansion of existing campgrounds and neighbouring land uses. The site plan approval process also permits neighbouring residents to view the site plans and ask questions before a permit is issued for the campground use.

Recommendation

- *That Planning Advisory Committee recommend that Council authorize staff to draft proposed amendments to the Official Community Plan in regards to permitting campground by site plan approval, as presented to Executive Committee on November 16, 2021 and outlined in this staff report.*

Recommended Motion

Planning Advisory Committee recommends that Council:

- ***authorize staff to draft proposed amendments to the Official Community Plan in regards to permitting campgrounds by site plan approval, as presented to Executive Committee on November 16, 2021 and outlined in this staff report.***