

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**

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**URBAN DESIGN TASK FORCE**

**MINUTES**  
**August 2, 2006**

**PRESENT:**

Clarence Butler  
Margot Young  
Paul MacKinnon  
Dale Godsoe  
Geoff Keddy  
Cathy Carmody  
Bernie Smith  
Linda Garber  
Kendall Taylor  
William Hyde  
Councillor Sloane

**REGRETS:**

Paul Shakotko  
Kevin Riles  
David Garrett

**STAFF:**

Andy Filmore, Capital District Urban Design Project Manager  
Stephanie Parsons, Legislative Assistant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Councillor Sloane, Acting Chair called the meeting to order at 12:09 p.m.

She advised that at the next meeting the Task Force will conduct the election of Chair and Vice Chair.

**2. INTRODUCTIONS**

At this time the Task Force proceeded with a roundtable of introductions.

**3. OVERVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- A copy of the Urban Design Task Force Terms of Reference was before the Task Force
- An information report submitted to Regional Council dated July 19, 2006 entitled Update Regional Centre Urban Design Plan was circulated to the Task Force

Mr. Andy Filmore, Project Manager provided an overview of the Terms of Reference approved by Regional Council on May 1, 2006.

**4. REGIONAL CENTRE URBAN DESIGN STUDY**

**4.1 Scope, Objectives and Overview**

Mr. Filmore introduced Ms. Jennifer Kessmaat, Consultant, Office for Urbanism, who provided an overview of the study.

Ms. Kessmaat advised of the following:

- The purpose of the study is to assist with the implementation of the Regional Plan,
- The study will deal with the nature, intensity and quality of development and provides physical form to the Regional Plan,
- The scope of the study includes changes to policies, bylaws, community plans, public improvements, capital district boundaries, and incentives to the private sector for design,
- The study includes six phases over 18 months.

#### 4.2. Identifying Issues and Priorities

Ms. Kessemat advised that the process is centered on Urban Design Forums which includes the following topics:

- Site and existing conditions analysis,
- Principles vision and infrastructure plan,
- Infill case studies and guidelines,
- Opportunity sites,

A discussion ensued regarding the dates proposed by Ms. Kessmaat for meetings, public forums and the Council presentation.

Councillor Sloane, Acting Chair, advised that September 12, 2006 is a Regional Council meeting day and that Councillors would not be available to attend the forum. She further recommended that the first forum not be held on Monday September 11, 2006 until a presentation is made to Regional Council.

The Acting Chair requested that when scheduling events and meetings to check with the Legislative Assistant to see what is on the Clerk's calendar.

Ms. Young recommended that Downtown Dartmouth have its own forum as it has its own vision which is different from Halifax, which cannot be overshadowed over the vision of Downtown Halifax.

Ms. Kessmaat lead a roundtable on what each member considered opportunities and constraints.

#### Constraints

- Working on how developers can preserve heritage,
- Timelines
- Ensuring that the recommendations can be implemented,
- Engaging Council and the public, there have been a lot of studies and meetings, people are getting tired and only come out when they are angry,
- People do not have clear ideas on how to materialize implementation,
- Changing the existing mindset,
- Changing existing legislation, existing design criteria - does not line up (Utility and Review Board decisions are an issue, cost everyone money) there is a need to look at the broader picture when it comes to development issues, not look at a particular building because by the time the matter gets to the UARB it is to late,

- As of right building permits,
- Sustainability,
- Bleeding of population to suburbs,
- The decentralized component of the Regional Plan will not move people into the downtown core,
- Inadequate transit.

#### Opportunities

- Building trust,
- Bringing people into the downtown core (also a constraint),
- Bringing together diversity (also a constraint in getting a diverse cross section of the population involved),
- Plan something that can be progressive.

#### Key issue

Determining if Halifax wants to be a historic or modern city. The infrastructure needs to coincide with the vision that is determined.

### **4.3 Generating Ideas for Distinct Project Identity**

The Consultant presented a draft project brand for the Task Force Consideration “HRM - Centre by Design”

A discussion ensued regarding the use of the words Halifax and Dartmouth. It was noted that Halifax Regional Municipality is a form of government that Halifax and Dartmouth are two distinct areas with their own identity.

### **4.4 Wrap Up and Next Steps**

The Acting Chair requested that the members give consideration to the position of Chair and Vice Chair. She advised the members to contact the Legislative Assistant if they have any concerns, questions, or documents to be circulated.

## **5. NEXT MEETING DATE**

To coincide with the Consultants schedule the Committee agreed to meet on Monday September 11 at 9:30 a.m.

**MOVED by Mr. Butler, seconded by Mr. Keddy that the Urban Design Task Force regular meeting scheduled be established for the first Wednesday of the month**

from 12:00-2:00 p.m. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

6. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Stephanie Parsons  
Legislative Assistant