

No problem, Kevin;

I should say that I expressed my concern in writing about the loss of trees in the Lafford development downtown, when I couldn't make the public hearings. I also talked with Ms Mitton, while she was councillor, about a tree by-law (replacing lost trees). And I have already talked to some staff and councillors, over the last years, about the importance of maintaining tree cover in and around Sackville, and improving tree cover to reduce flood risk. I come at this from two directions: one, because maintaining biodiversity in communities is essential. That includes reducing asphalted surface in favor of permeable surfaces, more trees, more green spaces that are not lawns.

I also come at it from the role trees and green spaces play in addressing the impacts from climate change. Trees reduce heat islands in towns and cities, contribute to water retention, and slow down rain as it hits the ground, and thus they help reduce the eroding impacts from heavy rainfall events.

I think a few things are needed and easy to do:

1. a by-law that requires the replacement of any lost trees in developments (or if lost to disease)
2. a plan to increase green spaces and tree cover (urban forestry plan, such as Halifax Regional Municipality has one), and in general a long-term management approach to both in light of climate change impacts such as flooding; but it is important that any tree planting includes considerations for species that will do well as the climate warms.
3. - which should be # 1, education about the role of trees and green spaces.

All three are fairly straight forward. And of course, with that, either a commitment to raise funding for yearly work, or set aside a certain amount each year in the Town's own budget.

Thanks for those questions! They are useful, and positive.

Sabine