

Plan Update – Mt Uniacke GMA Paving Requirements

Planning Advisory Committee

January 18, 2022

Planning & Development Department



EAST HANTS

Background

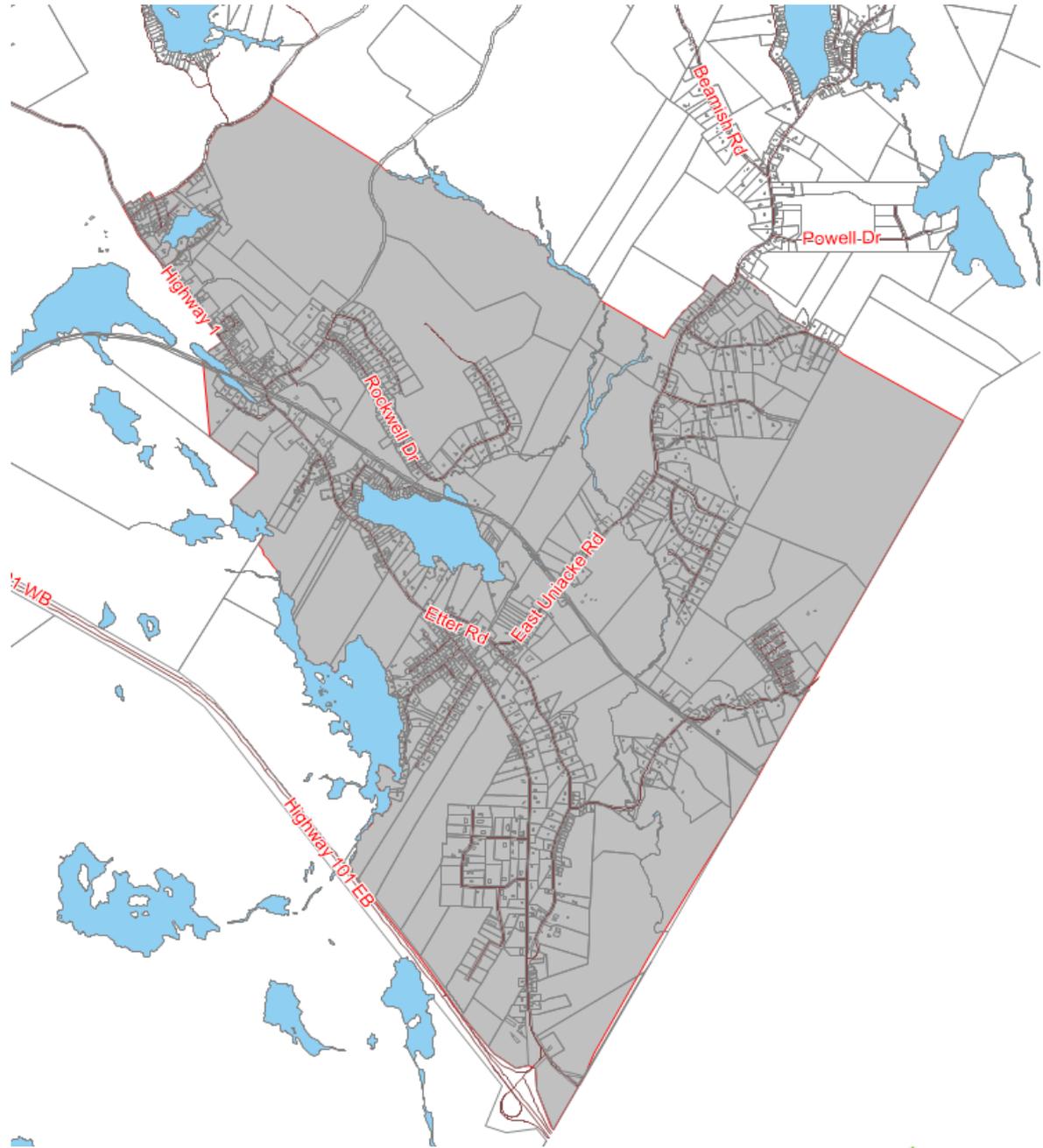
- In September 2020 Council passed the following motion:

C20(261) Passed that Council direct staff prepare a report on the current Growth Management Area and should it be revised with regards to paving of roads for new development.

- Although the motion doesn't mention Mt. Uniacke, the discussion at the time suggested that requiring paved roads in this area may be discouraging development.
- Given that Mt. Uniacke is the only Growth Management Area (GMA) that is not serviced with municipal sewer, it has much lower density.
- Minimum area for an R1 lot goes from 500 m², where there are municipal services, to 3720 m², where on-site services must be used.
- Similarly, lot frontage goes from 16 m to 30 m.
- The result would be potentially less profitable development economics with 7 times fewer lots and nearly twice the paving cost per lot.

Background

Mt Uniacke GMA



Discussion

- Council has debated the requirement for paved roads in various areas of the municipality a number of times.
- The current regulations, which have been in place since April 2006, require paved roads in all Growth Management Areas and Growth Reserve Areas while not requiring paving elsewhere.
- The rationale for this is that it is these areas, whether serviced or not, that Council is directing growth to. With greater development comes greater traffic and resulting complaints about dust and potholes on unpaved roads.

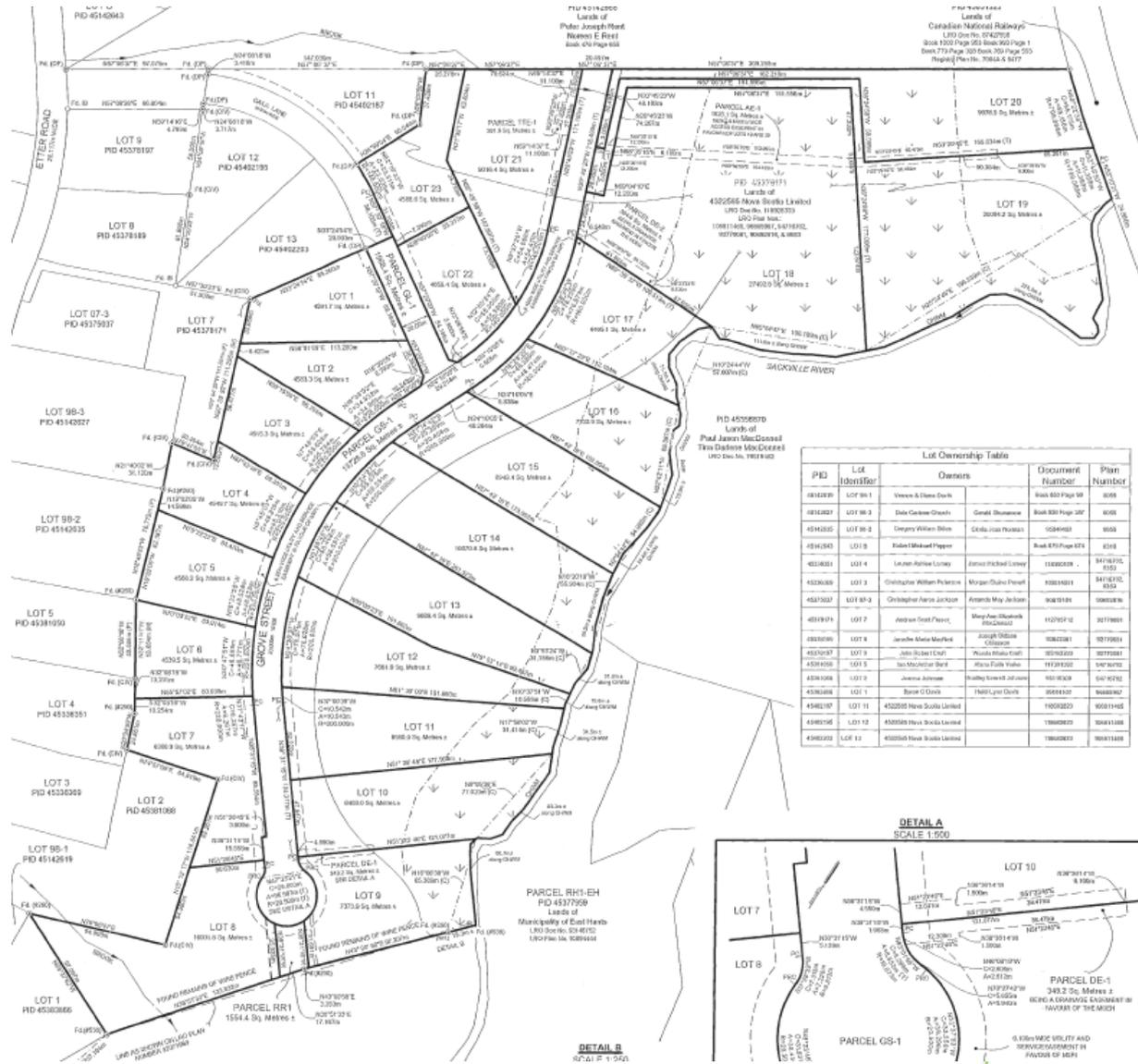
Discussion

- In addition, the argument about the weaker development economics with paved roads, given the lower density, ignores the significant additional costs developers face when building new roads in serviced areas.
- These costs include the installation of sewer, water, buried storm drains, curbs, street trees and sidewalks.
- Serviced areas are also subject to the Lot Grading Bylaw and require 10% of the land to be dedicated to the municipality for public open space as opposed to 5% in unserviced areas.
- Another significant cost that only applies to serviced areas are infrastructure fees which amount to \$6,000 per R1 lot.
- Although staff have heard complaints about the road paving requirement in the past, in the last few years staff have noticed an increased interest in development in the Mt. Uniacke area and the road paving requirement no longer seems to be an issue.

Discussion

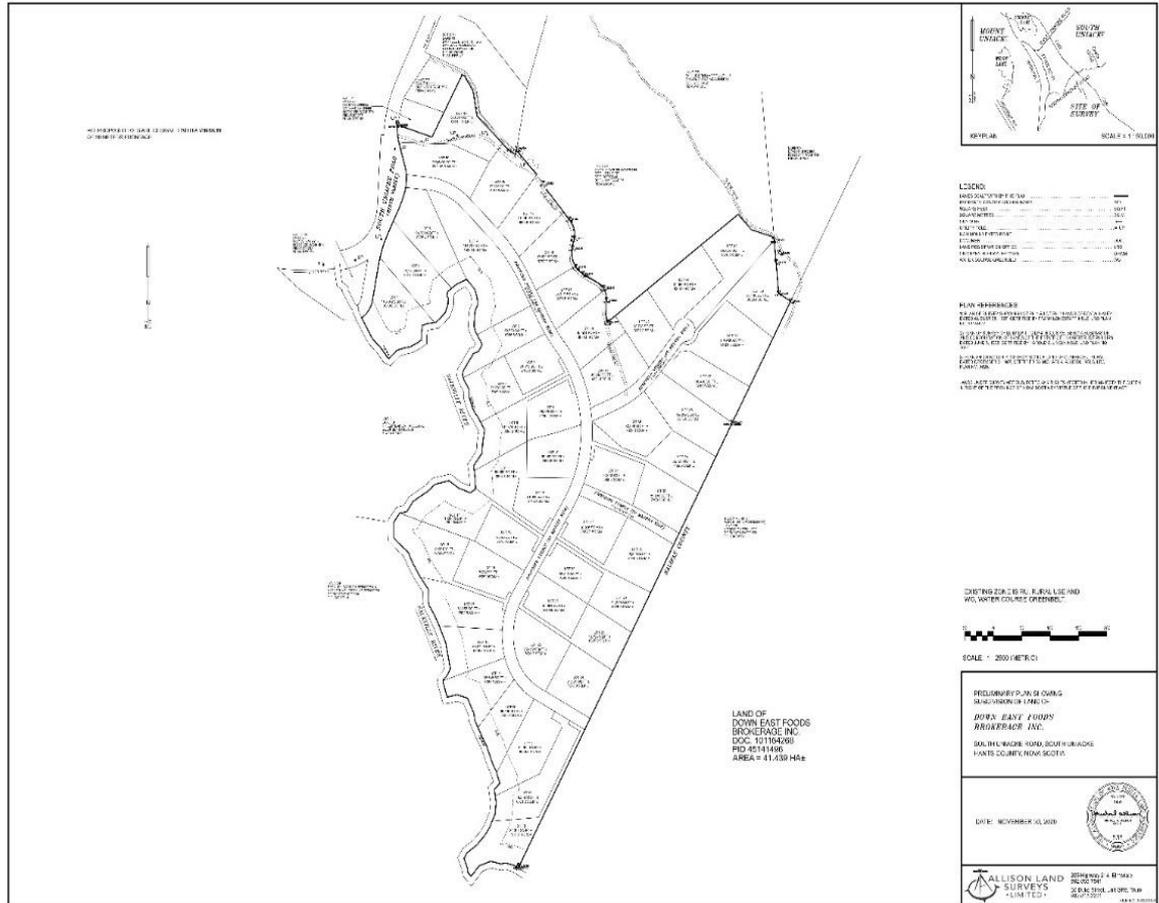
Current examples of development in the Mt. Uniacke area requiring road paving include:

The Orchards, a 23 lot subdivision off of the Etter Road which has received tentative approval under the Subdivision Bylaw.



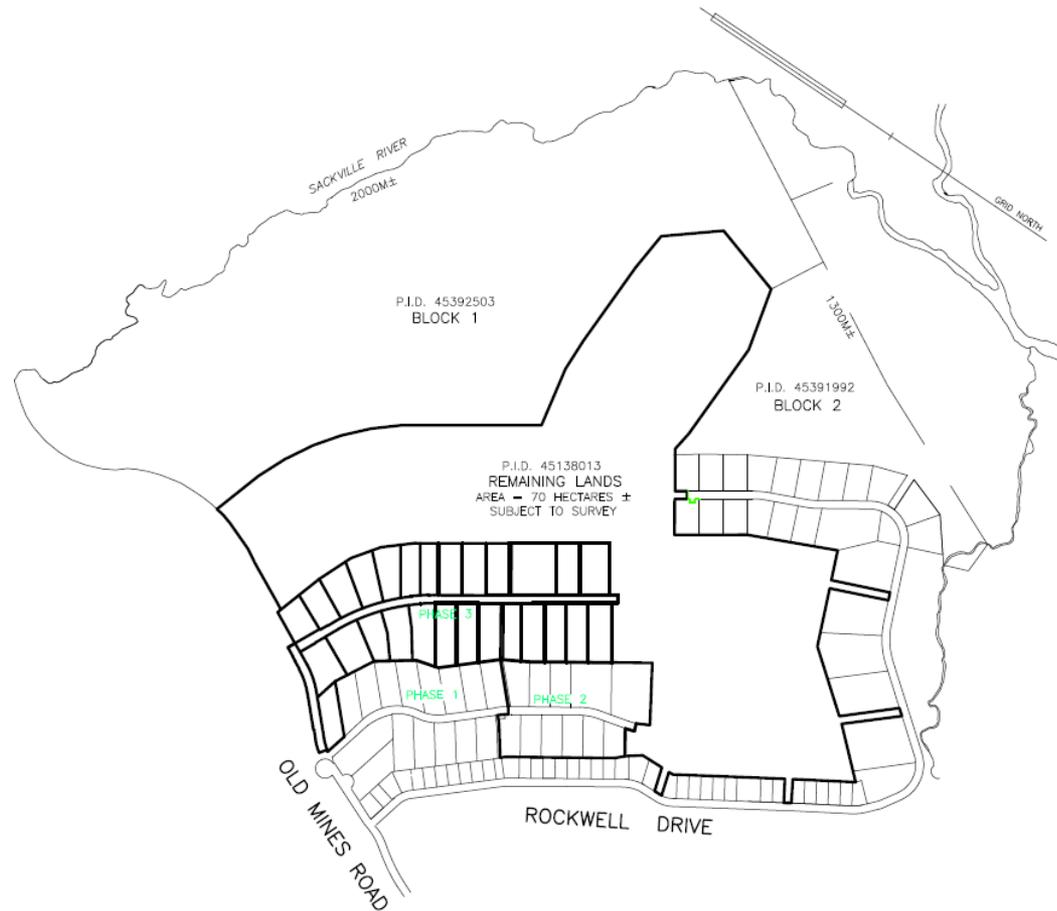
Discussion

Portree JACC's proposal for a 50 lot subdivision currently under review for an MPS/LUB amendment off of the South Uniacke Road.



Discussion

Headwater
Village Phase 3, a
24 lot subdivision
off of the Old
Mines Road
currently in the
tentative
subdivision
approval stage.



Conclusion

- If the cost of paving new roads in the Mt. Uniacke GMA has been a barrier to development in the past, it appears to no longer be the case as evidenced in the strong developer interest staff are seeing in the above noted applications and other inquiries.
- Given this trend and the superior service advantages that paved roads offer to residents, staff are recommending that the existing regulations be maintained.

Recommendation

That existing provisions that require paved roads in the Mt. Uniacke GMA be maintained.

Recommended Motion

Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Council:

- ***Existing provisions that require paved roads in the Mt. Uniacke GMA be maintained.***