



Subject: *Civic Addressing Bylaw Review*
To: CAO for Planning Advisory Committee, December 10, 2024
Date Prepared: November 28, 2024
Related Motions: N/A
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Approved by: John Woodford, Director of Planning & Development

Summary

Planning & Development staff have reviewed Schedule A of the civic Addressing Bylaw (P-800) with regards to public street and private road naming guidelines and are recommending amendments to the Bylaw. The proposed amendments to Schedule A provide additional guidance to the Civic Addressing Coordinator in determining whether a road name is acceptable.

Financial Impact Statement

There are no immediate financial impacts associated with the adoption of this report.

Recommendation

That first reading be given to Bylaw P-800-2 Civic Addressing Bylaw, a bylaw to amend Bylaw P-800 Civic Addressing Bylaw.

Recommended Motions

The Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Council that Council:

- *Give first reading to Bylaw P-800-2, a bylaw to amend Bylaw P-800 Civic Addressing Bylaw*
- *Move that the Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Council that Council approves that notices related to bylaws may appear on the municipal website and on social media in keeping with updated provincial regulations.*

Background

Schedule A of the Civic Addressing Bylaw contains general principles and guidelines for the Civic Addressing Coordinator to determine what is an acceptable public street or private road name. Staff are recommending additional criteria be added to the Bylaw that would prevent an offensive or distasteful name from being approved.

Discussion

The current Schedule A of the Civic Addressing Bylaw contains the General Principles and Guidelines for naming public streets and private roads. They are listed below:

General Principles

1. Avoid Duplication - There should be no duplication of names, including street names differentiated by a suffix.
2. Avoid Confusion - street names that sound very similar should be avoided in order to avoid diction problems when people are making emergency calls under stress.
3. Establish Continuity - a public street or private road running in one direction should have one name only and should have the same name throughout its entire length.

Guidelines

1. No name shall be duplicated including similar names that are differentiated by street type
2. No street name shall sound like an existing name
3. No street name shall contain numbers, special characters, decimals, hyphens, apostrophes, periods or punctuations of any kind
4. No street names shall incorporate product, trademark or copyright names
5. Street names should be limited to 24 characters

There are no guidelines included in schedule A that the name of a public street or private road name should be inoffensive to the public or “in good taste”. Without this amendment, there is no mechanism for the Civic Addressing Coordinator to reject a submitted name that may be considered to be inappropriate.

Staff have not been in a position where a name that could be viewed as inappropriate has been submitted for consideration. Staff want to mitigate the possibility of that situation by adding the amendment to the Civic Addressing Bylaw, which will add additional criteria for street names.

Jurisdictional Scan

There is a spectrum on which municipalities regulate the naming of public streets and private roads in regard to social acceptability. In some municipalities, there is no requirement that the proposed street name be “in good taste” or free of offensive language. Other examples are as follows:

The provincial road naming policy as well as Pictou County and Antigonish County’s policies include the guideline that a submitted name must be “in good taste”. In Colchester County the road naming policy references the provincial road naming policy.

The Municipality of the District of Yarmouth’s Street Naming Policy includes the guideline “not to be offensive to the public and/or pose a safety concern”.

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's Municipal Street Naming policy goes into greater detail. Their policy has a section "Names to Avoid" which has the following criteria:

1. Names that could be construed as advertising a particular business; and,
2. Cumbersome, corrupted, modified names, discriminatory or derogatory names from the point of view of race, sex, colour, creed, political affiliation or other social factors; and,
3. Names with any sexual overtones, inappropriate humour, parody, slang or double meaning; and
4. Names that have a secondary negative or offensive connotation

Staff recommend an amendment to the bylaw that falls between the guideline for a name to simply be "in good taste", and the detail that Niagara-on-the-Lake has would be appropriate.

Staff also recommend a guideline that will align Schedule A of the Civic Addressing Bylaw with Parks, Recreation and Culture's guidelines for naming public parks under their Park Naming Policy. This would prevent a full given name and surname from being used as a public street or private road name.

The proposed amendments are as follows (green text is proposed text and red strikethrough text is proposed to be removed):

Proposed Schedule A:

Guidelines

Street Name Characteristics

- A1. No name shall be duplicated including similar names that are differentiated by street type
- A2. No street name shall sound like an existing name
- A3. No street name shall contain numbers, special characters, decimals, hyphens, apostrophes, periods or punctuations of any kind
- A4. No street names shall incorporate product, trademark or copyright names
- A5. Street names should be limited to 24 characters
- A6. No street name shall be discriminatory or derogatory, or have a negative or offensive connotation.
- A7. No street name shall be a personal name such as a combination of given name and surname.

Staff have noted an error in subsection 8.1.c of the Civic Addressing Bylaw, where it references subsection 8.1.2. This subsection does not exist and should be notated as subsection 8.1.b. An amendment is proposed as follows:

Proposed subsection 8.1.c

(c) where permission is obtained in accordance with subsection ~~(8.1.2)~~ (8.1.b), erect, maintain in good condition, and replace as necessary, a sign and signpost at the intersection of the private road and the public street in a manner consistent with any conditions attached to such permission and other lawful requirements, and, except to the extent of any inconsistency with such conditions or other lawful requirements, in accordance with the following standards:

- i) lettering of the private road name to be no less than 100 millimetres (4 inches) in height, in Helvetica font style and in upper case characters;
- ii) lettering to be in black against a white background with a black border of 25 millimetres (1 inch) in width;
- iii) bottom of the lettering to measure at least 1.2 metres (48 inches) above grade;

iv) signpost to be made of pressure treated lumber or rigid non-ferrous metal and sufficiently fastened to the ground to hold the sign rigidly in place and to prevent turning of the sign in the wind;

v) to the extent possible, the signpost is to be located in an unobstructed line of sight for vehicles approaching the private road from either direction along the public street and to be set back a minimum of 3.5 metres (12 feet) from the traveled portion of the public street.

Policy Considerations

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The 2021-2024 East Hants Strategic Plan identifies Integrity and Respect as two of the Core Values which guide how employees serve the community.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The legislative authority to create planning policies and regulations relating to Bylaws is set out in the Municipal Government Act (MGA), Section 172(1).

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial considerations related to the proposed changes to the bylaw.

Conclusion

Staff propose amendments Schedule A of the Civic Addressing Bylaw which will provide additional criteria for the Civic Addressing Coordinator in determining whether to accept or reject a proposed public street or private road name. The amendment will also align the Civic Addressing Bylaw's naming guidelines with Parks, Recreation & Culture's guidelines for naming public parks. Staff also propose a housekeeping amendment to 8.1.c.

Attachments

- Appendix A - Draft amended Civic Addressing Bylaw