

URBAN DESIGN TASK FORCE
MINUTES

September 5, 2007

PRESENT:

Ms. Dale Godsoe, Chair
Mr. Paul MacKinnon, Vice-Chair
Ms. Cathy Carmody
Mr. Bill Hyde
Mr. Steven Terauds
Mr. Bernie Smith
Ms. Margot Young
Mr. Kendall Taylor
Mr. Frank Palermo
Councillor Jim Smith
Councillor Dawn Sloane
Councillor Mary Wile

REGRETS:

Mr. Paul Shakotko
Ms. Adriane Abbott
Ms. Linda Garber
Mr. Kevin Riles

STAFF:

Mr. Andy Filmore, Project Manager
Ms. Jacqueline Hamilton, Manager, Capital District
Ms. Jennifer Keesmatt, Office for Urbanism
Ms. Julia Horncastle, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES -August 1, 2007

MOVED by Councillor Wile, seconded by Paul MacKinnon, that the minutes of August 1, 2007 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

MOVED by Councillor Wile, seconded by Bernie Smith, that the Order of Business be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - NONE

5. REPORTS

5.1 Forum 4 Discussion

Ms. Jennifer Keesmatt, Office for Urbanism, with an aid of a powerpoint presentation outlining the Urban Design Strategy and components and key objectives of the vision for creating a successful downtown.

In response to Councillor Sloane regarding the development of the Cogswell Interchange, Mr. Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Development, advised the market is key and before the municipality tears something down there is a need to know there would be a market to sell what is built in its place. He noted there has not been sufficient demand for additional office space in the downtown. He stated if the economic trends change, then the demand would be greater but the existing as of right sites could deal with the immediate demand.

In reference to the proposed building heights, Mr. Dunphy stated that even if there is a discretionary process, it is not known at the present time what height is being approved. This would approve a height throughout the downtown and whether as of right or through a review process is not known at this time.

Ms. Godsoe clarified that the buildings in the presentation reflect buildings that are tall as well as others under the twelve foot. It is all those that can be developed not just the ones being presented in the scenarios.

Mr. David Garrett expressed concern that the risks and benefits presupposes a bias towards height.

Councillor Sloane stated the biggest issue is quality and design and the buildings should have the elements of building in a big city.

Mr. Kendall Taylor stated “L” and “M” sites strike him as being too tall with the buildings going from two to three stories up to twenty one stories. He stated it is important that the scale of building does not get out of whack.

Mr. Frank Palermo stated the transformation needs to be in the continuity of the streetscape and the tall buildings are not in the transformity of the streetscape. He stated low rise buildings should be limited to six or seven floors rather than twelve.

Mr. Ron Soskone stated one of the issues in doing development in Halifax is about process and not density. The major problem is uncertainty as to what can be built on a property with process and planning framework being issues as well as the ability to get an approval in place. He stated the question of feasibility is moot.

Mr. David Garrett noted not a lot of attention give to views.

In response to Councillor Sloane, the committee was advised that it is being proposed that all buildings are mixed use.

The Committee agree to meet for a debrief at noon Monday, September 17, 2007.

5.2 COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Ms. Mallaley, Communications Officer, provided an update to the committee with regards to newspaper coverage.

5.3 UPDATE ON EXTERNAL MEETINGS

Ms. Godsoe noted she and Mr. Filmore had met with Capital Health to discuss their long range plans. A meeting had been held with the Chronicle Herald Editorial Board as well as with the Nova Scotia Business Inc. who will be making a presentation at the October 3rd meeting. She advised the Halifax Regional School Board will be reviewing their master plan with the Task Force.

5.4 CRITICAL PATH UPDATE

The dates for Forum 5 are to be determined.

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND DELEGATION

7.1 Correspondence

7.1.1 Phil Pacey and Aubrey Fricker

It was agreed the Mr. Fricker would make a presentation at the October meeting.

8. ADDED ITEMS - NONE

9. NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 3, 2007.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Julia Horncastle
Legislative Assistant