

Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee
August 2, 2012

TO: Chair and Members of Environment and Sustainability Standing
Committee

SUBMITTED BY: 
Peter Stickings, Acting Director, Planning & Infrastructure

DATE: May 24, 2012

SUBJECT: Environmental Compliance

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

October 6, 2012, Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee

BACKGROUND

The Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee moved and passed a motion to direct staff to provide a report on the status of environmental enforcement in HRM, including the jurisdiction and service delivery of the various government bodies. In addition, identify current areas of potential improvements.

DISCUSSION

The motion from committee requested staff to look at:

1. The Status of Environmental Enforcement in HRM, including jurisdiction and service delivery;
2. Identify current areas of potential improvement.

Overview of Legislative Authorities, with respect to Environmental Issues:

Level of Government	Legislation	Contact Information
Federal	<p>Samples of pertinent legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Protection Act • Fisheries Act • Species at Risk Act 	<p>Environment Canada 45 Alderney Drive Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B2Y 2N6 Telephone: 902-426-7231 Fax: 902-426-6348 Email: 15th.reception@ec.gc.ca</p> <p>Fisheries and Oceans Canada P.O. Box 1035 Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B2Y 4T3 Telephone: 902-426-3550 Fax: 902-426-5995</p>
Provincial	<p>http://nslegislature.ca/legc/sol.htm</p> <p>Samples of pertinent Legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Act • Beaches Act • Electricity Act • Energy Efficient Appliances Act • Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act • Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act 	<p>Nova Scotia Environment</p> <p>Toll Free: 1-877-9ENVIRO (1-877-936-8476) Fax: 424-0569 E-mail: emc@gov.ns.ca</p>
Municipal	<p>http://www.halifax.ca/legislation/</p> <p>The municipality is directed by the HRM Charter</p> <p>Samples of pertinent By-Laws include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lot Grading • Respecting Open Air Burning • Pesticides • Solid Waste • Land Use By-Laws 	<p>490-4000</p> <p>https://www.halifax.ca/contactus/</p>

The breadth of environmental compliance is profound. Primary regulatory and legislative authority for environmental issues is the mandate of the Federal and Provincial Government. The primary avenue for municipal environmental compliance is through land use policy and regulation.

Currently, HRM is in the midst of the 5-year review of the Regional Plan. Regional Plan is the overarching set of policies directing the long term growth of the municipality. This is the primary venue for setting or altering municipal policy direction.

There are opportunities for public engagement and recommendation related to the review project. HRM is committed to an open and inclusive public engagement process. Community and professional organizations, institutions, the business community, diverse cultural groups and other interest groups can participate in long range planning efforts in a variety of ways:

- [@PlanHRM](#) on Twitter
- facebook.com/PlanHRM
- planhrm@halifax.ca

Phase II of RP+5 Public Consultation completed recently. Findings of community input will be reported to Regional Council imminently. Environmental issues were well articulated by the community. Those comments will inform the creation of draft policy which will be presented in Phase III of the public consultation meetings planned for September.

In addition to RP+5, in October 2011, Halifax Regional Council initiated the *Centre Plan* and directed that a new Regional Centre Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law be delivered by 2015. However, the recent emergence of a number of growth opportunities and challenges has led Council to direct that "Centre Plan Phase 1" be initiated to deliver new policies for several commercial corridors in Halifax and Dartmouth in 2012. This phase of the *Centre Plan* will address current growth pressures and opportunities by amending the Halifax, Dartmouth, and Downtown Dartmouth Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-Laws. The new policies will protect the scale and character of existing neighbourhoods while removing barriers to well-designed and appropriately scaled development. The entire *Centre Plan* is scheduled for completion in 2015.

These two major policy and planning projects are underpinned by pillars of environmental sustainability. It is through these projects, and projects like it, where specific concerns (in often cases related to environmental issues) will be identified. Following that, municipal policy is developed with those community concerns in mind. That work ultimately directs the development of By-Laws and Land Use Policy. This is the venue for the public to communicate the opportunities and expectation for improvement as directed in the motion.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no impacts to the 2012/2013 Operating or Project Budget.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not specifically for this report. However, very broad and comprehensive community engagement has been conducted in support of the Regional Plan review.

ATTACHMENTS

None

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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