

ATTENDING

Deputy Mayor Mike Trinacty, Chair
Councilor Adam Lutz
Councilor Chris Goddard
Councilor Derrick Jamieson
Councilor Ty Walsh
Jen Boyd, CAO
Chantal Franey, Executive Coordinator

ABSENT WITH REGRETS

Mayor Don Clark - Chair
Councilor Rod Reeves

In Attendance: 47 members of the public

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. PUBLIC HEARING

a. Overview of the Proposal

Ms. Fuller reviewed the proposal from Nick Bentley and John Foster to enter into a Development Agreement with the Town to construct 12 units at 131 Foster Street.

b. Comments from the Applicant

Mr. Bentley noted he was attending to respond to any concerns that the public may have concerning the proposed development. Mr. Bentley highlighted the urgent need for housing in the area and feels the proposed development will be a positive thing for the community.

c. Public Input

Mike Chalmers, 136 Foster Street

- Concerns about water drainage
- Little infrastructure to support public buses
- Wants Foster Street infrastructure and paving completed as soon as possible

Gloria Cunningham, 134 Foster Street

- Read letter (submitted and attached)
- Noted Mr. Foster promised current resident's that they would never have to move
- Water concerns

Glen Cooper, 125 Foster Street

- Has water issues in his basement
- Wants to know where all of the extra sewage will go
- What is the depth of the water study?
- Foster Street residents did not have input on bus route

Ms. Boyd indicated that the Foster Street project is listed in the five-year plan. A proposed stormwater management study and transportation study are proposed before completing Foster Street. It could be moved up following the studies. There will be a Water Study presentation at March 21st Council.

Mark Marchant, 127 Foster Street

- Very upset that the current tenants at the 131 Foster Street are losing their home
- Against the proposed development

d. Written Submissions

There is one written submission by Gloria Cunningham which is attached. There was also a written submission by Peter Dietert submitted to the Public Information Meeting on September 28, 2022, which is also attached.

e. Final Comments from Applicant

Mr. Bentley apologized that Mr. Foster was unable to attend as he just heard about the meeting last week.

Both Mr. Bentley and Mr. Foster will discuss the current tenant issue. Mr. Bentley does not want any animosity.

The water run-off from the development will be piped directly into the storm sewer, then it is up to the Town to deal with same.

Mr. Bentley has engaged in a water study himself and this party indicated that Berwick is very lucky to have the water excess that it does.

**Town Council Public Hearing Minutes
Development Agreement Application
245 Commercial Street, Berwick – Apple Valley Foods
2023 – 03 -20**

ATTENDING

Deputy Mayor Mike Trinacty, Chair
Councilor Adam Lutz
Councilor Chris Goddard
Councilor Derrick Jamieson
Councilor Ty Walsh
Jen Boyd, CAO
Chantal Franey, Executive Coordinator

ABSENT WITH REGRETS

Mayor Don Clark - Chair
Councilor Rod Reeves

In Attendance: 47 members of the public

2. PUBLIC HEARING

a. Overview of the Proposal

Ms. Fuller reviewed the proposal from Nick Bentley and John Foster to enter into a Development Agreement with the Town to construct 12 units at 131 Foster Street.

b. Comments from the Applicant

Ailie Longley, Apple Valley Foods Director of Human Resources, attended on behalf of the applicant Jeff Sarsfield who was out of the country.

Ms. Longley presented a power-point presentation highlighting two of their other temporary foreign worker residences, the development in Berwick and explained the advantages of having these staff reside in Berwick. As well as introducing the public to five of their current temporary foreign workers.

Ms. Longley explained that Apple Valley Foods employs a property manager who provides weekly inspections of the internal and external property, ensuring everything is in order and up to standards. Anything that needs to be addressed is done so immediately.

Ms. Longley noted that Apple Valley Foods Inc. currently has 63 temporary foreign workers employed at the two Kentville locations and highlights that

these staff are an integral part of the workforce and production would not be met without them.

Councillor Goddard asked who pays for the employees to be transported to the workplace each day. Ms. Longley confirmed AVF does.

Councillor Jamieson asked if the company had any further employees coming from away. Ms. Longley noted they have applied for more but unsure at present how many that will be.

c. Public Input

Sheila Stewart, 251 Commercial Street
Read letter (attached as submission)

Greg Hubbard – 121 Foster Street

- How does this make the Town better?
- Referred to Dalhousie and Ottawa studies regarding Boarding Houses indicating lack of regulation and conflicts between residents, neighbors, etc., as well as noting a Boarding House is one level up from homelessness
- Little oversight of residents
- Would like to see single occupancy
- What makes a Boarding House adequate housing?
- Asked Council not to proceed with DA application

Elizabeth Walker – 153 Main Street

- Encourages the Apple Valley Foods development proposal
- Notes this is a residence, period
- Feels it is in a prime location
- Would welcome the employees
- Encourages the public to welcome them by sponsoring a room and decorating same

Jack Smellie – 246 Commercial Street

- Requests that the Town consider minimum standards
- Look at number of kitchens, bathrooms
- Has safety concerns
- Notes Town has not considered minimum standards to allow this type of housing in R1 zones

Tony Bzrzpwszk – 2 Beckwith Drive

- Apple Valley Foods is here to make money

-
- Feels AVF has gone ahead with development without approvals, which is a red flag

Councillor Walsh asked if anyone was living in the residence right now. Ms. Longley confirmed there was not.

Larry Burke – 250 Commercial Street

- Asked Council who they would like to help – the company or the residents?
- Feels the residence would be “slum”

Rod Dorey – 252 Commercial Street

- Feels Council has already made up their minds
- Will there be criminal checks done on the residents?
- Suggested that AVF rent the Waterville Youth Jail and house the temporary foreign workers there

Anna Morton – 294 Main Street

- Noted she has a neutral opinion on the matter
- Asked Council to be pro-active and have policies in place before deciding

Tony Nette – 206 Prospect Road, Morristown

- Has temporary foreign workers that live all around his residence much of the year and has made wonderful friendships with he and his wife
- Very little acknowledgement from the community
- Hard workers
- Very respectful

Bob Stewart – 251 Commercial Street

Read letter (attached as a submission)

Kara Colbourne – Commercial Street

- If accepted Council will be setting a precedent for using large homes as Boarding Homes

Janet Chappel – 5677 Brooklyn Street

- Stated as President of the NS Fruit Growers Association, she knows that the Temporary Foreign Workers Program has a rigorous application process that usually takes up to 8 months for approvals
- Highlighted her disappointment in some of the negative comments made at this public hearing especially regarding using the term “them”

-
- Asked the neighbors if a family with 10 people moved in, would they have a problem with that?
 - Noted that the temporary foreign workers must be happy to want to continue to work here

Final Comments from Applicant:

Ms. Longley addressed the following points:

- The employees are screened and approved before they ever enter Canada
- Apple Valley Foods will never compromise the health and safety of their employees
- The company provides a home with furniture, kitchen supplies and other house supplies the employees require
- Apple Valley Foods does not force their employees to stay under any circumstances, they are free to leave whenever they like
- Some employees are seeking permanent residence here
- Apple Valley Foods have never been fined by the Temporary Foreign Worker program as alleged by Mr. Stewart
- The homes are in excellent upkeep at all times
- Each home has house rules – it is a rule-based society

3. ADJOURNMENT

IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE REGULAR MEETING BE ADJOURNED AT 9:01 P.M

Approved by Town Council May 9, 2023.

As recorded by Chantal Franey, Executive Coordinator.