

URBAN DESIGN TASK FORCE
MINUTES

December 19, 2007

PRESENT:

Ms. Dale Godsoe, Chair
Mr. Bill Hyde
Mr. Stephen Terauds
Mr. Bernie Smith
Ms. Margot Young
Mr. Kendall Taylor
Mr. Frank Palermo
Mr. Kevin Riles
Ms. Cathy Carmody
Ms. Adriane Abbott
Councillor Dawn Sloane

REGRETS:

Ms. Linda Garber
Mr. David Garrett
Mr. Paul Shakotko
Mr. Paul MacKinnon, Vice-Chair
Councillor Jim Smith

STAFF:

Mr. Andy Fillmore, Project Manager, Capital District
Ms. Jacqueline Hamilton, Manager, Capital District
Mr. Austin French, Manager, Planning Services
Mr. Richard Harvey, Senior Planner, Planning Applications
Ms. Tiffany Chase, Communications Specialist, Heritage and
Urban Design, Capital District
Ms. Sandra Riley, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:34 am in the Media Room, City Hall.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES - None**

3. **APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

The Urban Design Task Force cancelled the January 02, 2008 meeting. Ms. Godsoe brought forth the Added Items Agenda, amended the New Business items, making 6.4 - Implementation Workshop/Consultation, 6.5 - Opportunities for future presentations to/from external interest groups, and 6.6 - Media, and addressed the correspondence circulated.

MOVED by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Hyde, that the Order of Business, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

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

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

6.1 **Conclude discussion on Preferred Downtown Scenario & Public Comments/**

6.2 **Next Steps: Integrating the Built Form Framework**

Ms. Godsoe stated that this item is the opportunity for anyone to add any comments or second thoughts on the discussion at the last meeting. She opened the floor to anyone who would like to add anything at this point.

Mr. Hyde expressed concern with Mr. Fillmore's bulleted list on the Results of Forum 4B. He referenced the first page, second bullet which talks about the components of the scenario that require further refinement in the Implementation Phase. He stated that this does not mention simplification and it should be emphasized that simplification should be a very high priority.

Mr. Fillmore thanked Mr. Hyde for raising the issue and responded that it was touched on briefly during the December 05, 2007 meeting and he reiterated that the proposal is a complex project and the project team has to work harder on how it is communicated. He stated that the majority of the public comments stress the lack of clear communication. He advised that, after much deliberation, Staff are prepared to move ahead to continue with the multi layer Built Form Framework and Form Based Codes. He added that the project team will have graphics for the Task Force in the near future that will simplify this complex

idea.

Ms. Godsoe commented that Richard Harvey explained how Form Based Codes work. Mr. Harvey interjected that there are a few traps associated with this, and it is time to start adding layers other than height and make adjustments as needed on some of the conflicts such as street walls as the angular plane speaks to that. He stated that there is the need to be able to understand how the Built Form Framework is all going to work together and to be able to show this in a reasonable way and show what the buildings will actually look like. He added that a lot of testing needs to be done to see if it works the way it is proposed to work.

Mr. Fillmore added that the earlier January meeting of the Urban Design Task Force had been put off so that they would have the time to do the testing that Mr. Harvey spoke of and get into details of Built Form Framework and understand how it works.

Ms. Godsoe commented that Mr. Riles did a good job of simplifying the overall project goals and that Mr. Harvey will be tasked with making the Form Based Codes and the Built Form Framework work. She added that the different precincts and areas that are thought to be too multitudinous will influence what Mr. Harvey is doing.

Mr. Palermo expressed that he has a sense that the group has not talked enough about the issues and resolutions as value judgements and falling through the cracks is informed discussions of what these things mean and why some things are more important than others. Mr. Palermo stated his concern about the complexity of this small area between the Hill and the waterfront with a series of heritage districts, districts that distinguish between culture and entertainment, financial districts, and overlaid on top of that is the viewplanes. The final result will be building envelopes which will be the Form Based aspect of it, but it should be bold, simple and clear.

Ms. Godsoe inquired as to how culture, entertainment, and financial impact on the work in regards to the Form Based Code. It was noted that the answer lies in blocking and then looking at it.

Mr. Palermo expressed that the current view on heritage issues is to define Heritage Conservation Districts. He advised that heritage districts are not the right way to deal with the core of the city and that the Urban Structure is going to be the heritage aspect of Halifax. He stated that the buildings, themselves, are secondary and the Urban Structure needs to be protected. He suggested that the whole area should be thought of as a special district which is street oriented, concentrating on continuity on the street. He added that a building six storeys high could be really bold. He asserted that heritage districts are a bad notion, and that it is a mistake to believe that these areas are going to be protected as individual buildings are going to have to conform to the architectural discipline in the buildings around them.

Ms. Abbott observed that there is room within the historic districts for contemporary design as long as it maintains the integrity of the place.

Mr. Fillmore remarked that there is a feeling in the development community that the Heritage Conservation District approach is very stifling of innovation and growth, which goes back to the communications challenge. He stated the reason for the Heritage Conservation District's approach is to provide the most efficient means of demolition control and to arrest the lost heritage resources. He advised that it is up to the Heritage Conservation District's studies to impose design guidelines including the appropriateness of contemporary architecture.

Mr. Palermo added his concern about how to draw jagged lines of distinction on the importance of preservation of individual buildings as opposed to the importance of Urban Structure. He advised that the project team's job was impossible as it is bound to be challenged down the road because people are going to try to move the line of distinction.

Mr. Harvey stated that the proposal has to be looked at from an individual block by block or series of blocks perspective. He added these views:

- The existing buildings and block form have to be understood to be able to articulate ideas of height and the rest of the Built Form features, such as street walls and angle controls.
- Try to be informed by the boundaries that have been drawn as a test to see if those are the right places or even whether they are useful or necessary.
- The project team would need to look and test against ideas already discussed to prove them right or wrong from a structural perspective.
- Another layer may be the discovery that they are not so much Form Based but they have a certain character to them that may be just a difference of land use.
- He suggested taking a couple steps forward, check it, challenge it, change it if need be, and then move forward.

Mr. Riles commented on the need for simplification of the process. The goal is to create a dynamic, sustainable, livable, exciting downtown. He stated the following:

- He does not have a problem with the principle of Heritage preservation.
- Take a street like Barrington and look for government support as the lack of money involved in heritage preservation is unfortunate.
- Once a height is established, whether all agree or not, have an as-of-rights process up to that.
- A fair balance has to be found. He asserted that there should not be a 16-storey building in a 7-storey zone although there may be a little bit of flexibility.
- Almost any site in the downtown has to be built or bought and maybe demolished.

- This involves an environmental clean up as well as a consulting cost.
- Is 7 storeys enough. Economic realities (buying, building, consulting, demolition) have to be observed.
- He stated the need to go forward to the next step and stop wavering.

Mr. Palermo stated that the drawn streetscapes are not possible while at the same time having huge concentrations of buildings on the individual sites. Unless something dramatic happens, in terms of the economy, he advised that one or two sites will be developed and the rest will remain as they are. The projected streetscapes will just be an illusion and something different will be created. He added that he understands what the developers are after, on an individual basis, but it may not happen on many other sites, unless there is a market there. The potential that is there has to be taken and a way has to be found to allocate it broadly across as many sites as possible. He concluded that the developers/planners will say one thing, draw one thing, but are not going to be able to achieve it.

Mr. Fillmore stated that the act of city building occurs in a financial market place and in that market place there are shoppers who want to build big and those who want to build small. He advised that the increase of the as-of-rights building height in the downtown study area makes a strong business case for in-flow on this block, and to take away the opportunity for those who want to build big is a danger. Mr. Fillmore added that accurate points were expressed regarding Built Form but there was no good approach to the the human capital. He stated that the vision of the project is to create a city that has the ability to relocate people through the offer of being a great place to work, to live, the cultural infrastructure, and the open space structure. He advised that the best way to draw the emerging professional workforce is to achieve some of the goals set for the city. He stated that a way has to be found to balance small sites with big sites that will be major employment generators and bring that greater class in the next generation.

Mr. Hyde addressed Mr. Palermo with these questions that he requested Mr. Palermo ponder and address at a later date:

- You advised that the Urban Structure is the foundation of what the Planners and the Task Force should be focussed on, what are the important attributes of the Urban Structure? What exactly do you mean?
- Your thoughts about the importance of avoiding concentrations in development and that over long periods of time you want to spread it out, what changes do you think would be functional in making this happen?

Mr. Palermo's response was that he will put the answers in writing.

Ms. Carmody queried Mr. Palermo as to whether he felt the project team should start over.

Mr. Palermo asserted that there is no need to start over as the issues addressed were not

new and that some should be incorporated. Reflecting on where the project is right now and public discussion on what is being done and what has been done, he stated that the team may be losing track of the basic things and are getting carried away by individual arguments when there should be compromises between the different positions articulated. He stated that neither group is being satisfied and a way has to be found to talk about the one or two topics. He advised that his focus is on the one small area that is being made too complicated with overlays, and these complications are sowing the seeds for another 40 years of appeals for Council. He suggested that the task force should go for a walk around the boundary and see that the lines are not simple, so that a way can be found to dig deeper and sort out what is really significant and will be sustainable over a long period of time. Mr. Palermo is not convinced that the groundwork is there.

Ms. Godsoe enquired as to whether the area defined would have no heritage districts, no opportunity sites, no precincts and that everything would only be 7-storey buildings.

Mr. Palermo responded that the Hill area would have one set of guidelines and rules with a height limit of 72 feet.

Mr. Taylor clarified that just as the lines in the downtown are not that sharp, the same is true of the process in terms of the Visions Phase versus Implementation Phase. He advised that there were a couple things he wanted to have Mr. Palermo clarify. He indicated the need to understand whether or not the team was encouraging a program that would spark up a lot of good development for the future. He agreed that a walk-a-round would be good and it should be done before the January 23 meeting. He stated that the plan will spread things out quite a bit and there will be a lot of opportunity for variety with in-fill. He noted to Mr. Palermo that he thought the transit issue had been resolved during the downtown working group. He stated that it was agreed that going forward with the transit plan was an important recommendation, but it had also been agreed that it was not necessary that all the details were worked out as part of this process, as long as the group brought forth a recommendation to Council.

Mr. Palermo responded that the more informed he becomes on the transportation issue, he observed an underlying problem in the creation of departments and institutions whose responsibility it is to look at transportation and they are separate from departments that are looking at land use, or planning. He expressed that it is counterproductive to listen to experts come at the same issue from different perspectives. As a result, an unresolvable problem is created. He clarified that a more pro-active view has to be taken, and there should be a group whose job it is to get all of these departments to work together.

Ms. Godsoe advised that there will be a workshop, a little later in the agenda, from the Task Force's perspective on transportation.

Councillor Sloane advised that it is typical of any large business where planning and transportation are not meshing together. She advised that the transit has to be looked at

on the Peninsula, right now, if the goal is to have people moving back. She pointed out that the public is not willing to take long bus rides, pay high rent and taxes and still not be able to get around quickly or have parking spots. She stated that the transportation plan has not yet been brought back to Council. She advised that implementation is key for the Regional Plan and it has to be shown how it can be done and not just bow to Suburban Councillors. She further stated that the plan has to be for the common good, meaning the transportation planning and all of the aspects around that have to work together. She commented on Staff not seeing the need to work on this right now, but pointed out that the citizens of the Barrington Street Heritage district need to know the effect on their businesses. She stated that all team members - Transit, Transportation, Planning - are not working together on everything and need to pull together resources.

Mr. Harvey expressed that there has to be more talk about the notion of where to go with Built Form Framework in terms of transportation. He commented that the 72 feet limit is a premise that suggests that this will spread square footage downtown in an equal way creating an even playing field. He elaborated on some of the problems regarding the Twisted Sisters development and advised that having an even playing field does not mean there will be full capacity. He agreed that a workaround would be a good idea to look at specific spots and point out development where heights were limited by viewpoints. He added that the height is there and is not subjective.

Mr. Palermo stated that he would like to present a case study in Calgary for Mr. Harvey and Mr. Fillmore in the future.

Mr. Riles suggested that very strong opinions on all sides could cause staff to lose their nerve and compromising could cause mediocrity. He stated that he is in agreement with the walk through, but either there is enough on the plate to draw forward or not. If staff has already gone through the public forum and then deviate from due process they will have to initiate another public participation forum. He expressed that staff has to be careful with compromise.

Mr. Fillmore stated that since the 28th of November Staff has been hearing from the Task Force, the business and development community and the heritage community as well, that the Heritage Conservation District approach is complex. He stated that a critical point has been reached and a closer look is needed. He admitted not knowing how to achieve demolition protection for almost a hundred buildings in the downtown, that are registered now, without Heritage Conservation District, which is the tool that the law has provided to protect these buildings. He referenced Area 2 - pointing out these are study areas and not district boundaries, but proposed study areas in which districts may occur - which includes the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District, and the proposed Heritage Conservation District which centers around the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and the monument district around the Memorial Library and the Provincial Court House on Spring Garden Road. He stated that a way to achieve demolition protection with the Barrington Street district in play has to be explored.

Mr. Hyde clarified that the Heritage Conservation District, under the Heritage Property Act, needs stronger demolition controls. He further states:

- There are individual registered buildings with one year demolition control, and arguments have been made that this is inadequate.
- The Act leaves room to develop your own form of demolition control, as long as it does not lessen the protection already provided for individually registered properties.
- Arguments should be strengthened on demolition controls for individual buildings.
- The Act makes it mandatory that demolition policy is included for registered heritage buildings.
- When you establish a Heritage Conservation District, Section 18 does not apply, so Council is obligated to establish a stronger policy for the protection of registered heritage property. This opens up the opportunity to protect the registered and the supported buildings.
- One extreme for the Heritage Conservation District would be to stipulate that everything has to look like a heritage building. This would present the opportunity to establish guidelines to replicate old buildings.
- The Act does not require this. It is almost a given in many cities, Halifax included, in establishing a Heritage Conservation District, that there will be a number of registered buildings, old buildings, modern buildings, parking lots/gaps .

Mr. Fillmore inquired as to whether there is any tool other than a Heritage Conservation District for demolition control.

Mr. Hyde expressed that the authority is already there under the Government Property Act, and the other tool is that of financial incentives as this cannot be provided to private business, whereas the Heritage Property Act says financial incentive can be provided to the owners of heritage property or properties in the Heritage Conservation Districts. He stated that some would argue that the Act does not allow tax incentives because tax incentives are not specifically mentioned and one of the amendments would be to clarify that the term financial assistance includes this range of options of tax incentives. The Act states, when you establish a Heritage Conservation District Plan, it is mandatory that there is a public consultation process that is related to the establishment of the district and there has to be a rationale established through background studies. The other mandatory provision should be to have demolition policy for registered heritage properties. There are no actual requirements that there be design guidelines.

He further stated his belief that when the Heritage District provisions of the Act were created in 1990, there was an understanding at the Provincial level that you could not do design control through Municipal Planning strategies. Halifax was operating under it's own City Charter and so when the Heritage Conservation Districts provisions came into the Heritage Property Act it was a vehicle to adopt design guidelines and define the Urban

Structure of the area. Fundamentally, the Heritage District approach allows stronger protection to the heritage resources registered as well as to counterbalance with financial incentives. He agreed that the group should do the walk around and the Heritage District idea should not be abandoned as it is a defining element in the Urban Structure.

Mr. Fillmore requested clarification from Mr. French regarding design guidelines and the current Municipal Government Act.

Mr. French responded that under the Municipal Government Act, most of the regulating of architecture falls under the provisions related to Development Agreement. Buildings can be regulated under the Land Use Bylaw or the Site Plan Approval. He clarified that with the Site Plan Approval process you have criteria in policy, the way you would for a Development Agreement, however, the difference between Site Plan Approval and Development Agreement is that under the Site Plan Approval it is an entirely Staff driven process and the final sign off comes from the Development Officer as opposed to Council. He further clarified that, in terms of implementation, if everything is left as it is within the Provincial Legislation, a process could be set up with policies which are more predictable and clearer in terms of height and mass and could be done under the existing legislation. Getting into design guidelines within different districts, it is a little less clear as to whether By Right could be done under new legislation. He advised that the best way to go under the existing legislation, would be to have a new development agreement or a 'Bulletproof' Development process where the major issues are already resolved and the details at the street level could be resolved through the Development Agreement. His view is that this would be a successful outcome to the project, and would be a big step forward with greater flexibility and clarity than at present. He pointed out another option, that has been advanced to the Provincial Government, is the possibility that the Site Plan Approval process would be revised to have more discussion about architectural control. Council would have two clear options: Either have a Bulletproof Development Agreement or a Site Plan Approval process, which is entirely Staff driven or Staff resolved, having more emphasis on architectural issues. That would require an amendment to the Municipal Government Act, and is now being considered by the Province. He recommended a Site Plan Approval process to the committee where the Development Officer makes the decisions. He stated this same process was done in Ontario last June, and is a very common trend across Canada. He added that instead of having a Staff person sign off, this process includes being reviewed by a panel of experts, usually not Politicians but people appointed by Council because of their expertise.

The third option whereby without using the Development Agreement or the Site Plan Approval, is where policy could be written putting the height and the mass in, with no more debate or discussion and it is not appealable. He pointed out that there would be somewhat less control over architectural detail on the street wall in that scenario but this could be done entirely By Right without any referral panel.

Mr. Fillmore wanted clarification on As-of-Rights Developments, post HRM by Design. Are

Heritage Conservation Districts needed to provide design guidelines for As-of-Rights buildings. The response was that the Heritage Conservation Districts would not be needed as it could be done through the Site Plan Approval process. Mr. Fillmore further enquired as to whether As-of-Rights would be done through Site Plan. It was clarified that Site Plan Approval is essentially As-of-Rights, as it does not involve decision of Council, but the panel approach could still be used.

Ms. Young inquired as to whether the By-Right process could be used in some sort of heritage panel review. The response was that they could go with policy which set height and massing under existing legislation. Within the heritage district design view issues could be looked at. A combination of By-Right and Heritage District could be done as a fourth option. When questioned as to whether that would give the same kind of design review panel, the response was that this will have to be explored further and charts will be presented to the committee.

Councillor Sloane suggested that the position of Municipal Architect be re-established so that there will be architectural views on some of the things being built. She advised having architectural controls put into Land Use Bylaws that are tough and to stop allowing the loopholes. Since Site Plan Approval is allowing Staff to do all the work, why is there a Council. She agreed with a revised Development Agreement along with a Municipal Architect, or a combination of Heritage District and a Municipal Architect. She suggested that qualified applicant names should be randomly drawn for the position of Municipal Architect to eliminate favouritism.

Ms. Abbott expressed agreement in maintaining heritage buildings, but also stated the need for contemporary buildings where the heritage buildings are elevated and showcased by their juxtaposition with something different.

Mr. Smith expressed concern about the south end heights which went from 9-10 storeys to 12 plus. He expressed that the downtown should not be phoney Victorian, but it is the size, the match, and the interaction with the street that is important. He stated his concerns about the setbacks and whether they are advisable. In regards to the scale of the city, he advised that mass is not needed where mass should not be. He referred to the Twisted Sisters development and that massing was taken too far in that case. He finished with the fact that Class A buildings can be produced with six or seven storeys and can be perfectly functional and acceptable.

Mr. Terauds agreed heritage buildings have to be protected for the future; the next generation of them. He stated that fake old buildings provide nothing to the future as they are bland interpretations of what has come before, and they call into question what is authentic and what is not. Authentic buildings are needed to work in scale to heritage buildings as rhythm and scale is important to this city. He expressed his views on diversity and how important it is to every aspect of life. Different types of buildings can be appropriately integrated. He expressed being a little nervous about a blanket height and

re-iterated that there is room for diversity on the peninsula.

Ms. Young stressed that the discussion is of a mechanism for implementation and not a change in the vision. She stated that the question is who makes the decision. She stated there are four groups who do not trust each other, listing Council, Staff, Heritage and modernist groups. She expressed that new buildings do not have to look like the original buildings but should reflect more of the present period. She does not feel that Heritage is at odds with environmentally sustainable new buildings but have issues with the form of the box it goes into and who gets to make the decisions. There needs to be a process to find a way to see what all the groups have in common and put those common elements forward. She requested that Mr. French speak more on an inclusive process as a mechanism to how the decision is to be made.

Mr. French stated that he will address this when the discussions come up in the Critical Path and at the appropriate time. He stated that there is a parallel process going on in several communities called Community Visioning. He added that there is another process called Appreciative of Inquiry that might help in this situation, to bring groups together through identifying commonalities and positive strengths. He advised that he needs to bring charts and diagrams to express his explanation given earlier.

Mr. Palermo stated that he has three thoughts. He expressed that the view can be coloured if too much advance thought is given to legislation on what can and cannot be done, and more inventiveness is needed or the vision will not live up to its potential. The second point, in terms of process, he advised an open mind. Mr. Palermo agrees with Councillor Sloane but he pointed out that he can not think of a major city in Canada where Council is the final decision maker in development.

Mr. Palermo stated that his third point has to do with diversity and at what scale it applies. He expressed the concerns of Mixed-Use zones as to whether it applies to the building, to the site, to the area, to the district, to the peninsula, and the need to find the right level for that diversity otherwise there is a lot of confusion. He stated that this project is distinctive enough that it should be thought of in a straightforward, direct way. He asserted that there is a lot of room for diversity of other types.

Ms. Young stated she wanted to talk about diversity, height, and money issues. She suggested that all the issues are really money issues. She advised that if the developers are carrying the whole bill for the public realm improvements and for the heritage, there are one of two mechanism that happens: the height goes up, or the condominium price goes up and the poor people leave and there is no way around that money question. She asserted that the more guidelines, criteria, public realm and fancy buildings, the more it is pulled in one direction or the other - height goes up or rent goes up, which causes a fleeing to the suburbs. She advised that a lot of other issues fall into play. She stated that once the investment level is decided in the city, decisions can be made to bring things down in height and maybe decisions around affordability and other issues. She stated there is a Master

Plan Mechanism that says how much infrastructure is required within a new area and there is a mechanism whereby the public realm background is looked at, in terms of how much is background and how much is new and is there a possibility to look at the Master Plan Mechanism relative to these things. The new development, itself, is not carrying one hundred percent of the need to protect heritage, to support tourism or to drive the city along.

She pointed out that there are departments that take on transit terminals, street, and all the new things built, but the city does not actually have public realm and putting more people into one place causes changes in operations and ownership and the quality of space. She further stated that either the development is going to carry it and it will be felt in heritage, height, and affordability or this mechanism will be put in place, because there is no way the development community can take on the responsibilities wanted in terms of quality, design, character and heritage.

Mr. French specified that, under the Regional Plan, if a big interchange was being put up in the suburban communities, the costs are shared on a per acre cost for the developer and everyone pays their share. He clarified that in the Regional Centre, that does happen as Developers do not pay those charges as they do in the suburbs.

Ms. Young interjected that the discussion is about public realm improvements and how to achieve different kinds. Mr. French responded that that philosophy could be taken and explored from a different perspective for the downtown.

Mr. Harvey agreed with Mr. Palermo's pointed instruction to not let mechanism drive the program. He advised that it would be a lot easier if he was simply told what was wanted after looking at a particular block or area of the city. He pointed out that he could then model it up and look at it, and talk about the realities of it, creating a better starting point. He advised he would then be able to suggest the best way to achieve what is desired. He stated that the Heritage Conservation District and financial incentive are tools that are not going to work unless it is decided what is wanted.

Mr. Taylor shared that there are only one or two options doable in the time frame. He does not feel that going to the Municipal Government and re-drafting the Municipal Government Act will not allow the time. He suggested that the Heritage Conservation District is the way to go. He advised that if that route is not taken and this is opened up again, it is not going to look good if another heritage building is lost, and time is of the essence to protect the buildings. He stated that he liked the idea of someone reviewing the design, but does not feel that one architect should do so as there are a variety of perspectives that are not all purely architectural, and therefore it would be best for a jury or a body to review. He suggested that height bonusing may be a way to preserve heritage by allowing a little flexibility, or preserving a certain building and building on the adjacent property to preserve what was already built. He finished with the opinion that, architecturally speaking, he supports protecting heritage properties, but there is the need to celebrate who we are today.

Mr. Palermo agreed with Ms. Young regarding the infrastructure and public improvements. He suggested that the issue is not so much of low versus high as it is of density and the amount of floor space that can be built.

Mr. Riles suggested using the Herald Building as an example and find out what the strains are economically. He stated his concerns about a jury task force looking at proposals as it would replace the Council. He pointed out that the whole idea of going by Built Form is to have the guidelines that are established and that if the discretionary building is taken away unpredictability is the result. He advised that every policy has an economic impact and if the cost is unbearable to development, the big prospectors will come in and others will be sitting there until the prices go down.

6.3 Draft UDTF 2008 Meeting Schedule

Ms. Godsoe advised that the discussed walkaround would be for January 09, 2008.

The meeting dates for 2008 are as follows:

January 23, 9 am to 2 pm

February 06, 11 am to 2 pm

February 27, 11 am to 2 pm

April 02, 11 am to 2 pm

April 09, 11:30 am to 3 pm.

These meetings will be held in Halifax Hall, City Hall.

Tentative dates for the remainder of the year are:

May 02; June 04; July 02; August 06; September 10; October 01; November 05; and December 03; all meetings running from 12 noon to 2 pm.

6.4 Implementation Workshops/Consultation

Mr. Fillmore advised that there will be a series of intensive Implementation Workshops for the month of March that will last about a week. He stated the Implementation Phase is about the doing of the project as opposed to the dreaming. He advised that smaller, more focussed discussions are needed with groups like Heritage Planners at the Provincial and Municipal level, Heritage Advocacy - members of the public, design professionals such as planners, landscape architects, architects, urban designers, downtown business development. He advised that about eight topic areas have been identified, including: Form Base Codes, sustainability, transportation, affordability, public realm, expenditure of public money, heritage approach, density bonusing. He advised there will be a at least one workshop around each of those topics with key invitees from the groups previously mentioned. He advised having two or three members of the Task Force present for these workshops. He added that there will be a public meeting at the end of March for a read-back and review of learning. He stated that going into the workshops, Staff and Consultants will work to come up with a 'white paper' on each topic to help to guide the workshops. Using the heritage approach as an example, he remarked that through this method there will be two or three different options on the table for discussion about how to implement the

heritage approach and what the policy mechanism should be.

Ms. Godsoe commented on public spending, advising that the budget over the years ahead has to be considered. She added that some of the topics may overlap. It was noted by Mr. Riles that economic viability should be separate from density bonusing.

Councillor Sloane remarked as to what needs to be done with the 'white paper'. She suggested that, for example, with Economics as one type of paper, it should be broken down into the points of view of the developers, the public (HRM), and maybe the retailers so that there are three aspects, giving a better indication of what is trying to be achieved, as it talks about the public realm and how it would interfere with something that is being developed or what it does to enhance a commercial or retail business on the street and the public realm itself.

Mr. Riles remarked that so much time has already been taken and producing 'white papers' would not be done intelligently. He stated that expectation would be set up and by May the public will be inquiring as to where the goods are, and if these expectations can not be delivered there are going to be problems. Because there are so many different variables, he does not see how Staff could do this intelligently and suggested that another Task Force is needed. He maintained that the project team should stick to what they have been doing, move forward and then come back after. He reiterated that the public realm makes the issues huge.

Mr. Fillmore pointed out that this is the implementation phase not a re-visiting of the vision and it is just to see how the components work together and to start tying bows on things at that point.

Ms. Godsoe stated that consideration would be done by Staff in January and February, and she advised that there was a commitment made that the public would also be consulted on their ideas on implementation.

Ms. Young advised that there are technical techniques to address these issues using basic spreadsheets that have not been done by the Task Force or the consultants. She stressed that it is an economic and social question. She stated that after doing a spreadsheet the public would have some concrete information.

It was noted that wind studies in the city have not been talked about as a whole and it is a model that needs to be run as Halifax has a wind load issue and work has to be done with local structural engineers.

Mr. Harvey suggested that having focussed on downtown for so long they have lost sight of the whole process and that appropriate massing for the neighbourhood centre has already been looked at by hired consultants. He asserted that the Task Force's job is to liaison for the public and to question and say whether this is economically viable. He advised that the tangibles have to be brought forth by consultants or Staff and there is not much to be gained from re-visioning.

Mr. Taylor addressed the issue of sustainability. He stated that before March the Task Force needs to engage some community members who are interested in sustainability in the city and to focus and see what has value for the city of Halifax in the lead point system. He stated the need to look at the points that have value to urban forum as it would not be advisable to wait until March to collect feedback from the community.

Mr. Fillmore advised that it would be a good idea to attach a Task Force member to each topic area to host a discussion.

Ms. Carmody volunteered to be the Task Force personnel for affordability and that she would like to get involved with talking to different members of the public before March because the whole issue of affordability has to be looked at in a different way. She expressed that the public can be looked after while the developers get their money. She stressed that it is about the caring, the passion, and responsibility and not about the money. She advised that the government has to be involved as this is a big issue.

Mr. Fillmore advised that there is not enough bandwidth for Staff and the Task Force to push forward with the Regional centre wide implementation and the downtown at the same time. He stated that for several months the focus has been more on having the downtown piece done by mid 2008.

Ms. Godsoe suggested that everything from downtown will provide a model that will be applicable to the rest. She advised that the committee would like the Staff to go back to the drawing board and see how research analysis consultation and public accountability piece is done. She stated that the idea of doing workshops is dividing as opposed to integrating what is needed and it has to be looked at more holistically.

Mr. Taylor agreed with Mr. Fillmore in the need to have small focus groups.

When questioned as to when the group could meet to ensure the right methodology, Mr. Fillmore responded that meeting would have to come after the January 23 and February 12 meetings. The following members of the Task Force were assigned to the individual topics discussed:

Mr. Palermo- transportation.

Ms. Carmody - affordability

Mr. Smith - costing

Ms. Young- costing

Mr. Hyde stated he would handle any topic when he is available.

Councillor Sloane - transportation, sustainability. She suggested cycling from group to group.

Ms. Young requested copies of the Development Agreement or some background for the January 9 walkabout so the Task Force can have a sense of what was involved. This information will be supplied at the time of the walkaround.

Mr. Smith remarked that Mr. French is going to come back looking at various methods of

heritage conservation processes. He advised that it would be very useful to be informed on the appeal channels to look at the complexity.

6.5 Opportunities for future presentations to/from external interest groups

Ms. Godsoe stated there will be a continuing path on opportunities for future presentations.

6.6 Media

Ms. Chase agreed that momentum must be maintained. She advised that she is currently working on a six to twelve month communications project that will address a lot of the key issues. She remarked that the target members of the public are of a diverse educational background so the project team/task force should not be using same level of language for everyone when there is a need to maintain understandability. She stated that the Globe and Mail has a freelance reporter who requested a story on urban renewal in Halifax and will be interviewing the Mayor. Ms. Chase advised that there needs to be a Councillor representative from the Task Force. Councillor Sloane will be that member. It was added that Ms. Godsoe and Mr. Fillmore will also be interviewed. It was noted that there are several negative articles on the project that are not presenting the whole of what is being done. There have been meetings regarding this that have not changed the negative opinions, particularly that of the Chronicle Herald. She advised approaching the Herald again in the new year. Councillor Sloane suggested banning them and going to other papers. It was noted that Paul MacKinnon felt strongly about submitting something on behalf of himself and the business commission. She added that the downtown Halifax Business Commission has committed to working with HRM by Design on a more high-quality piece to hand out that will be an overview of the project. She suggested opinion editorials and have them submitted as the project moves along in the implementation phase to give people idea what is being done. She stated the web page would be updated as frequently as possible and remain readily accessible.

7 CORRESPONDENCE PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence

Correspondence was received from the public as noted below. These were distributed to the UDTF.

Ms. Beverly Miller	Mr. Arthur Carter	Mr. Kevin Ball
Ms. Joyce Hussey	Mr. Walter Nolan	Mr. Scott Dignan
Ms. Shirley Vaughan	Mr. Owen Carrigan	Mr. Rod MacNeil
Ms. Dulcie Conrad	Mr. Bruce DeVenne	Ms. Judith Fingard
Ms. Janet Morris		

In addition, "Further Thoughts on the Need for Simplification" was received from and circulated by Mr. Bill Hyde via e-mail to UDTF and Steering Committee Members on December 16, 2007.

8 ADDED ITEMS :

Items 8.1 through 8. 3 were previously covered during this meeting.

8.1 Staff Report dated December 14, 2007 re: Forging Ahead With the Preferred Scenario.

8.2 Updated Project Timeline

8.3 “Reasons for Attending Forum 4B”

9 NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE

The next regular meeting is scheduled for January 23, 2008 from 9 am - 2:00 pm and is to be an all day workshop.

10 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:54 pm.

Sandra Riley
Legislative Assistant