

URBAN DESIGN TASK FORCE
MINUTES

November 26, 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
Councillor Dawn Sloane
Ms. Sally Camus

ABSENT:

Councillor Mary Wile
Mr. Kendall Taylor
Mr. Stephen Terauds
Ms. Cathy Carmody
Mr. Kevin Riles
Ms. Margot Young

STAFF:

Mr. Andy Fillmore, Project Manager, Capital District
Ms. Kelly Denty, Supervisor, Planning Applications
Mr. Luc Ouellet, Planner
Mr. Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Development
Ms. Sandra T. Riley, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. MacKinnon, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:09 a. m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES - NONE**

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

Additions:

- 8.1 Re-instatement of Ms. Linda Garber as member of the Urban Design Task Force
- 8.2 Heritage Protection Act
- 8.3 Concerns raised by Mr. Phil Pacey
- 8.4 St. Mathew's Church representatives - Presentation
- 8.5 Update on Economic Baseline Study

MOVED BY Mr. Garrett, seconded by Mr. Shakotko, 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**

6.1 **Update on Legislative Amendments**

Mr. Fillmore introduced Mr. Luc Ouellet, Planner, stating that Mr. Ouellet joined the HRMbyDesign team to assist in getting the project to its conclusion.

Mr. Fillmore advised that Bill 179 (the HRM Charter) and Bill 181 (the HRMbyDesign bill), both passed. He stated that it was unanimous on the Charter and only one member voting against for Bill 181. He advised that Bill 179 was passed first and that Bill 181 was passed as an amendment to Bill 179. These bills will be spoken of together from this point forward.

He advised that the extension from one year to two years was not passed because the Province is contemplating a different bill.

Mr. Fillmore went on to advise the UDTF on what changes were made as a result of the passing of the two bills. He further advised of the amendments that the Law Amendments

Committee made and what it would mean to the HRMbyDesign Plan. A discussion ensued and Mr. Fillmore took questions of clarification from the Task Force.

6.2 Update on Proposed Approvals/Public Consultation Process

There was a Council Report before the Urban Design Task Force dated September 24, 2008, regarding HRM Community Engagement Strategy - Improving HRM's public involvement practices. Mr. Fillmore advised that the document was before Regional Council on November 25, 2008.

Mr. Fillmore advised that Mr. Andrew Whittemore, Manager, Community Relations and Cultural Affairs, has agreed to come on Dec. 12/08 to hear from the Urban Design Task Force.

6.3 Response to Public Comments

The Chair arrived at 11:32 a.m.

The document "Response To Public Comments - Downtown Halifax Urban Design Plan: Draft 2, Public Review Period, September 15 - October 24, 2008" was before the Task Force. An additional document was circulated to the UDTF entitled, "Issues for Which Change is Recommended - Prioritized by magnitude of proposed change". A discussion ensued, and the following motions were passed:

MOVED BY Ms. Godsoe, seconded by Ms. Garber that the following recommendations be approved:

- 1. Issue # 2 Maintain current height limits over heritage buildings.
Recommendation to amend DHSMPS Section 4.3 - Heritage Functional Plan to highlight this issue for further study under the Functional Plan.**
- 2. Issue # 21 Rooftop additions to heritage buildings.
Recommendation to amend DHSMPS Section 4.3 - Heritage Functional Plan to highlight this issue for further study under the Functional Plan.**
- 3. Issue # 45 Stepbacks and other guidelines will not protect heritage.
Recommendation to amend DHSMPS Section 4.3 - Heritage Functional Plan to highlight this issue for further study under the Functional Plan.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

MOVED BY Councillor Sloane, seconded by Councillor Smith, that the following recommendation be approved:

- 1. Issue # 46 Schools in the downtown area.
Recommendation to proceed with strategy of engaging the newly elected school board on the importance of keeping neighbourhood schools open (particularly through Regional Centre-wide work), and to include an MOU as part of the strategy.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

The meeting recessed at 12:19 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 12:32 p.m.

The following motions were passed with the continuation of the discussion regarding "Issues for Which Change is Recommended":

MOVED BY Mr. Smith, seconded by Councillor Sloane, that the following recommendations be approved:

- 1. Issue # 39 Maintain existing MPS policies for finger piers on the waterfront.
Recommendation to clarify the language/intent of Policy 27(e)**
- 2. Issue # 50 Keep parking for people with disabilities and increase accessibility for moving around downtown.
Recommendation respecting point a. to add a clause to section 14 clarifying the need for accessible parking spaces as per the Nova Scotia Provincial Building Regulations.**
- 3. Issue # 30 LEED and other sustainability standards are enabled under MGA.
Recommendation for HRM to continue working with the Province to identify necessary amendments to the Municipal Government Act and the Nova Scotia Building Code.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

MOVED BY Councillor Sloane, seconded by Mr. Palermo, that there will be no change to Issue # 11 - locate all tall buildings in Precinct 8 in the Cogswell Interchange area.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

MOVED by Ms. Garber, seconded by Ms. Camus, that the following recommendation be approved:

- 1. Issue # 68 Removal of Cash-in-lieu of Parking.
Recommendation to remove references to cash-in-lieu of parking from the Plan.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

MOVED by Councillor Sloane, seconded by Ms. Camus that the following recommendation be approved:

- 1. Issue # 49 Increase focus on cycling
Recommendation that in section 5.2.2 of the Design Manual, rather than referring to “pedestrian friendly links...” it should be changed to “active transportation friendly links” which encompasses both pedestrian and bicycle activities and infrastructure.**

Changes to Map 12 should be made to be consistent with the routes shown on the proposed AT Routes: Cycling and Trails Map from the Active Transportation Plan.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

Ms. Linda Hutchinson, a representative from NSCAD University gave the Urban Design Task Force a brief presentation regarding height allowance on NSCAD's Granville Campus, requesting an increase from 70 feet to 90 feet. The correspondence from Professor David B. Smith, President, NSCAD University, dated November 19, 2008, was referenced in this presentation and was circulated to the Task Force. After further discussion, the following motion was passed:

MOVED by Mr. Palermo, seconded by Mr. Shakotko that the following recommendation will be tabled until the UDTF meeting of December 12, 2008:

- 1. Issue # 8 Increase height allowance on NSCAD's Granville Campus**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

Ms. Godsoe retired from the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

Representatives from St. Matthew's Church gave a presentation to the Task Force regarding the refining of heights and zone boundaries on the church property. A discussion ensued and the following motion was passed:

MOVED BY Mr. Garrett, seconded by Councillor Sloane, that the request by St. Matthew's Church to refine heights and the zone boundary on church property be tabled for the meeting of December 12, 2008 with more information clarified by the applicant. MOTION PUT AND PASSED

Mr. Palermo retired from the meeting at 1:47 p.m.

MOVED BY Councillor Sloane, seconded by Mr. Smith, that the following recommendations be approved:

- 1. Issue # 29 Increase and support the sustainability objectives in this plan with regulation.
Recommendation to lower pre- and post-bonus heights on South Park St. to more closely conform to the heights that are actually attainable. Specifically, pre-bonus +125', post-bonus+160'.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED BY Councillor Sloane, Seconded by Mr. Garrett , that the following recommendation be tabled until the December 12, 2008 meeting and the current wording of Section 2.10 of the Design Manual to be stated for clarification:

- 1. Issue # 34 Allow for proposed atrium concept proposed in the Queen's Landing project.
Recommend clarifying Section 2.10 of the Design Manual to ensure that the Design Review Committee will have the flexibility required (within Schedule W) to entertain the idea of an atrium at this location.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

MOVED BY Councillor Sloane, Seconded by Mr. Hyde, that the following recommendations be approved:

From WDCL: Building height at water's edge.

LUB, pg. 31, 11(2)(b): Change to read "building should not exceed 4 stories on the water's edge and should have a minimum setback of 25; from the seawall face."

From WDCL: Building at setback at water's edge.

LUB, pg. 31, 11(2)(b): Change “40 feet” to “25 feet”. This change will prevent non-conformities from being created, and will allow a variety of narrow and wide open spaces at water’s edge.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS

Letter from Professor David B. Smith, President, NSCAD University, dated November 19, 2008. See agenda item 6.3. (Item 8)

Correspondence from Mr. Dan Goodspeed FRAIC - Kassner Goodspeed Architects Ltd., dated November 19, 2008, re: St. Mathew’s United Church Lands, 1479 Barrington Street, Halifax, Ns. See agenda item 6.3

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Re-instatement of Ms. Linda Garber as member of the Urban Design Task Force

MOVED By Mr. Palermo, seconded by Mr. Shakotko, to re-instate Ms. Linda Garber as a member of the Urban Design Task Force. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

8.2 Heritage Protection Act

Mr. Fillmore advised that Mr. Luc Ouellet will share research from other cities (the old city of Montreal and Quebec City), and what is transferable to Halifax. Mr. Ouellet will circulate his information with the UDTF via email prior to the December 12, 2008 meeting.

8.3 Concerns Raised by Mr. Phil Pacey, President, Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia

There was a document issued to the Task Force for them to review and comment on for the December 12, 2008 meeting of the UDTF.

8.4 St. Matthew’s Church representatives - Presentation

Presentation given and motion moved in agenda item 6.3.

8.4 Update on Economic Baseline Study

Mr. Fillmore advised that a draft of the Economic Baseline Study will be going to the Sub-Committee of the Urban Design Task Force early in the new week. He recommended that

the Steering Committee present an Executive Summary document to the Task Force that will be provided for the December 12, 2008 meeting.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

There will be a Urban Design Task Force meeting on December 12, 2008 from 9:30 am to 3:00pm in the Media Room, City Hall.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Sandra T. Riley
Legislative Assistant