

2003: The Year in Review

HF - Development

As 2004 dawns, future looks bright for Riverview

Town emerges from what will likely be a record year for construction starts

By CHARLES PERRY TIMES & TRANSCRIPT STAFF

Early in 2003, the Town of Riverview flirted briefly with the idea of seeking city status, following in the footsteps of its neighbour Dieppe which had become a city on Jan. 1.

However, at a Feb. 10 council meeting, the councillors rejected the notion after being swayed by two important factors — a lack of interest in the idea by the Riverview public and the additional financial cost it would mean for the municipality.

Citing the proposed east-west corridor road, a new water tower to be built on the west end of town and the new fire station, Ward 2 Coun. Bill McBeath noted there are a lot of other areas where the municipality can better spend its money.

As the new year begins, the still-Town of Riverview has made progress in all three objectives mentioned by McBeath and in many other areas, leaving room for high hopes for the Albert County community's future throughout 2004.

"I am very optimistic where the town is heading," Deputy Mayor Charles Broderick said in a recent interview.

He said the town has included in

its 2004 capital budget funding for construction of both the new fire station (\$3 million), to be built in Findlay Park at the corner of Pine Glen and Pinewood Roads, and the new water tower (\$4 million) to be located in the west end of town.

Broderick said the new tower will provide "decent water pressure" for the southern part of the town beyond the Mill Creek drainage area and open it up to development.

The deputy mayor said another step was taken this year toward the creation of the east-west corridor which is designed to alleviate the traffic congestion on Coverdale Road and open up a second major thoroughfare through the town. He said the municipality has to keep setting aside funds for the project until a federal-provincial agreement can be reached to construct the first phase.

This would cover the loop joining the new Petitecodiac River Crossing with Findlay Boulevard and the causeway. In 2003, the town completed legal and survey design work for the loop.

Brenda Orchard, economic planning officer for Riverview, said the town will complete the survey for the west loop for the corridor, which will link Findlay Boulevard (behind Callowhill Road) to Coverdale Road (out past Royal Court).

"We have made an Infrastructure Application and are looking for funding assistance from the province and the federal government," she said. "The town is putting money aside every year in our

Quick facts

Subdivision growth in the past year in Riverview, from east to west, at all price ranges (upscale, starter bungalow and miihome):

- Greys Brook — Upscale lots.
- McAllister Park — Upscale lots.
- Riverview West — bungalows.
- Cross Creek Minihome Park — Good sales figures in 2003.
- Golf Course Community (Clayton Developments of Halifax) — Work progressed on subdivision approval and engineering for the new subdivision. Lots will be ready this year.

budget to fund the project. It is critical to the future growth of our community."

Orchard said the construction of the new fire station this year is long overdue and will bring three major benefits for the community. "First, it is a great addition for Findlay Park, secondly, it is a better location for the fire department in terms of emergency response, and finally, it frees up prime property for development, located on Coverdale Road right on the Riverview front Park.

She said the town will most likely issue a "request for proposals" for the old fire hall property once the department has moved to the new Findlay Park site.

Orchard said the municipality is on its way to its biggest-ever year for construction starts. Along with major commercial projects like the

expansion of the Sobeys Store on Coverdale Road and erection of a new liquor store in front of Riverview Mall, she said 2003 residential development was strong and all indications this should continue into 2004.

In early April, a major residential subdivision will be launched, integrated with the Moncton Golf and Country Club and developed by Clayton Developments Ltd. of Halifax. It will comprise 187 residential lots, 163 of which will accommodate single family dwellings.

The lots will be created on the 63-acre (25-hectare) property, which stretches from the southern tip of the 18-hole golf course to the planned location of the east-west corridor. Most of the houses will be large upscale homes, but some of the lots will be used for small, two-bedroom bungalows that will back up against the golf club and the adjacent McAllister Park subdivision.

The remaining 24 units will be for townhouses that will be built in a cluster in the cul-de-sac where the proposed east-west corridor will run.

"I am proud to be working with Clayton Developments Ltd.," said Orchard.

"The company has an excellent reputation in the Halifax area," she said, noting construction is expected to proceed in the early spring.

A project announced late in 2003 — which the economic development officer describes as a "tre-

mendous development for Riverview and a perfect fit for the residential nature of the neighbourhood" — is the creation of the Chocolate River Conservatory of Music, which will be the centerpiece for a \$2-million complex.

It will be located on the Dobson Estates property at the northeast corner of Findlay Boulevard and Whitepine Road, with Juergen Welland serving as its managing director and his wife Melody Dobson as its artistic director. If their request is approved to have the property rezoned to CC Central Commercial from R1 Residential, Dobson said the conservatory could be up and ready by this fall.

The conservatory will provide an accessible, comprehensive program of musical instruction for both the English and French-speaking communities in Metro Moncton, said Welland. He said interested students may also register for annual examinations by the Royal Conservatory of Music or L'École Préparatoire de Musique de l'Université de Moncton.

Orchard said 2003 saw the Riverview Business Improvement Corporation change its name to the Downtown Riverview Business Association. The association is now embarking on a "re-branding and new image exercise," she said, adding the new image will be ready and announced this month.

In 2003, the town lost its two-term mayor Bruce Fitch, who stepped down after running successfully in the Riverview seat in the provincial election in June. He is currently the energy minister.