

May 26, 2026

Members of Council,
Municipality of East Hants
15 Commerce Court
Elmsdale, NS
B2S 3K5

Re: Regular Meeting of Council – May 27 2026
PLN25-013 – Dorey Lane, Enfield

I am writing on behalf of the applicant regarding Planning Application PLN25-013 respecting lands on Dorey Lane, Enfield. We respectfully request that Council allow this application to proceed to the next anticipated step in the municipal planning process, being the Public Hearing.

As planning professionals, we enter these processes in good faith on behalf of our clients. We follow the Municipality's established procedures, timelines, technical requirements, and public engagement expectations with the understanding that proposals will ultimately be evaluated through a fair, transparent, and complete planning process.

In this case, the applicant has done exactly that.

Throughout this process, we worked collaboratively with Municipal Planning Staff. We responded to comments and concerns as they arose, revised the proposal where appropriate, and provided the technical studies and supporting documentation requested by the Municipality, including traffic analysis, servicing review, concept plans, parking revisions, and supporting planning rationale.

Importantly, this proposal was intentionally redesigned to respond to concerns previously raised by Council regarding the earlier apartment proposal. The current application represents a materially different and lower-density form of development focused on townhouse housing that is more compatible with the surrounding context.

Municipal Planning Staff themselves acknowledged this distinction in their analysis, noting that the proposed townhouse development is *“more compatible with the existing low-density housing in the area.”*

Staff further recommended that the application proceed through the public engagement process, including the Public Information Meeting and subsequent consideration by Council.

The Municipality also communicated to surrounding residents that:

“A final decision to approve or refuse the application will be made after a Public Hearing to be scheduled at a later date.”

It is for this reason that we are deeply concerned by the recommendation that this application not proceed to Public Hearing.

To be clear, we fully understand and respect that Council retains complete discretion to approve or refuse the application following a Public Hearing. That is an accepted and understood part of the planning process. However, refusing to allow the application to proceed to Public Hearing after:

- extensive staff collaboration,
- completion of technical review work,
- formal public engagement,
- and a positive staff recommendation,

creates the perception that the process concluded before the applicant was afforded the opportunity to fully present the merits of the proposal in the formal public forum specifically intended for that purpose.

The Municipality’s own planning framework contemplates a process whereby applications are reviewed by staff, considered by PAC in an advisory capacity, and ultimately evaluated by Council following a Public Hearing process that allows both the applicant and members of the public to present their positions transparently and on the public record.

The Public Hearing is a foundational component of that framework. It is where:

- Council hears directly from the applicant,
- members of the public are given a formal opportunity to speak,
- staff recommendations are weighed openly, and
- decisions are ultimately made transparently and on the public record.

Respectfully, terminating the process prior to Public Hearing after substantial staff review and positive staff recommendation appears inconsistent with both the spirit and structure of the Municipality’s stated planning and public participation process.

This concern is heightened by the structure of the current PAC process, where the majority of PAC membership is composed of members of Council who will ultimately participate in the final decision-making process at Council. While we fully respect the important advisory role of PAC, the practical effect in this circumstance is the perception that the substantive merits of the application may already have been determined prior to completion of the formal Public Hearing process contemplated by the Municipality's own planning framework.

Regardless of intent, this is not a healthy outcome for applicants, members of the public, or confidence in the integrity and predictability of the municipal planning system.

Applicants undertake significant financial and professional risk in these processes. They invest heavily in planning analysis, engineering review, surveying, traffic analysis, servicing review, concept design, public consultation, and application fees based on the understanding that proposals will be fairly evaluated through the Municipality's established process framework.

That framework does not guarantee approval, nor should it. However, it should guarantee a fair opportunity to be heard through the complete process established by the Municipality itself.

We respectfully submit that allowing this application to proceed to Public Hearing does not predetermine the outcome. It simply ensures that Council's ultimate decision is made after the complete process has been carried out transparently, publicly, and fairly, with all perspectives properly heard and considered.

We therefore respectfully request that Council permit PLN25-013 to proceed to Public Hearing so that the application may be fully and properly considered on its merits.

Respectfully submitted,



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