

RULES ABOUT WIND TURBINES

The use of alternative energies is an important issue however keep in mind that wind turbines can create concerns to adjacent residences. There are divergent opinions on the use large and small scale wind turbines. HRM is preparing to bring forward new policy and regulations for the siting of wind turbines. There has been a number of community consultation meetings and now HRM staff are finalizing its recommendations. It is our job to find a balance to protect the public interest while attempting to provide the opportunities to realize the economical and environmental benefits of alternative energies such as wind power. But until then, existing land-use bylaws within our area will prevail at this time. So far there are 3 large residential wind turbines in District 3 (Lake Major, West Chezzetcook and Head Chezzetcook). Recently, the Atlantic Superstore in Porters Lake erected an industrial wind turbine to power various systems within their grocery store. The 100 kilowatt, \$500,000 turbine erected on a 36-metre tower is capable of providing electricity for 25 average homes. A development permit for this was issued in November 2008. It is situated 200 feet from adjacent property boundaries. And the property is zoned 'RE' - Rural Enterprise, which allows a broad range of uses (except fish processing plants, salvage yards, adult entertainment uses, mobile home parks, composting and C&D operations, industrial or commercial uses which are obnoxious). Wind turbines are also exempt from the Land Use Bylaw height regulations. For more details about wind energy opportunities and HRM's strategy, go to:

www.halifax.ca/regionalplanning/HRMWindEnergy.html

www.scotianwindfields.ca/community/chebucto

REFORMATTED TRANSIT TAXATION

HRM Council has approved a new transit tax structure as a part of its 2009-10 budget. The ways in which property taxes will be levied has changed, but the tax structure is revenue neutral on a HRM-wide basis. The effects of this new structure will vary from district to district. Even for some individual properties within those districts will vary according to their assessed value and by whether or not they are within 1 km of a transit route. Various aspects of Metro Transit services were imbedded in each of the respective general tax rates. Urban Area taxpayers had been paying 13.1 cents for transit, whereas Suburban & Rural Area taxpayers paid 4.5 cents per \$100 of assessment regardless of what service they received. Some taxpayers were further than 1 km from transit but paid the same rate. Under the new revised substitute system, (for an one year trial basis), there will be 4.5 cents per \$100 of assessment for general regional transit services such as MetroLink, Metro X (rural express), the Ferries, plus a marginal share of local transit costs. This rate will be spread across most of HRM - primarily the Urban, Suburban, and Rural Commutershed areas. (Basically from Head of Jeddore to Hubbards, but excludes the Agricultural Area of the Musquodoboit Valley and the Resource Area of the Eastern Shore beyond Oyster Pond.) A second transit tax of 8.8 cents per \$100 of assessment will be levied for local transit services. This will only apply to those properties within 1 km of a local transit route. Also the separate area tax rates for community transit (5.6 cents for the Preston-Porters Lake service) will be eliminated. For more information on this subject, please go to: www.halifax.ca/revenue/tax/taxmain.html

SATURDAY COMMUNITY TRANSIT

Once again, Community Transit will offer Saturday service during the summer months. It is expected to start on July 4th and run until Sept.5th Labour Day Weekend. This service adjustment is in response to accommodate the demand for such enhanced weekend access to Metro. This will certainly help those students with summer jobs and for seniors and many others wanting to get into town for appointments and special events. Further details with schedules will be distributed on the bus and web-site announcements. For more details on the summer schedule, go to: www.halifax.ca/metrotransit/Schedules/index.asp As well with the recent structural changes with Transit Taxation, our current weekday schedules are being reviewed for some possible service time adjustments. There have been requests for earlier and later bus runs, but that may require a complete revamping of the community transit service. If service changes are recommended, then there will be local notification about any pending bus route alternations and schedule time adjustments. More information to follow.



Happy
Canada Day

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