

Community Gathering Skyline Acres

January 7, 2017



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“I haven’t been to an event where the need for a pool hasn’t come up. It’s a hot topic”

-Greg Ericson, City Councillor



1. Summary

Political Representatives Present:

David Coon, MLA Fredericton South

Greg Ericson – City Councillor for Ward 8

On January 7, 2017, David Coon hosted a third community gathering with Greg Ericson in the Skyline Acres area of Fredericton South. David started with a report of his work in the Legislature, and Greg followed with a report of his work at City Council.

Questions for both followed each report, and then the event opened up to a general Q&A discussion.

2. David's Report from the Legislature

1. Videos

Interns at David's Legislative office have been working on videos to inform the public on various issues and topics, such as Emergency Room wait times, and mental health in New Brunswick. One series of videos on how the Legislature works would be good for use in schools. Upcoming videos include Affordable Housing and NB Forests.

2. Route 8 pedestrian crossing

David met with the Minister of DTI (Department of Transportation and Infrastructure), the Deputy Minister, and Engineers to push for a pedestrian crossing of Route 8. Proposed different ideas including a bridge, traffic lights, moving the temporary bridge. The final answer was no, but David is not giving up. The city has a new proposal, which Greg will explain more.

3. Impact

Pushed successfully to have New Brunswick's pilot midwifery program based in Fredericton.

Helped move along pay equity for Education Assistants.

4. Select Committee on Climate Change

This committee demonstrated effective collaboration between MLAs across parties. There was wide public consultation and expert hearings. The committee made recommendations, many of which were adopted in the government's Climate Change Plan. Now David is pushing for roll out of programs for energy efficiency, incentives for electric vehicles, etc. A mechanism for carrying out the climate change action plan remains to be seen.

5. Long Emergency Room Wait times

The problem is clear: ER wait times have become an issue of patient safety. Emergency Room doctors want to expand the definition of emergency so that they can call in extra help. David keeps pushing on this issue in Legislature but the Minister dismisses it. David will continue to keep on pushing on this issue.

6. Youth Mental Health

A successful youth mental health initiative, Integrated Service Delivery, is being rolled out throughout the province. ***It should come to Fredericton by this September – I think this is the case, need to confirm.*** The school district is getting ready for collaborative teams to provide help to youth when they need it.

7. Crown Corporations Committee meeting next week
8. Bills
David has a number of bills before the Legislative Assembly: home renovation and clean energy bill; eliminate corporate donations bill; new management of crown forests bill.
9. Legislative Calendar
As a transparency measure, government has agreed to publish a calendar of government business, (when the Legislature sits, when committees meet, etc).
10. Education Report
There is a proposal in the **report** to close Forest Hill School and replace Liverpool Street School. – ***really? Which report is that?***
11. Capital Budget and Hospital Expansion
The next phase of money for the Chalmers Hospital expansion is back on track. There will be an addition to the back of Chalmers, to expand the Labour and Delivery and Intensive Care Units.
12. Downtown Community Health Clinic
Opening in February

3. Greg's Report from City Hall

1. Planning and Research

City has just completed budget process, now they are in planning and research mode. Feb. 9, Long term city planning. Reviewing engagement feedback. Discuss how the city is going to move forward.

2. Master Plans

Odell Park and Killarney Lake Master Plans public engagements coming up to decide on green space policies, maintenance, etc. Need a plan for small neighbourhood parks, currently only high level governance on these.

3. Garbage and recycling

Investigate best practices. Will have public consultations. Conservation Council survey shows that green values of residents outstrip services provided by city.

4. Renewal of Municipalities Act

Some time in Spring. Relevant for many policy areas, such as maintenance of water and sewage, municipal ability to regulate and enforce.

5. Playhouse

Location has been decided, parking lot behind City Hall, but no details yet. Could be where the Armoury building is located, may have parking on ground floor, so not losing any parking space.

6. Pool

UNB announced pool closure. Need to compile studies and then consult with public about how to move forward. Lots of public input on this, hot topic.

7. Renewable Energy Strategies

City will use their buildings as test cases. Homeowners could come to see the buildings and get information and advice.

8. Police

Launching a 4 year strategic plan for desired public safety outcomes.

9. City Committees

Coming up with 2 year priorities for each committee, initiative of the Mayor. Greg is chair of the Finance and Administration Committee.

10. Hospice

City working with Hospice to use basement for EMO (Emergency Measures Operation) shelter space.

11. Downtown Legal Clinic

The new Downtown Community Health Clinic will also include a community legal clinic, with co-op work options for UNB law students.

4. Q&A Discussion

1. Nurse Practitioners

Q: Can be key to alleviating wait times in Emergency Rooms. They can do 90% of what family doctors do. Need more nurse practitioners in independent practice. Where is this process?

A: Right now nurse practitioners are employees of Horizon Health, but they can't charge medicare directly. Pharmacists are also able to do some basic triage, more people need to be educated about this service.

Comment: Policy about who can bill medicare does not specify on doctors, states "health provider" so nurse practitioners could also potentially have billing numbers.

Comment: Education about nurse practitioners is important b/c there is still lack of trust and desire to have a doctor rather than a nurse practitioner.

Comment: Baukje Mediema would like to help move this issue forward.

2. Gardasil Vaccine

Q: Will Gardasil vaccine be introduced for boys?

A: Don't know. Will find out.

*Note: Since the meeting, it has been announced that Gardasil will be covered for boys:
<https://www.telegraphjournal.com/telegraph-journal/story/100100298/hpv-vaccine-boys-new-brunswick-oral-cancer>

3. Aquatic Centre

Comment: Need a new aquatic centre. UNB Pool gets heavy community use; city should be responsible to provide community with a pool, not the university. Taxes paid by community to city, not university. UNB is not a reliable partner, city should not rely on them to make a pool happen. Synchronized swimming, competitive swim team, diving, many aquatic athletic teams use this pool and need an aquatic centre. Atlantic Canada has a dearth of such aquatic centres.

4. Green Infrastructure

Comment: Could look to Portland as an example of green infrastructure, they have turbines in their storm sewers to generate energy. Should invest in micro-energy turbines, eg. In-stream turbines.

Comment: We are selling our recyclables out of the province/country.

5. Power Outages in Skyline Acres

NB Power did some work following the community meeting with NB Power (tree trimming), but issues remain. They need to return as this work was done a while ago, they think it's a

cutting issue.

However, they think there may also be local problems in specific areas of Skyline Acres. Looking into this.

6. Rent Control

Q: Rent is disproportionately high, is there any way to enforce rent control?

A: Not under the current Municipalities Act. Encourage residents to write emails to put pressure on politicians to reform legislation to allow this kind of control. Currently nothing is known about any proposed changes to the Municipalities Act.

7. Property Tax

Q: Any consideration of a progressive property tax?

A: Fixed rate is progressive because it is based on the value of the property. Potential for progressive rate is in water rates. Could charge different amounts for block of water consumption, family size and use would pay differently. Heavy users would pay for monitoring and administration that this would require.

8. Sanding and Salting in winter

Comment: Sanding, salting and ploughing in winter seems very small and insufficient, only one line of sand/salt on a street.

A: Policy for sanding and salting is to only do so for larger streets and hills, otherwise, flat connector streets not sanded/salted. Would cost too much to sand and salt all the streets. Should call city if dissatisfied with the service level.

9. Enforcing Tenancy Act and regulating Landlords

Comment: As a tenant do not feel at home in rental properties here. Rentalsman is not helpful if there are problems. Was told by Rentalsman to take landlord to court, not a reasonable solution b/c this takes time and money that many tenants do not have. Would be easier if issues could be addressed by a city administrator.

Q: Who/what could regulate or enforce protections and regulations regarding landlords and tenants?

A: Some municipal bylaw enforcement exists, but don't have a regulating body for many landlord/tenant problems. Will look this up.

10. Route 8 Pedestrian Crossing

David presented that DTI and Minister did not support a pedestrian crossing of Route 8. Province not moving on this unless the Mayor is behind it. Currently city's priority is the ring road on the North side. The City has another proposal which involves a roundabout for Route 8. City anticipates growth and the hope is that Route 8 will be the next focus for the city. UNB Engineering student showed that a roundabout could divert some traffic from Prospect and extend the life of of the Regent- Prospect intersection. Concern is the land

behind the hospital, which is in need of expansion. City priorities: Playhouse, pool, ring road, Princess Margaret Bridge realignment.

11. Traffic safety

Intersections need improvement to improve safety of children walking to school
Kimble Drive traffic light was helpful but temporary, just during the Regent St.
improvement. Lots of residents wanted to keep it, but traffic study showed that the traffic
density did not warrant the existence of traffic lights.

Would like bike lane expansion.

Crosswalk improvement idea: orange flags at each intersection or crosswalk so pedestrian
can carry it in front of them.

12. New apartments

Q: What is happening with the storefronts? Still empty.

A: Waiting for business tenants.

Q: Any follow up on the idea of the Co-op having a satellite store there?

A: Greg joined the Co-op board to propose this idea, but Co-op is focusing on expansion
within their existing site, and struggling with competing with new businesses (Costco).

5. Follow-Up Actions

David Coon:

1. I will press the need to expand the use of nurse practioners in the Legislative Assembly and at my upcoming meeting with the new CEO of Horizon Health, Karen McGrath. In particular, there needs to be a modification of the Medicare system, so nurse practioners can establish private practices. Beaukje Medieama has agreed to support this work with her expertise and experience. We have already had an initial meeting.
2. I will follow up to find out what responsibility is placed on landlords to ensure safe conditions are maintained on walks and parking areas on their properties.
*Note: It appears that for rental properties, the owner is responsible for the safety of their tenants in that they could be legally liable for any injuries that occur as a result of poor care. However, as far as I can find out, there are no actual legally binding standards for how these areas are to be maintained.
3. I am participating on the committee that Dawn Gordon has set up to pursue new approaches to establishing a crossing over Route 8. The committee has agreed on a proposal that would provide direct benefits to the universities and the City. I am reaching out to the universities, college, schools and hospital to build broad support for the proposal.
4. With the Legislature back in session, I will find out whether there are any plans to provide Gardasil (the vaccine for Human Papillomavirus) to boys as it is for girls.
*Note: the government has announced it will extend the Gardasil vaccine to boys
<https://www.telegraphjournal.com/telegraph-journal/story/100100298/hpv-vaccine-boys-new-brunswick-oral-cancer>