

# HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

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## HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES May 13, 2003

PRESENT:

Mayor Peter J. Kelly  
Deputy Mayor Harry McInroy  
Councillors: Steve Streach  
Gary Hines  
Keith Colwell  
Ron Cooper  
Brian Warshick  
Condo Sarto  
Bruce Hetherington  
Jim Smith  
John Cunningham  
Jerry Blumenthal  
Dawn Sloane  
Sue Uteck  
Sheila Fougere  
Russell Walker  
Diana Whalen  
Linda Mosher (12:50 p.m.)  
Stephen Adams  
Brad Johns  
Robert Harvey (1:20 p.m.)  
Len Goucher  
Reg Rankin (1:10 p.m.)  
Gary Meade

STAFF:

Mr. George McLellan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. Wayne Anstey, Municipal Solicitor  
Ms. Vi Carmichael, Municipal Clerk  
Ms. Julia Horncastle, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES - May 6, 2003**

**MOVED by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Streach, that the minutes of May 6, 2003 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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

**MOVED by Councillor Streach, seconded by Councillor Blumenthal that the Order of Business, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. **SIGN BY-LAW**

Mr. Mitch Dickey, Planner, with the aid of a PowerPoint Presentation, addressed Council on what has taken place since the update in October, 2002, noting:

- There has been consultation with Councillors to discuss community specific issues and concerns;
- Further refinements to sign standards made;
- The By-Law Rationalization Working Group has completed review of new by-law;
- Further industry consultations have taken place;
- Interim controls on mobile signs in Cole Harbour & Eastern Passage have been initiated;
- All sign requirements to be located in one comprehensive by-law;
- There are general requirements for all types of signs in one document;
- Recognition of the need for communities to be able to develop unique standards;
- Approval mechanisms have been identified;
- Enforcement tools have been outlined;
- Timeline for implementation of the by-law and steps to be taken following adoption of the by-law.

Mr. Dickey advised the adoption of the Sign By-law needs to be in conjunction with the amendments to the Encroachment By-law. Following the adoption of the by-law, the existing Dartmouth and Halifax Ordinances would be repealed and the 21 existing Land Use By-Law's would have to be amended to remove all signage requirements. Mr. Dickey noted there is the potential for numerous mobile signs in Halifax and Halifax County as businesses could apply for a permanent sign resulting in a mobile sign being grandfathered. He advised interim land

use controls could be put in place for those areas and, when the by-law is advertised, those would have immediate effect to address the situation.

Councillor Blumenthal noted that one area can have stronger regulations than another. In response, Mr. Dickey advised the by-law will be made as consistent as possible but there will be some variation from area to area relative to some standards.

In response to Councillor Blumenthal regarding billboards on private property, Mr. Paul Dunphy, Director, Planning and Development Services, advised if the billboards are on private property and in existence at the time the by-law is adopted, they will be grandfathered. He noted most are on HRM property and there are no changes in the by-law that would restrict the use of the billboards if they were a permitted under the zoning for that property.

Mr. Dickey advised Council can make a request to the province to ban billboards in certain areas under the provincial rules and restrictions regarding 100 series highways.

Mr. Dickey advised there is a draft Elections Sign By-law that will be separate from the Regional Sign By-law.

In response to Councillor Sarto regarding the use of sandwich board placement on the road medians, Mr. Dickey advised there are safety concerns with the placement of these in the road right-of-way but there is provision for placement of such signs on private property.

Councillor Uteck suggested steps be in place with regards to impoundment prior to the adoption of the by-law so that the information is available before the public hearing.

Councillor Adams questioned why it was being suggested the placement be in line with setbacks from property lines as opposed to a physical setback such as a curb or sidewalk. In response, Mr. Dickey advised there are areas where road right-of-way includes a piece of a property so a ten foot standard may make it impossible to place a mobile sign on a property. He noted this puts the onus on a property owner to find out where that property line is, advising an encroachment license can be applied for if there is a problem with the setback from the road right-of-way.

Councillor Adams stated right-of-way and travel-way are separate, noting people know where the curb or sidewalk is but they may not know where the setback is.

In response to Councillor Mosher regarding real estate signs advertising new subdivisions, Mr. Dickey advised the corner sign height requirements are in Land Use By-laws at the present time. The Sign By-law identifies realtor signs as signs that can be placed without permit or license if they meet the setback requirements. These signs would be permitted in

conjunction with an ongoing development but would have to be taken down once the purpose for which they were erected is complete.

Councillor Whalen stated she would like to see a fee structure before the by-law is put in place.

In response to Councillor Smith, Mr. Dickey advised industrial parks would be permitted to have the largest signs with regards to height and size.

Councillor Adams referenced the summer months and the tourist season and suggested staff look at the signs being up for a 90 day period and down for a 30 day period.

**MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Fougere, that staff implement land use controls and proceed with next steps towards public hearing. Further staff provide a report on the provincial program for designating scenic highways. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

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

Vi Carmichael  
Municipal Clerk