

Purpose:

The purpose of this hearing is to receive verbal and written submissions regarding the Town of Mahone Bay draft Local Improvement By-law.

Background:

A draft Local Improvement By-law was first received at Council on December 8, 2020, at which time staff was directed to schedule a Public Information Meeting to discuss the proposed by-law with members of the public. The Public Information Meeting was scheduled for January 20, 2021 and was advertised on the Town website, in the Progress Bulletin, in a notice on the Town notice board at the Post Office, and on Facebook. Council received a new staff report concerning the draft Local Improvement By-law, including a report on the Public Information Meeting February 9, 2021 at which time the draft by-law was referred to the Town of Mahone Bay Strategy and Policy Committee.

The draft Local Improvement By-law was discussed at the April 26, 2021 meeting of the Strategy and Policy Committee, at which time staff were directed to amend the draft as discussed and present an updated draft to the committee at the June 28, 2021 meeting. At the June 28, 2021 meeting of the Strategy and Policy Committee, the committee passed a motion to recommend that Council approve first reading of the amended draft Local Improvement By-law.

At the July 13, 2021 regular meeting of Mahone Bay Town Council, Council approved passed first reading of the draft Town of Mahone Bay Local Improvement By-law.

The draft by-law was posted on the Town website and members of the public were encouraged to review the draft and offer comments, and participate in the Public Hearing via notification on the Town website, posts on social media, a notice posted at the Post Office, publication in both the August and September Mayors Newsletters, and an advertisement that ran in the Progress Bulletin.

Notification:

Public Information Meeting

Progress Bulletin January 13, 2021
Town website, Notice posted at the Post Office
Town Facebook page.

Public Hearing:

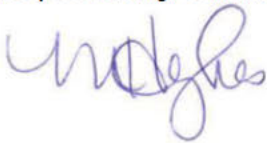
Progress Bulletin August 11, 2021
Town website, Town facebook page,
Notice posted at the Post Office,
Mayor's Newsletter August and September 2021

Submissions Received:

As of 2:30pm on September 14, 2021 correspondence had been forwarded to Council from the following members of the public:

- On September 13, 2021: Anya Holloway; Kirsty Cousins; Robert Hirtle; and Tim Arsenault.
- On September 14, 2021: James Brunt and Nichole Bush; Linda Schneidereit; Michelle Proulx; Marie Raymond; Paula Griffin; Sabrena Jaswal; Tim Merry; Catherine and Sebastian Andreu; Peter Visser; and Rhiannon Visser.

Respectfully submitted,



Maureen Hughes
Town Clerk & Deputy CAO



From: [Anya Holloway](#)
To: [Town of Mahone Bay Clerk](#)
Subject: Questions for Improvement Bylaw
Date: Monday, September 13, 2021 9:46:25 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

The following are questions for the upcoming meeting and discussions on the Local Improvement Bylaw.

Town Council
Re: local Improvement Bylaw
Questions for Upcoming Meeting

Questions

1. In speaking with some on Council, they appeared unsure on some points in this draft and were unable to answer my questions. If this Bylaw draft has been voted on once already, why do some on Council not know answers to questions regarding its workings?
2. If repairs are deemed necessary by the Town and not petitioned by residents, who is responsible for payment?
3. What is the percentage of cost?
4. What is the Town monetarily responsible for when it pertains to repairs? Or, are residents now responsible for all infrastructure costs? Including large projects such as sewer repair, roads etc.

On a last note: There will be many of us who will not be able to pay. It is written in the bylaw that liens will be placed. You will surely have many on your hands.

A. Holloway
384 Main St.
Mahone Bay

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Town of Mahone Bay Clerk](#)
Subject: Improvement bylaw
Date: Saturday, September 11, 2021 1:02:05 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Town of Mahone Bay Council
Re: Improvement Bylaw
September 12, 2021

Dear Honourable Mayor and Town Council,

I am requesting that you reconsider implementation of the Improvement Bylaw.

The draft itself is rather unclear.

Will this include infrastructure that is existing which has broken down or in need of repair? If so, are these grandfathered such as the sewer pipes in town that have been supposedly in the works for a few years?

Is it just for extension of services or changes wanted by residents?

Residents cannot be expected to pay thousands of dollars to repair sewers, sidewalks etc.

What percentage is expected to be paid? The entire cost?

This Bylaw will cause considerable monetary hardship to residents in the Town of Mahone Bay.

Many of us are on fixed incomes and pay high taxes that are already stretching residents to the limit.

Due to the pandemic, many have been unable to work, closed businesses and are trying to recoup losses from this time.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Anya Holloway

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [Kirsty Cousins](#)
To: [Town of Mahone Bay Clerk](#)
Subject: Concerns about the proposed By-law
Date: Sunday, September 12, 2021 11:05:37 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Dear Council members

I am writing to voice my objection to the proposed bylaw. As a homeowner it is my responsibility to pay for repairs that are needed to my property. However, it is the responsibility of the Town to maintain the infrastructure of the town, including road, sidewalk and sewage/water treatment maintenance. As a resident of Mahone Bay I already pay extremely high property taxes, every year, to help cover these costs. I am currently paying \$3088 residential tax, \$590 infrastructure tax and (I was quite surprised to see this) a \$462 fire tax.

This proposed bylaw is a tax that would allow the Town to pass its responsibilities off, onto smaller groups that cannot afford to pay yet even more tax. I live on Pleasant Street and we have been lucky enough to have had upgrades to the road, sidewalks, sewer, potable water, and wastewater removal systems. This project was extremely costly and if we had had to cover even a fraction of that cost, on top of what we already pay in taxes, we would likely have had to move out of town. If a hole were to appear in the middle of the street, the cost should not be placed onto the residence of the street, we are already paying our property taxes to cover this.

Respectfully
Kirsty Cousins
Pleasant Street.



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.
www.avast.com

From: [robert hirtle](#)
To: [Town of Mahone Bay Clerk](#)
Subject: Local Improvement Bylaw
Date: Saturday, September 11, 2021 1:00:16 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Dear Maureen:

I am writing to express my concerns over the proposed Local Improvement Bylaw. I consider myself reasonably intelligent but I am having difficulty understanding some of the contents of this document. Am I correct in assuming that costs of upgrades/repairs to sidewalks, sewer/water lines and streets will be charged to the owners of property bordering said street and not out of property taxes paid to the town?

If this is the case, and I believe most of the people I have seen comment on the proposal also understand this to be the intent, then I am dead set against it. I am retired, on a fixed income and cannot afford to pay what I am told could amount to thousands of dollars for each property owner depending on the work carried out.

Our taxes and extra surcharges are high enough.

Robert Hirtle

86 Pine Grove Street

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Tim Arsenault](#)
To: [Town of Mahone Bay Clerk](#)
Subject: Local Improvement Bylaw
Date: Sunday, September 12, 2021 12:53:04 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Mahone Bay Council

I am writing to voice my objection to this proposed bylaw.

In my view, it is a regressive tax allowing the town to shift its responsibilities to a small group of citizens who may, or may not, have the means to bear the financial burden.

We are a small town who have been able to maintain our infrastructure so far through property taxes, with all ratepayers contributing to the maintenance and upgrading of our infrastructure. To change this now, is a boon to those who happen to live in areas where the roads, sidewalks, sewer, potable water, and wastewater removal systems have been upgraded. Not so for those who live on streets with open ditches, or require upgrades to the systems mentioned above. Under this bylaw they will no longer have the benefit of costs being shared amongst all ratepayers. This is an unfair, regressive tax which could place a large unexpected burden on a much smaller group of ratepayers. All of us have shared the burden so far and we should continue to do so.

This is a great small town and we, together, have accomplished great things. It was through all of us working together and sharing burdens that we met and exceeded expectations. This is why I completely support the Town's long term business plan, and believe that by working together and sharing burdens we will continue to be a forerunner amongst Nova Scotia's municipalities. However, maybe we need to revisit the timeframe for reaching these objectives if we can not afford the basics like maintaining infrastructure.

We all need to manage household debt and live within our means whether personally, professionally or at any level of government. Perhaps it's time to rethink the town's business plan with the objective of living within our means, not spending revenues on debt servicing, and pursuing goals that are currently beyond our ability to achieve. This could provide the funds needed to allow the town to continue with what I believe is their responsibility, and what our property taxes are supposed to fund, the maintenance of infrastructure.

This brings me to the two parts of the bylaw that I do agree with. I am in favour of a fee schedule where we pay for "requested" upgrades and maintenance that specifically impacts our personal property, or our neighbourhood. The latter however needs to have stringent limitations placed upon it. Mahone Bay is a financially diverse community, where some may not have the ability to share in paying for requested neighbourhood upgrades. The upgrades must only be approved through a private vote with a unanimous decision by the neighbourhood requesting the upgrade. An unexpected bill of several thousand dollars may not be an issue for many people of this town but for others, it can be devastating. A schedule of fees provides transparency and fairness, which is advantageous to property owners and provides a positive image of the town as a whole. I also have no objection to paying the town for limb removal to protect the power lines on my property or connecting electrical or potable water services and sewer. We recently received an estimate from the town of nearly \$10,000 to connect a new sewer and water line to my property line. This estimate was based upon actual cost to the town. This is a want, not a need, and as such is completely fair. It is unreasonable however for a single street to be responsible to pay for system upgrades or maintenance caused by infrastructure failures or upgrades required to support new property development.

If I have misread the intent of this bylaw it is due to the ambiguity of the document. It does not place any limits on council's ability to develop related policies without public consultation, nor provide a procedure for defence or grievance arbitration. Finally, it doesn't specifically define where the Town's responsibilities begin and end, and when ratepayers must specifically bear the financial burden.

Respectfully submitted to Council for consideration.

Tim Arsenault
57 Longhill Road.
Mahone Bay

James Brunt and Nichole Bush
46 Kinburn St
PO Box 231
Mahone Bay NS
B0J 2E0

September 13, 2021

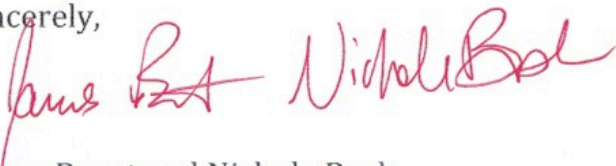
Dear Town of Mahone Bay,

We are concerned homeowners located in the Town of Mahone Bay and wanted to provide feedback on the draft by-law titled "Local Improvement By-Law" dated July 13, 2021.

We realize and respect that Town Council must, from time to time, decide to proceed with local improvement projects that are necessary even if the public opinion is in opposition. Surely, in general, projects that are completed in the Town of Mahone Bay are approved by Town Council and paid for with revenue largely from property tax. However, in this by-law it is suggested that local improvement projects may be paid for by landowners directly according to a specific cost allocation over and above property tax. If this is in fact the intent of the "Local Improvement By-Law", the language needs revision to provide clarity with respect to how decisions to proceed with a project are made. Additionally, details should be given for grievance processes (if any) landowners may use if they oppose the decision being made under the Local Improvement By-Law. Most importantly, is a landowner petition always required for Town Council to proceed with a local improvement?

In the draft, specifically in Section 10 "Administrative Guidelines", there are contradictory points describing a decision making process. Language seems to suggest Town Council may unanimously proceed with a local improvement if deemed necessary without approval by taxpayers / landowners as long as there is a "compelling reason". It mentions that the decision to proceed may be made in response to a landowner petition or via staff recommendation. Therefore a landowner petition may not be pre-requisite for proceeding with a local improvement. Then later in Section 10, the document describes a situation whereby Town Council considers proceeding with a local improvement on the basis of a petition. It suggests that taxpayers, even if they do not support a local improvement but are in the <25% opposition group, may still be subject to unwanted costs. While the document mentions that "charges would be considered only where there is support for the project from adjacent landowners", these costs could be a large financial burden for landowners who are unable to afford land improvement costs. This is especially important when the economy and jobs have not fully recovered from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Expecting landowners to pay for local improvements, that could otherwise be placed into the Town of Mahone Bay's future budget and business plan and prioritized accordingly, is a tough pill to swallow for home and business owners. Another possible solution could be to increase property tax.

Sincerely,



James Brunt and Nichole Bush

From: [Linda Schneidereit](#)
To: [Town of Mahone Bay Clerk](#)
Subject: To: Council, Re: Concerns about the proposed "Local improvement" bylaw
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 11:51:18 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

I am writing to you, before tonight's Council meeting, to express my concerns about the potential effects of the proposed improvement bylaw. I am confident the Council has drafted this bylaw with the best intentions, but I am concerned that, if enacted, the bylaw will shift financial responsibility for certain aspects of town infrastructure onto small groups of citizens who may not have the means to bear the financial burden.

It is my belief that all taxpayers in the town contribute to the maintenance of, and necessary upgrades to, the town infrastructure, for the benefit of all citizens (as well as visitors), by paying property tax.

However, if the proposed bylaw is enacted, then property owners in areas where essential infrastructure (such as roads, potable water, and wastewater removal) are new or have already been upgraded will benefit to the detriment of those in areas where the infrastructure is older and/or needs to be replaced. In other words, the proposed bylaw would impose a large, unexpected, and disproportionate burden on those residents in areas with substandard infrastructure. It is important to remember that it is through no fault of their own that these residents happen to live in areas of the town where necessary repairs or upgrades are required now or in the future.

As a small community, we need to share the cost of maintaining our beautiful town, and not take the path that will lead to a situation of "haves" and "have-nots". If one looks at the school system in the U.S. – where individual schools are funded by local taxpayers, and children in neighbourhoods where residents have more disposable income end up with superior schools – one can easily see what happens when essential services become a commodity based on who has more ability to pay. In my local area, I know of several seniors on fixed incomes who are barely able to meet basic living costs and would not be able to afford to pay for needed infrastructure on top of the property tax they are already paying.

On the other hand, I do support the section of the proposed bylaw concerning having residents pay for "nice to have" improvements. However, it is important to have strict guidelines, e.g., I suggest that, in situations where a proposed improvement affects several properties, all property owners must agree (or the other property owners must agree to carry the cost of the non-participant).

Sincerely,
Linda Schneidereit
26 Shady Lane
Mahone Bay

From: [Michelle Proulx](#)
To: [Town of Mahone Bay Clerk](#)
Subject: New Bylaw
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 11:19:06 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Hello,

I'd like to express my concerns over the new bylaw being proposed regarding how town improvements are charged to residents.

It seems wrong to me that people living in areas needing repair should have to pay for the repairs, given that we all pay taxes to the town already -- is that not the point of the taxes? It puts more financial burden on less improved areas -- and these areas presumably are inhabited by lower income people, given the lower quality of their infrastructure. This bylaw would then, hypothetically, reward the rich for living in better-developed areas, and punish the poor for similar reasons. And that doesn't seem like something the town should be encouraging.

I would be in favour of charging local residents for improvements only if it were not an essential service. For example, if neighbors felt their street was too noisy and wanted to install speed bumps to slow down traffic, that would be a non-essential upgrade that they could all contribute toward. Whereas widening a road to improve the flow of traffic, or installing a "Dead End" sign to prevent drivers from having to back out onto a busy street, would be necessary services, so they would be paid for by all.

Thanks,
Michelle Proulx

From: [marie raymond](#)
To: [Town of Mahone Bay Clerk](#)
Subject: new proposed by-law
Date: Saturday, September 11, 2021 12:16:06 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

To the Mahone Bay Counsellors:

I've read the bylaw in it's entirety and can't be certain that I understand the whole document but, in my mind, if any proposed or requested improvement makes the whole, or any part of the town SAFER, then it should be covered without any additional expense to the taxpayers.

This would include even if a group of residents, for a particular area, requested this *safety* improvement by petition. If the residents' petition was for *aesthetics*, then perhaps the group should pay for it or maybe have access to a cost-share program.

If the improvement makes the whole town more *attractive* or *desirable* or *useful* or *environmentally healthy* or *helpful* to would-be residents or visitors, this improvement should also be covered under the regular taxes with no increase to the residents.

The only time I think full or any support from businesses might be expected, would be if an owner or group, by petition, asks for an improvement in *aesthetics*, or to increase trade, for example, a *business* asks for a sidewalk extension so they can add outdoor seating.

Marie Raymond

P.S. I am not a taxpayer, but these are my thoughts.

9 Cara Lane

From: [Paula](#)
To: [Town of Mahone Bay Clerk](#)
Subject: Letter for the council.
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 9:30:11 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

To the Council

Ref: Local improvement By-Law

I am writing to voice my objection to this proposed Local Improvement By-law.

It is my opinion that this tax will divide our small town. Not all of us can afford to be suddenly lumped with a cost, on top of the taxes we currently pay.

The property taxes we pay are meant to be able to maintain our ongoing infrastructure, this is a fair and equal way forward.

To change this now will divide neighbours who can or are unable to pay.

Will this new bylaw be retro active? As will all past new sidewalks, sewer and water upgrades be billed?

This is a divisive, unfair, tax on people who can ill afford the cost.

The whole concept of everyone paying property tax, is that it is a fair and equal system, on how much your house is assessed at.

I for one, if I had a house on a sidewalk that was upgraded and knew I was paying for it, A) I would make sure the work couldn't be carried out, B) If I couldn't stop it, I would go straight to a lawyer for advice.

However let us look ahead even further! Let's say the sidewalks are done and paid for by the 5 houses that front it. Who's liable for the salting, sanding and snow clearance? The resident or the town? It should be the resident I guess, as they paid for that area. If someone slips and falls? Who's liable the resident or town? This could go on.....and on.....

We all love our town and together we can accomplish great things.....when it is communicated properly!!

This new bylaw that is being advanced is a tax that I can see lots of lawyers getting busy and a huge headache for The town of Mahone Bay.


If the overspend on certain developments has gone over Eg. The Firehall. If the treasurer is saying we have no money, then like other households the town needs to re think some of their plans.

This bylaw has written it in such a way to be unreadable to most people, which really does not sit well with me. It should be a readable comprehensive transcript of a proposed law that can be read by the elderly and the younger generation equally.

I truly think the council does a great job, this tax though will divide neighbours and we are a town of unity. Let's keep it that way please.

I submit this to the council for your kind consideration.

Kindest regards
Paula Griffin
117 Long Hill Road



From: [sabrena.jaswal](#)
To: [Town of Mahone Bay Clerk](#)
Subject: Submission of Comments re: Town of Mahone Bay Local Improvement By-law
Date: Sunday, September 12, 2021 7:02:01 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Dear Council Members

Re: Town of Mahone Bay Local Improvement By-law

I have a number of concerns and queries and am writing to you today to express my strong **objection** to this proposed By-law. In an effort to be clear and efficient I have bulleted and highlighted specific items below:

The Town of Mahone Bay's Financial Situation:

- Why are the existing property tax and utilities not sufficient enough to cover such costings?
- Was a yearly incremental tax/utility increase considered?
- Are the finances in such dire straits that an open ended way to charge residents was deemed the only viable option?
- What cost cutting operations has the local Council employed before proposing this as an option?

There is a real lack of transparency with regards to the current iteration of this proposal, which leads me to my next group of concerns.

Budgets/Capacity

- You as the Council work to a budget, however this proposal makes no mention of how this would work with this By-law -please clarify?
- Will there be a cap on works undertaken and budgets or will this be allowed to spiral out of control?
- How are residents expected to budget for these unknown costs?
- The proposal mentions covering costs of
service provision and shall include but is not limited to costs of study, design, construction, installation and administration, engineering, surveying, Town staff time, and other incidental expenses as well as the costs of financing including bridge financing...

This wording is highly concerning because you are implying that before any works can even begin there is a very real potential that residents are already out thousands of dollars. How will this be managed and how do you justify this?

- This proposal mentions nothing about tendering quotes to procure services, what is your procurement plan?
- If someone in my place of work hands me an invoice for works completed, I get a breakdown of where every penny has been spent. Will residents get this and have the opportunity to challenge this?
- What voice do the residents have in these decisions if they are being asked to pay for something that you as town should be supplying and we as residents are already paying for via our taxes etc.
- Is the entire street involved or just the surrounding lots/PIDS where the works are being done?
- What about streets which may get more wear and tear based on their location?
- What about streets which have already had works done and were paid by the community and/or grants (as it should be)?
- Is there such a desperate need to create this cash grab that the possibility of creating

community divisiveness has not even been considered?

These last few queries along with your wording in Section 10 of the proposal which states:

Council may proceed with a Local Improvement in response to a petition from property owners or in response to a staff recommendation which shows the necessity of the project for improved public health and safety; or that the project is critical to the controlled management of residential or commercial/industrial growth and development or for other such compelling reason as determined by Council

leads to my next set of concerns around the wider implications of such a proposal.

Wider Implications:

- As Section 10 (noted above) stipulates, works may either proceed in response to a petition or staff recommendation. The former clearly has the potential to create hostility amongst neighbours. The latter is concerning because (and forgive me for being blunt but I have worked in many roles, so this query comes from a place of experience) how do we know that repairs will not be unnecessarily done because of the Council's precarious financial situation?
- How will you ensure the health and safety of residents who may decide they will sort out issues on their street themselves rather than being billed by the Council?
- Many residents budget for house emergencies, their taxes etc., but now you are wanting/expecting them to have an endless pot of money to fix the financial issues of this Town's Council- is that correct?
- What will this do to Mahone Bay's reputation and to local businesses who have already suffered tremendously from the pandemic?
- As a resident I have no idea what conditions such infrastructure is in and yet I am being asked to pay these additional costs for its maintenance. When we moved here, we had an inspection on the house not the infrastructure around us- have you thought how this could impact real estate in this area?
- My husband and I moved here approximately 2 months ago. In that time, we have been to nearly every business in Mahone Bay, making sure we are supporting our locals. If all of the sudden residents are paying thousands upon thousands for repairs, do you not see the ripple effect that that this will have on the community and its economy?

I would just like to conclude by reiterating that we are new to Mahone Bay and have felt very welcomed. The one thing I often repeat is that we "chose right" with respect where we have decided to live. However, the lack of communication surrounding this By-law from the Council and the ambiguity and timing of this document has left a really bitter taste in my mouth.

I only came across this proposed By-law last night via social media. Speaking to members of the community today, I am truly surprised and disappointed at how many did not know about this proposal. Something of this magnitude required much better communication from yourselves.

This proposed By-law is incredibly Council-centric with the residents being a mere afterthought. It lists out what the Council wants, needs and demands with little regard for the residents of this town. I find this truly disheartening.

I do hope my concerns and queries along with the concerns and queries of my fellow community members are respectfully considered.

Sincerely,
Sabrena Jaswal
27 Fairmont Street

From: [Timothy Merry](#)
To: [Kelly Redden](#)
Subject: Local Improvement Bylaw
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 9:29:00 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Hi there,

After meeting with Francis Kangata on council it sounds like the intent of the Bylaw is more along the lines of:

“A by law to create an opportunity for town residents to organize together to accelerate improvements to their neighbourhood. This is specifically targeted at areas of town that are not high on the priority list for town of mahone bay infrastructure spending.”

This clarity of intent does not, however, allay many of the concerns with the actually wording of the bylaw itself, that have been identified by other community members.

Thanks

Tim

143 Fairmont Street, Mahone Bay

From: [Cathy Andreu](#)
To: [Town of Mahone Bay Clerk](#)
Subject: Letter of Concern re: Local Improvement By-Law proposal
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 3:02:11 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Members of Town Council,

It has come to our attention that council is proposing a Local Improvement By-Law, which may have a negative financial impact on local residents, who already pay a substantial amount of property tax, which includes an infrastructure charge. We have read through the draft, and we cannot see any way that it would benefit tax-paying homeowners, only the town itself. We will be paying attention to the meeting to see if the fears that many residents have voiced, can be answered and addressed tonight. We would be opposed to any additional personal expense for items that we would expect our personal property taxes to already cover. We would also like to know who brought forth this proposal to begin with.

Regards,

Catherine & Sebastian Andreu
309 Main Street
Mahone Bay

From: [Peter Visser](#)
To: [Town of Mahone Bay Clerk](#)
Subject: Re: Concerns about the proposed "Local improvement" bylaw
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 2:40:46 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

Hello,

I am writing to you, before tonight's Council meeting, to express my concerns about the potential effects of the proposed improvement bylaw. I am confident the Council has drafted this bylaw with the best intentions, but I am concerned that, if enacted, the bylaw will shift financial responsibility for certain aspects of town infrastructure onto small groups of citizens who may not have the means to bear the financial burden.

It is my belief that all taxpayers in the town contribute to the maintenance of, and necessary upgrades to, the town infrastructure, for the benefit of all citizens (as well as visitors), by paying property tax.

However, if the proposed bylaw is enacted, then property owners in areas where essential infrastructure (such as roads, potable water, and wastewater removal) are new or have already been upgraded will benefit to the detriment of those in areas where the infrastructure is older and/or needs to be replaced. In other words, the proposed bylaw would impose a large, unexpected, and disproportionate burden on those residents in areas with substandard infrastructure. It is important to remember that it is through no fault of their own that these residents happen to live in areas of the town where necessary repairs or upgrades are required now or in the future.

As a small community, we need to share the cost of maintaining our beautiful town, and not take the path that will lead to a situation of "haves" and "have-nots". If one looks at the school system in the U.S. – where individual schools are funded by local taxpayers, and children in neighbourhoods where residents have more disposable income end up with superior schools – one can easily see what happens when essential services become a commodity based on who has more ability to pay. In my local area, I know of several seniors on fixed incomes who are barely able to meet basic living costs and would not be able to afford to pay for needed infrastructure on top of the property tax they are already paying.

On the other hand, I do support the section of the proposed bylaw concerning having residents pay for "nice to have" improvements. However, it is important to have strict guidelines, e.g., I suggest that, in situations where a proposed improvement affects several properties, all property owners must agree (or the other property owners must agree to carry the cost of the non-participant).

Sincerely,
Peter Visser
94 Spruce Street
Mahone Bay

From: [rhiannonvisser](#)
To: [Town of Mahone Bay Clerk](#)
Subject: Local Improvement proposed By Law
Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 2:45:29 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

My name is Rhiannon Visser. I live on Spruce Street in Mahone bay. This recent proposed bylaw has been brought to my attention by The Mahone Bay Community Board and fellow neighbours.

My friend has also sent you the below letter but she coined my feelings and sentiments perfectly and I have her permission to send it.

I am writing to you, before tonight's Council meeting, to express my concerns about the potential effects of the proposed improvement bylaw. I am confident the Council has drafted this bylaw with the best intentions, but I am concerned that, if enacted, the bylaw will shift financial responsibility for certain aspects of town infrastructure onto small groups of citizens who may not have the means to bear the financial burden.

It is my belief that all taxpayers in the town contribute to the maintenance of, and necessary upgrades to, the town infrastructure, for the benefit of all citizens (as well as visitors), by paying property tax.

However, if the proposed bylaw is enacted, then property owners in areas where essential infrastructure (such as roads, potable water, and wastewater removal) are new or have already been upgraded will benefit to the detriment of those in areas where the infrastructure is older and/or needs to be replaced. In other words, the proposed bylaw would impose a large, unexpected, and disproportionate burden on those residents in areas with substandard infrastructure. It is important to remember that it is through no fault of their own that these residents happen to live in areas of the town where necessary repairs or upgrades are required now or in the future.

As a small community, we need to share the cost of maintaining our beautiful town, and not take the path that will lead to a situation of "haves" and "have-nots". If one looks at the school system in the U.S. – where individual schools are funded by local taxpayers, and children in neighbourhoods where residents have more disposable income end up with superior schools – one can easily see what happens when essential services become a commodity based on who has more ability to pay. In my local area, I know of several seniors on fixed incomes who are barely able to meet basic living costs and would not be able to afford to pay for needed infrastructure on top of the property tax they are already paying.

On the other hand, I do support the section of the proposed bylaw concerning having residents pay for "nice to have" improvements. However, it is important to have strict guidelines, e.g., I suggest that, in situations where a proposed improvement affects several properties, all property owners must agree (or the other property owners must agree to carry the cost of the non-participant).

Rhiannon Visser
94 Spruce Street

Maureen Hughes

From: Drew Moores [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 5:56 PM
To: Town of Mahone Bay Clerk
Subject: New town by law

CAUTION: This email originated from an external sender.

The below message was written by a friend of mine and I am in full Support of what she has said and her concerns echo my own. Please consider the following argument.

I am confident the Council has drafted this bylaw with the best intentions, but I am concerned that, if enacted, the bylaw will shift financial responsibility for certain aspects of town infrastructure onto small groups of citizens who may not have the means to bear the financial burden.

It is my belief that all taxpayers in the town contribute to the maintenance of, and necessary upgrades to, the town infrastructure, for the benefit of all citizens (as well as visitors), by paying property tax.

However, if the proposed bylaw is enacted, then property owners in areas where essential infrastructure (such as roads, potable water, and wastewater removal) are new or have already been upgraded will benefit to the detriment of those in areas where the infrastructure is older and/or needs to be replaced. In other words, the proposed bylaw would impose a large, unexpected, and disproportionate burden on those residents in areas with substandard infrastructure. It is important to remember that it is through no fault of their own that these residents happen to live in areas of the town where necessary repairs or upgrades are required now or in the future.

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73 Spruce Street