



May 4, 2021

Mayor Bill Mills  
Truro Town Council  
695 Prince Street  
Truro, NS  
B2N 1G5

**RE: Support for development in Truro**

Dear Mayor Bill Mills,

In January 2021, Mr. Ron Smith, former President of the Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce wrote your council to express his pleasure with the development interest the Town of Truro has received of late. The prospect of increasing the housing inventory to fill the much-needed demand while working toward increasing population to fill labour needs and stimulating economic activity for the region are all viewed as positives for promoting development.

Over the past couple months, we have observed with interest a variety of applications navigate through the development agreement process. We must share how impressed we are with the Town staff who have guided council, planning committee members and the applicants, conveying town development policies and community feedback to allow the greatest opportunity for acceptance.

Developers are business people. They establish conceptual plans for development based on the defined conditions set by the governing agency, in this case the Town of Truro. Land-use planning and zoning have provided past, current and future councils the tools to ensure lands are developed in a responsible and planned manner. These conditions set the foundation for welcoming business; allowing for the business case to be established and the expectations known, while upholding the standards the town has established.

As an observer of the Planning Advisory Committee meetings and public hearings, the proponents have been very patient and accommodating to council and committee recommendations. While feedback is important, it is also paramount that emotions remain in check and the process defined and responsive.

Two applications presently before council have raised considerable concern and debate among residents and council. The height and/or location, related to “compatibility,” of these proposed developments are getting pushback because it is not what the community is used to. Despite staff recommendations to approve, one application was turned down by the Planning Advisory Committee voting to not recommend the project. These roadblocks are becoming evident to those wishing to invest, potentially tarnishing the reputation of Truro while contributing to future hesitation of developers.

The town is at an important juncture in deciding its future. The question can be asked: Do we want to continue living in the shadows of our neighbours in HRM? It is vitally important that the value of property tax dollars, that fund town services, are being considered within the decisions of a six-person council and not put at risk.



As the voice of the business community, representing more than 450 businesses across many sectors, our members are challenged to find labour which is compounded by the lack of available housing. There is no question that new developments will add to our economy by providing jobs in the construction phases, increasing the tax base and ultimately would provide new accommodations desperately needed in this region.

We support the interests of developers to fill the void and have confidence in the Town to approve and deliver to the standards they have set. We cannot afford to lose these important opportunities. The tax base is stagnant. Residents and businesses cannot continue to be faced with the prospect of rising tax rates as we work to rebound from the deep impacts of a global pandemic.

Very sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sherry Martell". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Sherry Martell  
Executive Director  
Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce

CC: Mike Dolter, CAO Town of Truro  
Stephen Johnson, Chairman of the Truro Planning Advisory Committee