

URBAN DESIGN TASK FORCE
MINUTES

November 12, 2008

PRESENT:

Ms. Dale Godsoe, Chair
Mr. Paul MacKinnon, Vice-Chair
Mr. Bernie Smith
Mr. Frank Palermo
Mr. Bill Hyde
Ms. Linda Garber
Mr. David Garrett
Mr. Paul Shakotko
Councillor Jim Smith
Mr. Kendall Taylor
Mr. Stephen Terauds
Councillor Dawn Sloane
Councillor Mary Wile
Ms. Sally Camus

ABSENT:

Ms. Cathy Carmody
Mr. Kevin Riles
Ms. Margot Young

STAFF:

Mr. Andy Fillmore, Project Manager, Capital District
Mr. Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Development
Ms. Sandra T. Riley, Legislative Assistant

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CALL TO ORDER	4
2.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES - August 13, 2008 and September 10, 2008	4
3.	APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS	4
4.	BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES	4
5.	CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS	4
6.	NEW BUSINESS	
	<u>UPDATES:</u>	
6.1	Membership Update	4
6.2	Schedule Update with Detailed Timeline (set December meeting date) .	5
6.3	Baseline Study Update	5
6.4	Update on Legislative Amendments	5
6.5	Public Comments Update (Raw Comments & Summary of Comments)	5
	<u>DISCUSSION:</u>	
6.6	Staff Report:	
	- Heritage Sub-committee Discussions	6
	- Plan Monitoring committee and Scorecard	6
	- Notice Area for Site Plan Approval and Appeals	6
	- Conclude Discussion on Architect's Built Form Recommendations ...	6
6.7	Design Review Committee Terms of Reference & HRM Conflict of Interest Policy	7
6.8	Barrington Heritage Conservation District - Fact Sheet	8
	<u>PRESENTATION (S):</u>	
6.9	Mr. Phil Pacey, President, Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia - presentation	8
7.	CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND DELEGATION5	
7.1	Letter of Support for Proposed Legislative Amendments - Regional Plan Advisory Committee, dated October 22, 2008	9
8.	ADDED ITEMS	9

9. NEXT MEETING DATE - November 26, 2008 9

10. ADJOURNMENT 9

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Godsoe called the meeting to order at 11:15 a. m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - August 13, 2008 and September 10, 2008

MOVED BY Mr. MacKinnon, seconded by Mr. Palermo, that the minutes of August 13, 2008 and September 10, 2008 be approved, as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Revised order of business:

Agenda items will be addressed by the Urban Design Task Force in the following order:

- 6.1 Membership Update
- 6.7 Design Review Committee Terms of Reference
- 6.2 Schedule Update with Detailed Timeline
- 6.3 Baseline Study Update and Plan Monitoring Committee and Scorecard
- 6.4 Update on Legislative Amendments
- 6.5 Public Comments Update
- 6.9 Mr. Phil Pacey - Presentation

MOVED BY Mr. MacKinnon, seconded by Mr. Palermo, that the order of business be approved, as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

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

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

UPDATES:

6.1 **Membership Update**

The Urban Design Task Force membership will remain the same until Regional Council's approval of the HRMbyDesign Downtown Halifax Plan and the implementation of the Design Review Committee, providing there are no resignations.

6.2 Schedule Update with Detailed Timeline (set December meeting date)

The HRMbyDesign Schedule was circulated to the Task Force with all UDTF meeting shaded in gray. The original date for the UDTF meeting was scheduled for December 10, 2008. This date has been re-scheduled to December 12, 2008 for a discussion on Baseline Study Results, and overall UDTF comments on the Plan.

There are three remaining meetings projected for the Task Force, with the final one on January 14, 2009, to forward motion of approval to Regional Council.

6.3 Baseline Study Update

Mr. Jim Donovan, Manager of Economic Development, External and Corporate Affairs gave the Urban Design Task Force an update on the baseline study. He advised that there will be a draft of the consultant's report for the November 26 meeting of the UDTF.

6.4 Update on Legislative Amendments

Mr. Fillmore gave a brief overview of the legislative amendment to Bill 182 for the Heritage Property Act, with a discussion ensuing. He further advised that Mayor Peter Kelly would be giving a presentation to the Provincial Law Amendments Committee, next week, regarding the HRMbyDesign process.

6.5 Public Comments Update (Raw Comments & Summary of Comments)

The document "Raw Comments from Public Review Period, September 15 - October 24, 2008 - Draft 2 - Downtown Halifax Urban Design Plan" was circulated to the Task Force for their review and discussion.

A financial incentive package for HRMbyDesign will be further discussed in the Urban Design Task Force meeting of December 12, 2008.

The meeting recessed at 12:49 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

DISCUSSION:

6.6 Staff Report:

- Heritage Sub-committee Discussions

The Task Force discussed the seven proposals to enhance heritage protection under the proposed HRMbyDesign program as follows:

- a. Fast-track the formation of the Precinct 2 and 7 heritage conservation districts
- b. Allow the municipality to set its own demolition controls
- c. Examine the possibility of TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) to enhance heritage
- d. Density bonusing connected only to heritage conservation and affordable housing
- e. Downtown as a Comprehensive Development District toward conserving heritage
- f. Ensure heritage design guidelines take precedent over bonusing
- g. Constraints on development of lands after heritage demolitions

- Plan Monitoring Committee and Scorecard

The UDTF discussed the Plan Monitoring Committee and Scorecard, and it was noted that Mr. Paul MacKinnon, Vice-Chair of the Urban Design Task Force, will Chair the program.

- Notice Area for Site Plan Approval and Appeals

This item has been discussed over the past year in various workshops and meetings, and today's discussion of the Urban Design Task Force resulted in the following motion being passed:

MOVED BY Councillor Sloane, seconded by Mr. Garrett, that the Urban Design Task Force recommend option B:

- B Downtown study area-based: Notice/appeal area - the downtown study area, plus a 30m radius to capture affected neighbours in case the application is on the study area boundary.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

- Conclude Discussion on Architect's Built Form Recommendations

In followup to the October 08, 2008 meeting of the UDTF, the Task Force approved the following recommendations:

MOVED BY Mr. Hyde, seconded by Councillor Wile, that the following recommendations be approved:

- **Existing in Draft 2: Maximum high-rise tower dimension (above 110' in height) is 90' x 125', yielding a floor plate of 11, 250 sf.**

Staff Recommendation. Make proposed change. The 90' dimension is only relevant in the central blocks so should remain there, but outside of those blocks it is an unnecessary floor area penalty.

- **Existing in Draft 2: Minimum separation between high-rise towers (above 110') is 80' for reasons of preserving skyview and privacy. Staff Recommendation. Make proposed change. Part of the rationale for separation is privacy. In cases of common ownership this would mean privacy from oneself.**
- **Existing in Draft 2: Maximum high-rise tower dimension (above 110; in height) is 90' x 125' on the waterfront, arranged with the long dimension perpendicular to Lower Water Street. Proposed Change. Consider reducing this to 70' x 125' as that is a typical residential dimension, which may be the anticipated use of such towers on the waterfront.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

Councillor Sloane advised that she is against the second recommendation. Mr. Palermo stated that he is against the recommendations. Mr. Hyde stated that he agrees with all the recommendations.

Mr. Palermo and Mr. Taylor retired from the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

6.7 Design Review Committee Terms of Reference & HRM Conflict of Interest Policy

The Task Force discussed the changes made to the original draft of the Terms of Reference for the Design Review Committee that have now been incorporated. These changes were outlined in a handout circulated to the Task Force for the agenda package. The document "Municipal Conflict of Interest Act - Chapter 299 of the Revised Statutes, 1989" was also circulated to the Task Force for discussion.

6.8 Barrington Heritage Conservation District - Fact Sheet

A Fact Sheet regarding the Barrington Heritage Conservation District was distributed for discussion to the Urban Design Task Force.

PRESENTATION (S):

6.9 Mr. Phil Pacey, President, Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia - presentation

Mr. Phil Pacey, President, Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia gave a brief presentation to the Urban Design Task Force and circulated a handout for their review. He advised that there are 120 registered heritage buildings that could be demolished and replaced by larger buildings under the proposed HRMbyDesign height maps. His handout included a 2008 Height Limits map, as well as a Proposed As of Rights height map.

Mr. Pacey advised the UDTF of the following facts:

- There are 1,050,000 square feet of vacant land in the study area, not including the Cogswell Street interchange, and as such, there is no need to sacrifice heritage and views.
- There are 1,800,000 square feet of potential office space on vacant land between George, Brunswick, Spring Garden, and Salter Streets.
- 582 residential units and 356 hotel units now approved but not built.
- 750,000 square feet of other vacant land (outside Cogswell development area and CBD) could accommodate about 5000 more residents with our as-of-right heights.
- 740,000 more square feet of vacant land (including some streets) for future developments, which would not affect views from Citadel Hill.
- There is ample vacant land to accommodate demand at a moderate scale.

He further advised that the HRMbyDesign Plan should:

1. Make the height and massing limits match the heights and masses of the heritage buildings on the block.
2. Protect views of Halifax Harbour from Citadel Hill
3. Encourage compatible development on vacant lots.

Mr. Pacey ended his presentation with a plea to the Task Force and Staff to work with the Heritage Trust to find an urban design plan that allows for growth while protecting heritage.

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS

7.1 Letter of Support for Proposed Legislative Amendments - Regional Plan Advisory Committee, dated October 22, 2008

A letter of support for the proposed Legislative Amendments was before the Task Force. The letter was written by Mr. Fred Morley, Chair of the HRM Regional Plan Advisory Committee and submitted to the Honourable Cecil Clarke, Minister of Justice - Chair, Law

Amendments Committee. Mr. Morley stated the full support of the Regional Plan Advisory Committee for approval of the proposed legislative amendments to the Municipal Government Act as a result of the HRMbyDesign initiative.

8. **ADDED ITEMS** - NONE

9. **NEXT MEETING DATE**

There will be a Urban Design Task Force meeting on November 26, 2008 from 11:00 am to 2:00pm at Halifax Hall, City Hall.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:04 p.m.

Sandra T. Riley
Legislative Assistant