

REGIONAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES

June 23, 2010

- PRESENT: Mr. Fred Morley, Chair  
Councillor David Hendsbee, Vice-Chair  
Mr. William Book  
Mr. Floyd Dykeman  
Ms. Margo Grant  
Ms. Christina MacLeod  
Mr. Sam Metlej  
Ms. Cheryl Newcombe  
Ms. Carole Pelletier  
Mr. Paul Pettipas  
Councillor Peter Lund  
Councillor Gloria McCluskey
- REGRETS: Ms. Talia D'Alessio  
Mr. Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
- STAFF: Mr. Austin French, Manager, Community Development  
Mr. Paul Morgan, Planner, Community Development  
Mr. Roger Wells, Supervisor of Regional and Community  
Planning  
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Fred Morley, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m. in the Conrad Room, Findlay Community Centre, 26 Elliot Street, Dartmouth.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - March 17<sup>th</sup> & May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

**MOVED by Councillor Lund, seconded by Mr. Pettipas, that the minutes of March 17<sup>th</sup> and May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010, as presented, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

Delete: Item 7.1 Transportation Demand Management Functional Plan deferred to the July meeting.

Addition: Two additional speakers will be heard under 7.2.1: Mr. Tom Swanson and Mr. Allan Rodgers.

The agenda, as amended, was approved.

**4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - NONE**

**5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - NONE**

**6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS - NONE**

**7. REPORTS**

**7.1 Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Functional Plan**

This matter was deferred to the July meeting during the approval of the agenda.

In response to a question from Mr. Paul Pettipas, Mr. Roger Wells advised that costing and budget implications would be available at the July meeting in regard to the Transportation Demand Management matter.

**7.2 Project 01341: Cost of Servicing Study and Requests to Initiate Secondary Planning Strategies (Community Plan Amendment Requests)**

- A Supplementary Staff report dated June 10, 2010 was before the Committee.

A written submission from Ms. Mary Ann McGrath was before the Committee for consideration.

Mr. Morley introduced Mr. Austin French, Manager, Planning Services, Community Development. Mr. French gave a brief background/overview of the Cost of Servicing Study.

Ms. Carole Pelletier entered the meeting at 2:10 p.m.

In response to a request for clarification by Mr. Paul Pettipas on whether or not there have been changes in the way the provincial 100 series highways were treated/costed, staff provided the following information:

- 100 series highways belong to the province, however, it was not uncommon for HRM and Developers to contribute to the cost of interchanges or improvements to 100 series highways
- the Supplementary Staff Report, dated June 10, 2010, contains a letter from Mr. Phil Corkum, Manager, Highway Planning and Design, Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, in regard to funding of 100 series upgrading work

Mr. Floyd Dykeman and Mr. Sam Metlej entered the meeting at 2:17 p.m.

- the province has made it clear to HRM that they are expected to cost share for projects such as widening the sections of road between two interchanges.

Mr. Paul Morgan, Planner, presented the Supplementary Staff report. He explained that staff are recommending not to proceed, at this time, with the three requests for Secondary Planning Strategies. He also noted that the province of Nova Scotia is developing new guidelines in regard to a Wastewater Strategy that will require review in relation to the Wastewater Management Functional Plan (WMFP). The WMFP should be completed within two years.

Staff responded to questions of clarification from members of the Committee providing the following additional information:

- when CBCL Consultants did the Wastewater Study for the area they were not aware of the proposed changes to the provincial guidelines or their ramification(s), therefore, there is a lot of uncertainty until the Regional Wastewater Functional Management Plan is complete

- if the provincial guidelines are too extreme, it could be expensive for development
- Halifax Water, a regulated utility, will face significant expenditures to improve/upgrade the existing system; the impact to their financial capacity requires approval by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board
- C the Regional Plan will form the basis of the Regional Wastewater Functional Management Plan and will be in context with the Canada Council of Minister of Environment (CCME) guidelines
- the existing system can deal with the increased capacity
- Halifax Water will outline where additional infrastructure would be required and provide direction on how to move forward in new development areas
- the CCME guidelines will not force HRM to separate the wastewater systems. If there is a combined sewer that overflows, Halifax Water will develop the system to ensure that the overflows do not get worse and that the impact down stream be mitigated
- developments that would be built out over twenty-five to thirty years are recommended to be done in stages, therefore; changes could be made at certain stages if guidelines were radically different
- it is important to complete the study to ensure development will not cause deterioration of Paper Mill Lake or Kearney Lake
- water quality protection is the priority
- HRM is not obligated to purchase the privately owned property for park land as the legal interpretation is that the land is not designated park land.
- The Regional Plan notes that HRM hopes to acquire a park; the community would also like to see the park acquired by HRM over time.

Mr. Pettipas noted that he has read comments that some land owners are actually calling the area park land and do not see that the area is part of a “wish list”. He noted that there was a very subtle difference between “designated” and “regulated”. The private land owners are being told they cannot do this/that, however; they still have rights to those lands. It is very important to know what part of the land is going to be developed and what part is needed for park land.

Staff further responded to questions from Members of the Committee as follows:

- C the six or seven areas in the Regional Plan designated as Urban Settlement are thought to be required for development by the year 2025; the six areas designated Urban Reserve were not thought to be required for development until at least 2026
- C the estimated cost for transportation issues is difficult to determine as the province will look to the municipalities due to their fiscal constraints

- C in addition to the designated growth areas in the Regional Plan, there are opportunities for development throughout the municipality such as Regional Council's recent approval for a high-rise development on the Bedford Highway
- C in regard to sewer/water capacity, using the low estimates there is capacity for the next 42 years; using the high estimates there is capacity for 20 to 28 years
- C in regard to HRM's ability to obtain density in the form they want, the suburbs are no longer just single family dwellings as more apartment buildings are being constructed
- C wetland conservation/sustainability is part of the HRM subdivision approval process; consideration will be given to the upcoming changes to the provincial wetland regulations
- C there will be plenty of developable land over the next 15 to 25 years on the Halifax side but not as much on the Dartmouth side.

Mr. French explained that the major growth area in Dartmouth was to be the Morris Russell Lake area as it was close to the Woodside Ferry and the Burnside Business Park. The mixed use plan for the area provided opportunities for affordable housing. The Morris Russell Lake plan would also address the most significant traffic capacity issue which is Portland Street. Due to the removal of the Shearwater lands, that development will not continue at this time, however; if a road were permitted to be built across the Shearwater Lands it would open up lands in Colby South, and other areas, for development. HRM owes it to the community to complete the option started in this area prior to considering Port Wallis due to investments already made such as the interchange at Mount Hope Avenue.

Ms. Cheryl Newcombe entered the meeting at 2:59 p.m.

Mr. Morley thanked staff for their presentation.

### **7.2.1 DELEGATIONS**

Mr. Morley explained the process for presentations then called the first Presenter forward.

#### **(I) Mr. Nick Pryce, Senior Planner, Terrain Group**

Mr. Pryce explained that Terrain Group made a formal application in 2007 to initiate the Secondary Planning Strategy (SPS) process for the Sandy Lake area. Of the four urban areas considered for SPS's in the Regional Plan, one has already been implemented and the other three are being presented today for the Committee's consideration. Terrain Group would like to commence the SPS while the Wastewater Management

Functional Plan is underway in order to better understand what can happen on the lands and create a planning system that will respond to the current issues. The planning process includes engaging the public to determine what they want to see in regard to commercial, residential and mixed uses and that information would then enable more detail of the planning framework rather than assumptions.

Consideration is being given to oversizing the wastewater infrastructure for the Bedford West area to accommodate future flow from the Sandy Lake development as that is the cost effective approach. Commencing the SPSs now could enable HRM to recover their costs sooner. The process would span over a long time with the first step being to initiate the watershed study, then a visioning exercise, and then the creation of a Committee to establish the policies creating the vision followed by a Development Agreement.

Mr. Pryce proposed that commencing the Watershed Studies for the three areas at the same time would also be a cost saving; rather than having three separate Requests for Proposals (RFP's) they could be integrated and done as one. He suggested that something innovative and creative be done as employment would be created as well as providing residents a choice in housing and affordability options. Terrain Group is requesting, three years later, to be able to start the planning process.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee, Mr. Pryce provided the following information:

- C in regard to housing affordability, the Sandy Lake development will provide a choice from moving downtown as the cost of downtown is higher than the suburban areas
- C innovative ways of treating wastewater, such as the Membrane Bioreactor Treatment System (MBR) used in a Bridgewater area development, will be considered for incorporation into future developments

In response to a question from Councillor McCluskey, Mr. Jamie Hannam, Director of Engineering, Halifax Water, explained that if there were a designated development approved in the Sandy Lake area, the Capital Cost Contribution would be necessary to cover the costs. Halifax Water would pay up front and then the Developer would provide payment through a Capital Cost Contribution that would first be reviewed/approved by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board. The process is for Halifax Water to do a master plan for a Council approved planning area.

Staff provided the following information in response to questions from Members of the committee:

- C Capital Cost Contributions would not be a huge lumpsum payment as development would be in phases over the next few years

- C HRM would cover the cost for Watershed Studies with the intention being to determine how development could/should proceed at the least cost
- C having Developers pay for Watershed Studies is not recommended due to the issue of credibility that arose during the Morris Russell Lake process
- C HRM staff time is not included in the Capital Cost Contribution amounts.

Mr. Pryce explained that Armco Capital, in an effort to find a solution to the issues of concern for the municipal fiscal health and staff resources/time, is offering to help with the costs by offering funding up front for the Watershed Study.

Mr. Pettipas commented that he did not see a problem with a Developer contributing toward a Watershed Study if HRM hired the Consultant and handled the process then billed the Developer. The best intent is to satisfy the home purchaser who is the one who will ultimately pay.

Ms. Margo Grant expressed concern that the public would not accept Developers paying for Watershed Studies.

Mr. Pryce noted that the Wastewater Management Functional Plan was underway by Halifax Water and there were other questions that necessitate the process commencing now in order for Armco Capital to be better informed. Obtaining answers to the questions would be for the betterment of all. Good planning would include engaging the community to obtain their vision for the area as well as creating a range for the number of units required for the Sandy Lake development. The actual development could be five years down the road.

Mr. French explained that the Watershed Studies come before the planning process and the planning process only commences upon Regional Council's approval. Under the Regional Plan, the process proposed is to first do the Watershed Study then the Community Visioning Exercise and then the Planning Process. Some believe that the Watershed Study is the first step in the planning process but that is not the case and would not guarantee the commencement of the planning process. HRM is hesitant to accept funding from a Developer for a Watershed Study as HRM does not want to raise expectations or create confusion in regard to any potential/future development.

Mr. Morley thanked Mr. Pryce for his comments.

**(II) Mr. Chris Lowe, Birchdale Properties, Annapolis Group**

Mr. Chris Lowe, President of Birchdale Projects Inc, representing key property owners in the Highway 102 West Corridor area, explained why the request for the Secondary Planning Strategy (SPS) for the Highway 102 West Corridor area was being presented at this time. Highlights of his presentation are as follows:



- C the Highway 102 West Corridor lands are designated Urban Service under the Regional Plan and there are portions that are under consideration for possible acquisition for the proposed Regional Park.
- C discussions with HRM Staff, to ensure the interests of private property owners are protected and the broader community vision is incorporated, have been ongoing since 2009
- C it is necessary to start the SPS for the entire area, including the future parkland designation, in order to incorporate various land uses as part of the Master Plan
- C the parkland, located behind the Birchdale properties, should not be considered in isolation as the Regional Plan requires effective integration with other uses
- C Birchdale is recommending a two phased approach as follows:
  - C Phase 1 to occur in 2010/11 with the determination of the parkland and baseline/background information studies
  - C Phase 2 would be to commence the Secondary Planning Process in 2011; it could take several years to complete
- C an Independent Facilitator would be engaged to determine if any private lands could be acquired for public park land with the findings being reported within six months of the facilitation process following which, negotiations would commence in regard to what lands would be removed from the Birchdale application
- C once the park land negotiations are complete, Birchdale requests that the SPS be permitted to commence for the remaining land as the process would take several years and include extensive public consultation.
- C Birchdale recommends a time line of one year for the negotiations for the park land and that the negotiations be linked to the SPS so that all parties involved have the potential to compromise and consult in regard to the park land.

In conclusion, Mr. Lowe expressed concern that people were currently trespassing across their property, which contains an active quarry, to access the Provincially designated Wilderness Area located immediately behind the Birchdale properties. The private quarry has been in existence since the 1960's and the Owner wants to know if it will be decommissioned. He noted that discussions with HRM staff in regard to the park land study have been positive. All lakes in the area are due to a system of private dams owned by private interest. It is hoped that once the park land designation is completed the SPS would commence.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Lowe explained that the Watershed Study is not considered necessary in determining the designated park land area as there would be no development in the areas designated park land. The intent is to have a large portion of the land used as park land with the remaining lands considered for

development, therefore; in the interest of the community, the park land should be considered first.

In response to a query by Councillor Hendsbee in regard to riparian buffers for land development, Mr. Peter Bigelow explained that HRM's approach was to consider the water quality for the entire area rather than simply considering designating park land as recreational areas. Part of the purpose of protecting the park land is in consideration of the water quality, therefore; the watershed analysis has to be conducted first.

Mr. Lowe provided the following additional information in response to questions from Members of the Committee:

- C it is difficult for Birchdale to enter into negotiations (for park land) when they are essentially being required to give away their land without knowing what they will receive for it
- C there is concern that in negotiating the park land, Birchdale could negotiate themselves out of any other uses for the land and there is currently an active quarry involved
- C the issue of utilizing an Independent Facilitator is a charged issue, however; it is recognized that private information could be shared with an independent Facilitator that would not be circulated beyond that point
- C the park land has to be negotiated so that they may move forward with the SPS
- C plans for the development area are:
  - C to encourage national and international commercial uses in the Bayers Lake Business Park extension portion
  - C consideration for some residential development behind the commercial portion with most of the area being park land
  - C possible decommissioning of the quarry
- C if Phase 2 (Secondary Planning Process) were not approved to move forward, it would be difficult for Birchdale to commence facilitation for the park land as most of the land under consideration for removal belongs to one property owner and the other property owners may obtain huge commercial leases while that property owner, and potentially others, could be left with nothing
- C the arbitrary circle drawn on the map was done in 1996 as part of the Environmental Assessment by Porter Dillon Consultants. The Porter Dillon report had a circular layout with three entrances to the site. The initial phase would be through the Parkland Drive area with over 90% of the cost being covered by Birchdale for road infrastructure and the land brought forward in a market respectable manner
- C there will be a market within ten years for this Business Park and Birchdale wants to be ready.

Mr. Bigelow noted that the park land boundary determination, an award winning design by EDM Consultants, was done in consultation with the province and outlines what is best for the area lakes.

In response to a question from Mr. Pettipas on whether money had been set aside to purchase the land in the proposed park area, Mr. Bigelow advised that there is a clause in the Regional Plan that HRM should endeavor to acquire the lands over the course of the Regional Plan. There would have to be a willing buyer/seller situation.

In response to a question by Mr. Pettipas as to the value of the land if HRM were to buy it, Mr. Lowe advised that he was not able to provide that information. He then outlined the outer edge of the area on the map as requested by Councillor Lund and confirmed that a portion of that area was the provincial Wilderness area. He advised that Birchdale was willing to build a road into the Wilderness area, at no cost to HRM, to enable residents to enjoy the Wilderness area during the initial stages.

Mr. Bigelow explained that the province had set aside the Wilderness Area in support of the Regional Plan's aspirations for a regional park. The Wilderness area will be part of the Regional Park. The boundary study was conducted jointly by the province and the municipality and they will work jointly in regard to the details once the boundaries for the entire land assembly are done.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee, Mr. Bigelow advised that there is a legal entrance to the Wilderness Area via the Kearney Lake end that would not be crossing private land.

Mr. Lowe expressed concern with the amount of illegal activity that is occurring with people accessing the Wilderness Area from the Bi-centennial Highway and crossing the privately owned Birchdale properties. He also expressed concern with the possibility of fires and that someone may fall into the quarry. The key benefit to the Wilderness Area is its proximity to the urban area.

Ms. Cheryl Newcombe commented that, since the Porter Dillon report of 1996, the private land owners have been asked to sit by until the government decides what it wants to do and are now required to wait for completion of the Watershed Study which is unreasonable without some recompense for the land owners.

Mr. Morgan and Mr. Bigelow advised that it was important to have the Watershed Study completed first in order to determine how much development could take place while ensuring that the water quality in Kearney Lake, Paper Mill Lake and others, did not decline.

Ms. Grant commented that it may be unreasonable to expect the property owners to wait fourteen (14) years, however; the plan for the entire area would affect hundreds of thousands of people.

In response to a question by Councillor Hendsbee, Mr. Bigelow advised that the parkland boundaries were identified prior to a Watershed Study which is the important next step as the Watershed Study would consider the capacity for development around the park land, wilderness area, and lakes.

Councillor Hendsbee noted that the Watershed Study could show potential flaws with the park land boundary.

Ms. Carole Pelletier suggested a mini-planning exercise take place to determine the residential and park land areas and then the Watershed Study as the park land boundary could be modified based on the results of the Watershed Study.

Mr. Lowe commented that Ms. Pelletier's suggestion was an excellent idea as they have some ideas and wish to include things such as active transportation potential in their development and that is why they wish to proceed to the Secondary Planning Process.

Mr. French advised that it was a good idea and that the process was already underway as the Watershed Study is the next important step.

Mr. Morley thanked Mr. Lowe for his presentation.

The Committee recessed at 4:18 p.m.

The Committee reconvened at 4:32 p.m.

### **(III) Mr. Nathan Rogers, Terrain Group**

Mr. Rogers advised that he was the Project Planner representing four major land owners in the Port Wallis area. He noted that the Port Wallis area was located in north Dartmouth. Highlights of his presentation are as follows:

- C the key points in moving forward with an SPS are in regard to transportation infrastructure and land availability
- C the cost associated with the proposed 107 interchange is unknown at this time, however; the residents of Port Wallis are prepared to pre-pay for some major transportation infrastructure
- C the proposed interchange may be accessed from both the east and west sides of the highway, however; it is still in the design stage and the Port Wallis area already has an interchange

- C phasing in units over time could be considered for this development
- C the numbers vary in regard to land availability from the Eastern/Western regions and the Port Wallis area is a large area in Dartmouth for future residential development
- C the Watershed Study is a multi year process and forms part of the SPS
- C Terrain Group would like to commence the SPS so that they are further along in the process as the demand for development in Dartmouth continues to increase
- C a variety of housing options are being considered for the development
- C Halifax Water is in discussion with the Shubenacadie Canal area in regard to opportunities for a central servicing corridor that would provide cost savings
- C the flat terrain with low bedrock occurrence in the Port Wallis area eases development which enables affordable housing
- C Port Wallis is located adjacent to the Burnside Industrial Park.

In conclusion, Mr. Rogers explained that Terrain Group is asking the Regional Plan Advisory Committee to recommend that Regional Council move forward with an SPS for the Port Wallis area, and; commence the Watershed Study immediately in conjunction with the Highway 102 West Corridor study.

In response to questions by Members of the Committee, Mr. Rogers advised that:

- C the interchange that already exists in the Port Wallis area is the quarry on the Conrad lands into Waverley
- C an approach, similar to the phased approach for the Bedford South development where the interchange had to be built once a certain percentage was reached, could be used for the Port Wallis area
- C the Dartmouth area, Eastern Region, has the fewest acreage available
- C 350 units would be the maximum number if the Shearwater lands are not available
- C a portion of the Port Wallis area is designated Urban Settlement and a portion is designated Rural Commuter
- C part of the SPS would be to designate the boundary of Port Wallis
- C the proposal is for a mixed use development where people could live and work in Dartmouth
- C the SPS would determine what the servicing requirements would be
- C the land owners are willing to pre-pay HRM for the study
- C the final Capital Cost Contribution would be determined
- C the North Dartmouth Trunk Sewer line would have to cross the Shubenacadie Park area; discussions with Halifax Water have been held
- C Halifax Water is contacting the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board in regard to a shared trench to share the costs of servicing

- C the number of units that could be developed would be part of the SPS as it is too early to say at this point
- C the Port Wallis area is the only piece of developable land in the former City of Dartmouth area besides the Dartmouth Crossing lands if they have a residential portion.

Councillor McCluskey commented that some people do not want to live in Portland Estates or other areas and would like to stay in Port Wallis.

Mr. Nathan Rogers noted that the area Councillor has advised that he receives calls in regard to housing in the Port Wallis area.

In response to a question by Councillor Lund in regard to the table in the Supplementary Report for projected housing, Mr. Morgan explained that there are lots in the Morris Russell Lake area that can be approved. Attachment M of the report shows the capacity for new residential development in the Eastern region being substantially less than the other two regions.

Councillor McCluskey commented that most of the land owners in the Port Wallis area have owned the property for fifty years or more and have been trying for development rights since prior to 1966. There has been a long wait since the former City of Dartmouth's City Council passed a motion to provide sewer capacity. Portland Hills/Estates continues to develop yet there is no development occurring in the Port Wallis area.

In response to question by Mr. Pettipas, Mr. Rogers advised that if the SPS were to commence today, it would be a minimum of five years before a unit would be built.

Mr. French noted that it may not take five years as HRM would have to go through a budget cycle and ensure funding was available. Regional Council approval would be required prior to commencing an SPS. The next step would be the public consultation process as the Watershed Study would have been done prior to the SPS. Regional Council has stalled development in areas following analysis when the cost to develop were seen to be too high.

Mr. Morgan noted that development in the Morris Russell Lake area was also stalled when residents expressed concern with the traffic through the area.

In response to a question by Councillor Hendsbee, Mr. Wells explained that the majority of the three areas under consideration are within the Urban Settlement designation under the Regional Plan. Council has anticipated that within the next twenty-five years those lands would be developed for full service. The Regional Plan Advisory Committee is now considering the timing and whether or not it is appropriate

to undertake the SPS for each of the areas now or defer it to later. One or two of the areas needs to come online within the next five years or, incremental studies done to determine when it would be best for HRM and the market. Staff are recommending doing the Watershed Study one year and then the SPS. The scope of the Regional Plan review is unknown at this time, however; a report will be before Regional Council later this year or early next year. The suggestion on reviewing the four year old Regional Plan would be to double check whether it is on the right track or if it requires tweaking.

Mr. Pettipas requested clarification on whether the Watershed Study was the first step in the SPS process or not as part of the problem seems to be the wording, or interpretation of the wording, in the Regional Plan. Some sections/interpretations are that the Watershed Study as the first step to the Secondary Planning Process and then another indicates it is not.

Mr. Wells explained that at one time land use plans were driven by the roads/services required, however; the critical matter now is the protection of the environment. Once Council is confident that the environment has been protected the next steps in land use planning would commence.

In response to question by Mr. Pettipas, Mr. Rogers advised that the Regional Plan is clear in that the Watershed Studies are the first requirement. Dates were not suggested for the Highway 102 West Corridor lands Watershed Study as the Wastewater Management Functional Plan must be completed first as well as a review of the Regional Park lands.

Mr. Rogers commented that the landowners he represents have suggested paying up front for the Watershed Study with the expectation that they be reimbursed. The understanding is that the only reason for delay is that HRM does not have the budget to support two Watershed Studies in 2010. He confirmed that the intent was for HRM to maintain control over the study.

In response to a question by Ms. Christina MacLeod, Mr. Rogers advised that they were willing to fund, on condition of reimbursement, the Watershed Study even if it were not part of the Secondary Planning Process as it would at least be a step forward in the process.

Mr. French advised that HRM's fiscal constraint was only part of the reasoning for delaying the Watershed Study, the other reason was the huge investment made in the Morris Russell Lake area that staff are obligated to sort out prior to moving to Port Wallis.

Ms. Grant noted that according to the numbers provided, there does not appear to be an urgent need for new development, therefore; there is no need to open the land at this time. She concurred with the staff recommendations.

Mr. Rogers advised that there is a lack of available land in Dartmouth and by the time the planning process is done the demand will be there.

Ms. Newcombe inquired as to the ratio of affordable housing in the Portland Hills/Estates area development.

In response to a question by Councillor Lund, Mr. French advised that HRM does leave the number of units available up to the market as the zoning of land is in regard to market requirements, however; directly or indirectly the market is affected by the lands brought to the market and HRM is also financially impacted.

Mr. Morley thanked Mr. Rogers for his comments.

### **(III) Mr. Raymond Plourde, Ecology Action Center**

Mr. Plourde advised that he was speaking against the SPS proposals for the areas not included in the twenty-five year Regional Plan development life span. Lands outside the Urban Reserve zones should be considered at a later date. He asked the Committee to safeguard the integrity of the Regional Plan by denying the applications as they are premature and break the plan.

The development of the Regional Plan commenced in 2001 and was an exhaustive process involving public engagement and consultation with focus groups. Thousands of Haligonians, companies, and professional associations participated in the process. Compromises were made as no one got everything they wanted. The Regional Plan was formalized by stakeholders in a general way and then passed by Regional Council in an official way. Participants feel a sense of ownership toward the Regional Plan and that it was a promise to citizens that should not be broken.

The twenty-five year plan is intended to guide the planning of Halifax in a timely manner with preservation of natural assets and protection of watersheds being the key theme. Preservation of key areas such as the Birch Cove Mountain Lakes is a priority. The Regional Plan supports and reflects the vision HRM residents have for a sustainable, healthy environment. The Regional Plan is the framework for: sustainable growth, maintaining a strong economy, transportation and service centres, fostering integration to natural areas while maintaining the ecosystem and quality of life. Growth should be directed to mixed use compact centres as municipal costs would be avoided through this form of development planning.



Implementing the plan over twenty-five years will be challenging and rewarding. A lot of people remain engaged in the process and feel they have to defend the four-year old Regional Plan. He acknowledged his support for the staff recommendations that the watershed study be done first followed by consideration of the park land as the Regional Park is something thousands of residents would like to see. He noted that the landowners should be dealt with fairly. Citizens of HRM are justified in their expectation that the Regional Park will be done. The notion that HRM has too much green space is an uninformed notion. Rather than arbitrary acres, it is important to conserve natural areas and connectivity to them. Developments should be managed to ensure the most effective use of the land. Mr. Plourde added that he was in agreement with the Urban Design Task Force that approving the SPSs at this time would be going against the design and would have far reaching consequences. He requested that the Regional Plan Advisory Committee reconfirm its commitment to the Regional Plan and approve staff's recommendations.

Mr. Morley thanked Mr. Plourde for his presentation.

In response to a question by Mr. Morley, Mr. Morgan explained that a lot of the lands in the areas of the three SPS applications are in the designated Urban Settlement zoning. The Highway 102 West Corridor lands are Urban Reserve. The Regional Plan commits to servicing those lands within the life of the Regional Plan. The Port Wallis lands are considered Rural Commuter. The main recommendation at this point is that HRM is to manage its resources effectively.

Ms. Grant, referencing the letter from Ms. Godsoe, Chair of the Urban Design Task Force, noted that the Regional Plan Advisory Committee has endorsed the HRM by Design goals and consideration should be given when deciding this matter as they should not go against the goals of HRM by Design.

Mr. William Book commented that it was impossible to expect a twenty-five year plan to remain static.

Mr. Plourde noted that most people do not recognize that the Highway 102 West Corridor lands are the area of the Birch Cove Lake - Blue Mountain preservation area and proposed Regional Park land, otherwise, the Committee would have heard from more people. The area that was designated Urban Reserve goes into the proposed Regional Park area. It is one large ecosystem with a head lake that flows into Kearney Lake, Paper Mill Lake and eventually the Bedford Basin.

Mr. Morley noted that due to time constraints the remaining two speakers would be heard at the June 30<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**(V) Mr. Tom Swanson**

Due to time constraints, the presentation was deferred to the June 30<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**(VI) Mr. Allan Rodgers**

Due to time constraints, the presentation was deferred to the June 30<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**8. ADDED ITEMS - NONE**

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - June 30, 2010 from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m.**

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:36 p.m.

Chris Newson  
Legislative Assistant