

**Motion C26(182) - MPS
*Amendment: Subdivision of Places
of Worship and Cemeteries***

Planning Advisory Committee
September 15, 2026
Planning and Development Department



EAST HANTS

Background

- Municipal Planning Staff received inquiries from a former place of worship. The congregation has been contemplating selling the former place of worship and maintaining the cemetery.
- There is very limited distance between the cemetery and building.
- In June, Council passed the following motion:

C26(128) Moved that staff be directed to prepare amendments to the East Hants Official Community Plan that would enable the subdivision of properties containing churches/former churches and cemeteries. Amendments should enable reduced setback, area and frontage requirements to permit the cemeteries and church buildings to be located on separate lots.

MPS Amendments

Staff have drafted the following policy changes for the MPS:

TH17.1 Council shall consider the subdivision of places of worship and former places of worship from cemeteries with reduced lot area, frontage, and setbacks in all zones where there is frontage or deeded access to both lots.

Subdivision Bylaw Amendments

Staff have drafted the following changes for the SUB:

9.2

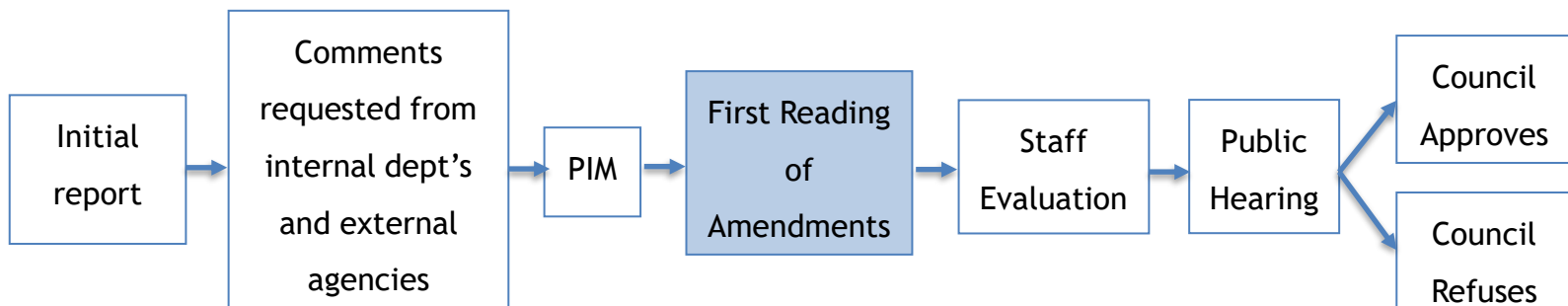
e) In all zones, the subdivision of places of worship and former places of worship from cemeteries with reduced lot area, frontage, and setbacks shall be permitted where there is frontage or deeded access to both lots.

Discussion

- The policy changes allow for reduced setbacks and frontage requirements
- This would enable the congregations to subdivide their property
- The amendments would encourage the adaptive reuse of former places of worship, which would help protect East Hants built heritage

Citizen Engagement

- Staff are following all applicable Citizen Engagement Policies outlined in the Municipal Planning Strategy
- Additional advertising has been placed on the East Hants website and on our social media feeds.
- A Public Information Meeting (PIM) is required for all amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy
- An advertisement stating the date and time of the PIM was placed in the August 25th, 2026 edition of the Chronicle Herald
- The PIM was held on September 8th, 2026. 7 residents and 6 Councillors attended . One question which asked who maintains the cemeteries if located on their own lot?



Internal & External Agency Comments

- Planning Staff reached out to Nova Scotia Public Works, Municipal Affairs, and Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage for comments on the proposed amendments. Their comments included:
- Need to consider whether amendments could inadvertently encourage demolition of registered heritage places of worship
- Archaeological assessments may be needed if the subdivided building was to be redeveloped or demolished before permits can be distributed. This is a requirement under the Cemeteries and Monuments Protection Act
- Safe and appropriate access would need to be maintained for subdivided properties to enable maintenance of the building and cemetery

Recommendation

- That Planning Advisory Committee recommends that Council give First Reading to the proposed amendments and authorize staff to schedule a Public Hearing

Recommended Motion

Planning Advisory Committee recommends that Council:

- ***Give First Reading to amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Subdivision Bylaw to allow the subdivision of places of worship/former places of worship from cemeteries with reduced lot area, frontage, and setback requirements in all zones where there is frontage or deeded access to both lots; and***
- ***Authorize staff to schedule a Public Hearing***