

Friday July 18, 2025

To: **Honourable Colton LeBlanc**, Minister of Growth and Development, Nova Scotia;
Melissa Eavis, HRM, Lead Planner for the Sandy Lake SPA

cc: **Mayor Andy Filmore**, Halifax, N.S.; **Richard Butts**, President **Clayton Developments Ltd**, Halifax; **John Haseltine**, Senior Planner at **Stantec Consultants Ltd**; **Sandy Lake Conservation Association**, Bedford, NS;

cc: **Honourable Tim Halman**, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Nova Scotia;
Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee, HRM; **Halifax Regional Councillors**.

From: **David Patriquin**, Prof. of Biology, Dalhousie University (retired)

Topic: **Comments on Stantec's Community Studies for Sandy Lake (a Future Serviced Community): Significant omissions & misinterpretation of data related to the water quality of Sandy Lake**

Dear Minister LeBlanc, Melissa Eavis

I am writing in regard to the **Stantec Community Studies for the Sandy Lake Special Planning Area**, released to the public On May 16, 2025.

Minister LeBlanc, it is my understanding that you/the NS government have the final say in matters related to the Future Service Communities in HRM. I appreciate your government's and HRM's efforts to evaluate environmental concerns via the Stantec Community studies, and your reassurances that mitigation efforts "will be looked at and that "Nova Scotians take great pride in our environment and our government ... would not do anything to jeopardize our environment."

I have just recently learned, Melissa, that you are the "Lead Planner for the Sandy Lake SPA and will be managing the project through the comprehensive planning process."

Reading Stantec's Summary, Watershed and LSA reports for the Sandy Lake Special Planning Area, I was dismayed, actually shocked, to see that a large set of observations (data)* pertaining to the current state of Sandy Lake that I shared and discussed with Stantec was not made use of in these reports.

*I conducted these observations as a voluntary activity with the help of 3 volunteers from the Sandy Lake Conservation Society over the period 2017-2024 and ongoing in 2025. Beginning in August of 2022, some of the sampling was conducted in collaboration with the Halifax LakeWatchers program.

As well I brought to Stantec's attention related observations that were conducted completely independently and as part of a more formal scientific study; those likewise were not made use of in the Stantec reports. Even in regard to Stantec's own observations on Sandy Lake in 2023 and their interpretation of those data and of the historical data they did consider, there are significant interpretation errors and deficiencies.

These "missing data" and related comments, outlined in detail in the attached documents, are highly pertinent to the state of Sandy Lake and how it responds to development and related mitigative actions. For a brief read, the essentials are given in Section 1: Introduction/Overview, pp 3-5 of the attached Comments document.

I am appealing to you, Minister LeBlanc, that the missing data and related comments and concerns be appropriately considered - not that they be accepted necessarily, but that they be properly vetted e.g. by asking an independent authority to review the observations and comments and the Stantec Reports and to make recommendations accordingly.

I would hope that the secondary planning process could be put on hold pending the outcome of such a review.

Regardless, I bring the missing data to your attention and of Melissa Eavis, HRM Lead Planner for the Sandy Lake SPA and of others who may be involved in making decisions related to the Sandy Lake development and the secondary planning process.

I appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

David Patriquin

Professor of Biology, Dalhousie University (retired)

Attached:

- PatriquinSandyLakeComments18Jul2025.pdf (31XX pages, 1.8 MB)
- PatriquinSandyLakeNotes18Jul2025.pdf (33 pages, 2.4 MB)

These documents are also available at www.versicolor.ca/sdocs