

**URBAN DESIGN TASK FORCE
MINUTES**

May 2, 2007

PRESENT:

**Ms. Dale Godsoe, Chair
Mr. Paul MacKinnon, Vice- Chair
Mr. David Garrett
Mr. Frank Palermo
Mr. Paul Shakotko
Mr. Stephen Terauds
Mr. Bernie Smith
Ms. Linda Garber
Ms. Cathy Carmody
Councillor Smith
Councillor Wile
Ms. Adriane Abbott
Councillor Sloane
Mr. Kendall Taylor**

REGRETS:

**Mr. Kevin Riles
Mr. Bill Hyde**

STAFF:

**Mr. Andy Fillmore, Project Manager, Urban Design
Ms. Jacqueline Hamilton, Manager, Capital District
Ms. Chrissy White, Legislative Assistant**

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 in the Halifax Ferry Terminal Board Room, 5077 George Street.

Mr. Harold Madi, Partner, Office for Urbanism joined the meeting via conference call.

2. **INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair introduced Kristin Chrzanowski, Intern who will be working with the UDTF throughout the summer.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Changes:

Remove Ms. Linda Garber's name from the April 19th attendance list as she was not present.

Mr. Frank Palermo advised that he would like the words "rebuild and not repair" to be changed to "some areas need an historical feel, but modern buildings could also be represented in the area."

MOVED by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Wile, that the minutes from March 30, 2007 and April 19, 2007 be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

MOVED by Mr. Paul Shakotko, seconded by Mr. David Garrett, that the Order of Business be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

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

end result.

Mr. Madi continued his presentation by advising:

- Each of the Opportunity Sites will have a set of guiding principles that will guide their transformation and development,
- The sites will be resolved and refined at the Nova Scotia Association of Architects 75th Anniversary Design Charettes. The outcomes of the Charettes will be forwarded to the Office for Urbanism for review to ensure a consistent and coherent approach is developed for each site. These outcomes will serve as a model for future site specific guidelines in HRM,
- The consultants will provide the framework for the Opportunity Sites in September as the Downtown Forum will provide valuable information that will be applicable for each site,
- The framework for the sites are demonstrations and not policy, but if they become universally accepted, they may be developed into plans for the future.

8.1.2 What Were the Outcomes and How Will They Be Used

Outlined in the above discussion.

8.2 Project Manager's Report

Mr. Fillmore, Project Manager advised that two interns have been hired to assist in the Urban Design project. Additionally, one full time position for a technical assistant will be filled in approximately six weeks. He further advised that Mr. Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Development has committed to providing appropriate staff resources, and plans to allocate an additional planner to the urban design team.

Ms. Hamilton, Manager, Capital District advised that the Urban Design project is highly consultant driven, and that is the main differing factor from the Regional Plan.

8.2.1 Project Staffing

Outlined in the above discussion.

8.2.2 Project Communications

Councillor Smith advised that the communications staff person should provide the Urban Design “story” to the media to provide interest.

8.3 Approval of Forum 2 Outcomes

8.3.1 Presentation- Urban Design Framework

Mr. Fillmore provided a PowerPoint presentation as a refresher for the panels received earlier in the project.

8.3.2 Neighbourhoods and Districts

Mr. Madi provided an overview on the above noted.

- The urban design plan will be approved in principle but could be subject to future amendments.
- The intent of the project is to create buy-in with the understanding that there may be possible changes.
- The objective is to define neighbourhoods within a scale of a five minute walk, having the basic amenities available within that radius.
- Larger scale amenities would have to be shared among various neighbourhoods and the sub-areas need to have a focus because they provide the basic building blocks.
- The intent is to provide study areas to help define details to ensure constant evolution.
- The selection of the neighbourhood districts was achieved through public feedback and the forums.

In response to Mr. Palmero’s question regarding the adoption of a small neighbourhood structure and the risks involved, Mr. Madi advised that a distinction must be made between Dartmouth and the Peninsula. The areas that do not have an identity and a strong sense of stability will be the areas that will need assistance.

Councillor Sloane advised of her support for the plan and reiterated the value in its concept and flexibility. She further advised that this strategy will be used to help identify the needs of the community in comparison with other areas.

8.3.3 Prominent Open Spaces

8.3.4 Prominent Streetscapes

Mr. Madi provided made a brief verbal presentation, noting the following:

- The Office for Urbanism is looking at streets where everyday life unfolds to determine public access capabilities,
- Pedestrian movement is the primary form of movement in the downtown, and the environmental design will consider that factor.
- Specific areas could be set as a priority for streetscaping.

A brief discussion ensued regarding transportation and transit services where the following points were noted:

Concern was expressed regarding the context of the development concerning road space and the transit system as well as transit priorities and inconsistencies.

Mr. Smith expressed concern regarding implementable guidelines surrounding neighbourhoods. He noted that the bigger picture may be overlooked if too much time is spent individually categorizing neighbourhoods.

Councillor Sloane advised of the need for further examination regarding transportation, safe pedestrian areas and open space pertaining to special events in HRM.

Ms. Hamilton advised that the Regional Plan outlines the transit and traffic guidelines. She noted that the urban design policies will strive to be un-sync and integrate with the Regional Plan priorities. She concluded by advising that the urban design project should not outline detailed transportation guidelines that are different from outcomes established by the Regional Plan as it would cause confusion and inconsistency.

Mr. Madi advised that the intent of the urban design project regarding transit is to identify how urban design can support transit priorities.

Mr. Palermo expressed concern regarding a transportation gap. He questioned the commitment of the urban design project in making public transit work. He advised that he is unconvinced that setting guidelines will fix problems, and is fearful that these problems will not be identified in the study. He believes that transportation should be a central point that is built around.

8.3.5 Civic Design

Mr. Madi advised that the civic design element is intended to capture the unique aspects of urban design that are important on a regional scale. Heritage and cultural resources, gateways and intersections, civic frontages and open spaces are some important approaches for the downtown core.

Mr. Garrett advised that he would like to see details on a heritage advisory plan as it has been identified as something that needs to be done for the downtown and the Regional Centre.

The Committee agreed to combine recommendations for Forum 2 and 3 for the July Committee of the Whole.

8.4 Ongoing Issues

At the request of the Chair, the Committee agreed to move Forum 5 to the first week in September.

8.4.1 People- Cathy Carmody

Deferred to the next meeting due to time constraints.

8.4.2 Sustainability- David Garrett/Kendall Taylor

Deferred to the next meeting due to time constraints.

8.4.3 Heritage- Andy Fillmore

Deferred to the next meeting due to time constraints.

8.4.5 Reurbanization

Deferred to the next meeting due to time constraints.

9. ADDED ITEMS- NONE

10. NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE

