

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES

March 1, 2012

PRESENT: Councillors: Barry Dalrymple, Chair
Jennifer Watts, Vice Chair
Peter Lund
Darren Fisher
Jackie Barkhouse
Dawn Sloane
Lorelei Nicoll

REGRETS: Councillor: Debbie Hum

STAFF: Mr. Peter Stickings, Acting Director, Planning and Infrastructure
Ms. Krista Vining, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 6, 2012

MOVED by Councillor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Fisher that the minutes of February 6, 2012 be approved, as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions

9.1 Information Item 5 – Information Report dated February 24, 2012 re: Requests for Presentations to Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee

* Additional request to present received from:

- Walter Regan, Sackville Rivers Association re: Sackville Greenway

It was noted that the Transportation Standing Committee has accepted to hear Mr. Regan's presentation on the Sackville Greenway at their March 22, 2012 meeting. The Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee agreed to attend the Transportation Standing Committee's March meeting to hear the presentation.

9.2 Information Item 2 - Information Report dated February 8, 2012 re: ComFIT: Small Wind Turbine Municipal Opportunities

9.3 Information Item 3 - Information Report dated February 20, 2012 re: Disposal of Surplus HRM Equipment

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Nicoll that the Order of Business be approved, as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

4.1 STATUS SHEET UPDATE

A copy of the Status Sheet was before the Standing Committee for review.

Clarification was provided that an information report dated January 16, 2012 on the status of the Community Energy Plan was before the Standing Committee (Information Item 1) and is proposed to be removed from the Status Sheet. A progress report is projected to come forward to the Standing Committee in the spring 2012 and will be tracked on the internal agenda planning tool.

Councillor Lund referenced the Lot Grading By-Law/Storm Water Management Functional Plan item, asking if future updates on the RedBook would include rural road standards. Mr. MacLellan advised that he would seek clarification from staff and report back to the Councillor. Mr. MacLellan noted that rural road standards are captured under some of the working projects of the Regional Plan Review.

Matters proposed for removal were deleted from the Status Sheet.

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

6.1 Correspondence – None

6.2 Petitions – None

6.3 Presentations

6.3.1 Lara Ryan, Canada Green Building Council Atlantic Chapter re: Current Status of Green Buildings in Canada

Matter addressed later in the meeting. See page 6.

6.3.2 Terry Toner & Art Vidito, Co-Chairs of Harbour East Transmission Project Public Advisory Committee re: Harbour East Transmission Line Project

A copy of the presentation was provided for the file.

Mr. Terry Toner, Co-Chair of the Harbour East Transmission Project Public Advisory Committee and Director of Environmental Services for Nova Scotia Power Inc. introduced himself, Robin McAdam, Executive Vice President of Strategic Business and Customer Services and Tim Leopold, Director of Transmission Project Implementation, and delivered a presentation on the Harbour East Transmission Line project to the Standing Committee.

Councillor Sloane entered the meeting at 1:19 p.m.

7. REPORTS

7.1 STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

7.1.1 Harbour East Transmission Line Update

A revised staff report dated March 1, 2012 was before the Standing Committee.

Mr. Angus Doyle, Utilities Coordination Manager, provided an update on the Harbour East Transmission Line and an overview of the recommendations outlined in the March 1, 2012 staff report. Highlights were as follows:

- The Harbour East Transmission Line Project Advisory Committee was comprised of 13 members representing the stakeholder communities, including: Cole Harbour, Woodlawn and Eastern Passage
- The process was open and transparent and in addition, open houses offered an opportunity to the general public to engage with the Committee to understand the process and recommendations
- The design will utilize existing power lines located roadside in HRM right-of-way
- Poles will be replaced with new longer poles that can accommodate the transmission lines
- Work will be undertaken without power disruption
- No additional infrastructure is anticipated; the visual impact is incremental as existing infrastructure appears roadside for most of the route and the impact would be the additional 15 feet (increased profile to the existing structure)
- Nova Scotia Power Inc. have agreed to consider relocating the existing power line which runs along the Costal Heritage Park entrance to the other side of the road; in addition, NSPI has agreed to include input from the Municipality respecting aspects of the line, which could assist with reducing visual impact

Councillor Barkhouse entered the meeting around 1:30 p.m.

Councillor Nicoll was assured from her discussions with residents during the open houses that this is the best possible outcome for the transmission line. She thanked Nova Scotia Power Inc. for their work on the project and was encouraged to know that NSPI acknowledges the value of community input for a project of this nature and their willingness to work with residents. She was further encouraged to know that NSPI is going to use this initiative in future projects where public engagement will be paramount.

MOVED by Councillor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Fisher that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommend to Halifax Regional Council that:

- 1. The process undertaken to identify the route for a new transmission line between the Dartmouth East substation and Eastern Passage is acceptable;**
- 2. The proposed project design and routing reasonably reflects values related to community identity and inspirational scenery as gathered during the Cole Harbour Basin: Open Spaces; and**
- 3. The utilization of existing power lines in the HRM right-of-way to accommodate the new transmission line is acceptable, providing the project complies with By-Law S-300 (Streets By-Law) and that Nova Scotia Power Inc. agrees to continue to work with HRM staff around detailed design of the line along Bissett Road in order to meet Municipal objectives as outlined in the staff report dated March 1, 2012.**

Appreciation was expressed to everyone involved in the project for creating a better solution that is more cost effective.

Mr. Doyle and Mr. Toner responded to questions raised by the Standing Committee respecting the cost savings, the public engagement process being used as a template for similar future projects and concerns raised on the electromagnetic fields (EMF) from power lines. It was noted that a medical doctor from Capital Health was present at one of the open house sessions and indicating was given that there is no concern with respect to the existing standards and levels of EMF that are permitted within these types of environment.

Further clarification was provided with the possibility of using the existing lines as-of-right without going to public consultation. It was noted that a portion of the lands in the south-east area were private lands, which would have required consultation with HRM. Mr. Toner confirmed that public engagement would have been held as the Public Advisory Committee was trying to reduce or eliminate incremental impact from the lines.

Staff further advised that relocating poles in the Coastal Heritage Park entrance area of the Bissett Road section of the transmission line route, to minimize impact on view planes was being considered. This will require coordination with BellAliant and Nova Scotia Power Inc. as both utilities' infrastructure is on the identified poles.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Councillor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Barkhouse that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommends that Halifax Regional Council request the Mayor to send a letter of commendation to the community members of Harbour East Transmission Project Public Advisory Committee (Cole Harbour, Woodlawn and Eastern Passage), thanking them for their efforts in relation to the positive outcome. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Item 6.3.1 was addressed at this time.

6.3.1 Lara Ryan, Canada Green Building Council Atlantic Chapter re: Current Status of Green Buildings in Canada

A copy of the presentation was submitted for the file.

Ms. Lara Ryan of the Canada Green Building Council Atlantic Chapter (CGBC) introduced herself and CGBC members Tim MacLeod and Kendal Taylor, and delivered a presentation on the new developments in green buildings.

Mr. Richard MacLellan, Manager, Energy and Environment, advised that HRM staff is conducting an engagement session with CGBC on March 7th. Staff will be providing an overview of policy processes HRM is undertaking, such as Regional Plan Review, to help CGBC determine how they can engage with these processes. Staff will forward this appointment to members who may be interested in attending the session.

Ms. Ryan, Mr. MacLeod and Mr. Taylor responded to questions raised by the Standing Committee on the programs and tools for green buildings (ie. Living Building Challenge, LEED Canada Program, Green Up: Building Performance Program) and the process and cost involved to obtain LEED certification for buildings and neighbourhood developments.

During the discussion, Mr. Ryan referenced the CGBC's Sustainable Communities Toolkit which she would provide to the Clerks Office for distribution to the Standing Committee for their information.

Mr. MacLellan indicated that the LEED Canada Program is comparable to the request Councillors received from the Halifax Chamber of Commerce (HCC) on a recommendation for an energy plan. He noted that a number of HCC members that participated in the drafting of the energy plan are members of CGBC. He suggested that staff could prepare a report to the Standing Committee identifying appropriate engagement opportunities related to municipal policy opportunities, inclusive of the Regional Plan Review and the applicable HRM policy.

MOVED by Councillor Sloane, seconded by Councillor Watts to direct staff to provide a report identifying appropriate Regional Council engagement opportunities with the Canadian Green Building Council (Atlantic Chapter) and Halifax Chamber of Commerce, Energy Advisory Committee related to municipal policy opportunities, inclusive of the Regional Plan Review. Further, that the report identify the applicable HRM policy for which the Municipality has responsibility.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.1.2 Cost-sharing Agreement – QUEST Canada

A staff report dated November 29, 2011 was before the Standing Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Sloane that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommend to Halifax Regional Council that the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to sign a cost-sharing agreement with QUEST Canada to undertake an Opportunities Assessment: Natural Gas Use in HRM Fleet (Phase One), according to the Budget Implications section of the November 29, 2011 staff report.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Watts respecting what the cost-sharing agreement with QUEST Canada means for HRM's fleet stock in terms of conversion, staff advised that they would respond back to the Councillor.

Staff further responded to questions respecting project funding and the phased approach.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.1.3 Conceptual Brownfield Incentives: Gas Stations

A staff report dated December 6, 2011 was before the Standing Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Watts seconded by Councillor Sloane that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee forward the staff report dated December 6, 2011 to Halifax Regional Council with a recommendation that Halifax Regional Council:

- 1. Request the Mayor to send a letter to the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations urging that the 2009 requested Legislative Amendment respecting Density Bonusing be expedited;**
- 2. Request the Mayor to send a letter to the Minister of Environment urging that the efforts to complete the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act commitment of developing tools to stimulate redevelopment of contaminated land be expedited; and**
- 3. Direct staff to examine the solutions required to expedite redevelopment projects in the Regional Centre, specifically related to the increase in housing requirements related to the Ship Building Contract.**

Councillor Watts noted the importance of finding a balance between having development happen on brownfield sites which provides economic, social and environmental benefits, and at the same time being cautious of how these developments will happen. Councillors are seeing hesitancy from residents in relation to the pace at which brownfields are being redeveloped. She further noted the importance of public education around the process for redeveloping brownfield lands, as this has been very successful throughout Canada.

Clarification was provided on the Atlantic Risk Based Corrective Action (RBCA) guidelines, as outlined in the attached December 6, 2011 staff report. A common barrier in the redevelopment of brownfield properties is the risk aversion of lenders. Acceptance of RBCA guidelines is intended and anticipated to eliminate that barrier.

In response to question raised, staff clarified that preliminary work has started around tax incentives, which requires additional financial analysis. A report will be coming forward to the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee on the Tax Holiday Incentive.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

8. MOTIONS

8.1 Councillor Lund

MOVED by Councillor Lund, seconded by Councillor Watts that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee request a staff report, including recommendations, on:

- 1. Current practices of HRM in the investigation of potentially contaminated soils/sediment and management of impacted materials on and off site; and**
- 2. Procedures for the investigation and management of impacted materials on and off site to be uniformly applied across HRM departments on decommissioning and construction projects.**

Councillor Lund indicated that when large scale facilities are developed (ie. redevelopment of old school sites and large industrial sites) HRM conducts phase one and phase two environmental assessments to determine if the soil materials are contaminated. However, there are no testing requirements for smaller scale construction sites. He noted that HRM generally tests the soils to determine if it is geotechnically suitable to be used onsite. If determined unsuitable material, it is then left up to the contractor to remove it offsite. He expressed concern with HRM's liability in relation to protocol in relying on the contractor to remove unsuitable materials from the site. He was further concerned that testing is not being uniformly applied across HRM. Councillor Lund provided an example of a situation in his district where contaminated materials were left onsite.

Mr. Richard MacLellan, Manager, Energy and Environment, advised that in accordance with the rules and regulations when soil is removed offsite it must be tested. In response to Councillor Lund's example, he noted that once contamination is known, testing must then be conducted.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9. ADDED ITEMS

- 9.1 Information Item 5 – Information Report dated February 24, 2012 re: Requests for Presentations to Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee**

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Sloane that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee approve Mr. Geoff Schimmel of Atlantic Wood Works request to present. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9.2 Information Item 2 Information Report dated February 8, 2012 re: ComFIT: Small Wind Turbine Municipal Opportunities

A staff information report dated February 8, 2012 was before the Standing Committee.

Staff responded to questions of clarification raised by the Standing Committee in relation to the information provided in the February 8th information report.

MOVED by Councillor Sloane, seconded by Councillor Barkhouse that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee direct staff to continue to investigate opportunities to develop a potential ComFIT project for the 2013-2014 capital budget and provide regular updates to the Standing Committee.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9.3 Information Item 3 Information Report dated February 20, 2012 re: Disposal of Surplus HRM Equipment

A staff information report dated February 20, 2012 was before the Standing Committee.

During the review of the February 29th information report, reference was made to serviceable furniture that cannot be redistributed being sent to public auction for sale. It was noted that there are a number of not-for-profit community groups that could use this furniture rather than having to purchase new furniture. District funds have been used to in the past to assist with purchasing furniture for not-for-profit community groups.

MOVED by Councillor Lund, seconded by Councillor Sloane that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee direct staff to examine opportunities to revise the Disposal of Surplus Assets Policy to enable donation of furniture, including filing cabinets to not-for-profit community groups and report back to the Standing Committee on these opportunities.

Upon further consideration as to which business unit would be responsible for this review, the Standing Committee agreed to ask the Audit and Finance Standing Committee to examine opportunities to revise the Disposal of Surplus Assets Policy.

The motion now reads:

MOVED by Councillor Lund, seconded by Councillor Sloane that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee ask the Audit and Finance Standing Committee to examine opportunities to revise the Disposal of Surplus Assets Policy to enable donation of furniture, including filing cabinets to not-for-profit community groups and report back to the Standing Committee on these opportunities. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION – NONE

11. NEXT MEETING DATE – April 5, 2012

It was noted that the meeting will be held in the Dartmouth Chamber, 90 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

Krista Vining
Legislative Assistant

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Information Report dated January 16, 2012 re: Status of Community Energy Plan
2. Information Report dated February 8, 2012 re: ComFIT: Small Wind Turbine Municipal Opportunities
3. Information Report dated February 20, 2012 re: Disposal of Surplus HRM Equipment
4. Briefing Note dated February 22, 2012 re: Clean Across N.S. - Community Litter Clean-up
5. Information Report dated February 24, 2012 re: Requests for Presentations to Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee