



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 10.1.6 (iii)
Halifax Regional Council
February 8, 2011

TO: Mavor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed _____
for Councillor Gloria McCluskey, Chair, Harbour East Community Council

DATE: February 3, 2011

SUBJECT: Dartmouth Bridge Terminal

ORIGIN

The Harbour East Community Council Meeting of February 3, 2011.

RECOMMENDATION

That the comments and concerns received from the public be referred back to Council for their consideration prior to making a decision with regard to the Dartmouth Bridge Terminal Project.

BACKGROUND

Halifax Regional Council received a staff report and presentation on January 25, 2011 regarding proposed tender changes to the Dartmouth Bridge Terminal project. Discussion of the matter resulted in Halifax Regional Council approving the following motion:

That this matter be referred to the Harbour East Community Council for a public meeting and then come back to Halifax Regional Council for a final decision.

DISCUSSION

A public meeting was held in conjunction with the Harbour East Community Council meeting of February 3, 2011 during which staff gave a presentation which presented the proposed changes to the tender for the Dartmouth Terminal project. The meeting was attended by approximately 40 members of the public with 11 persons addressing the meeting. The need for a new transit terminal was not disputed. However, citizens had a number of comments and/or concerns which, in summary, fell within the following categories:

Accessibility

Concern was raised that features be included in the design to assist visually impaired persons in crossing lines of bus traffic and accessing the platform. Also that features such as tinted or colored glass are included in the design to provide contrast. Concern was noted that the individuals representing persons with disabilities relative to this matter have the necessary background/understanding of the concerns. Disappointment was expressed by representatives of Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) on behalf of the visually impaired that the bridge is no longer part of the proposal. The bridge provided a safer alternative for visually impaired transit users. There is a desire on the part of representatives of the CNIB to have a greater understanding of Option 2 and how persons who are visually impaired will safely access and travel the terminal.

Loss of Features

The loss of the bridge, elevators, and green roof is very disappointing. The loss of these features makes the terminal less acceptable to residents of Dartmouth, particularly since they only approved of Option 1 due to these features. Dartmouth has been required to give up a significant portion of its 300 year old Common and, if Option 2 is chosen, will receive a terminal with fewer features. There is concern that the landscaping depicted in the sketches will not be implemented and note was made that the trees shown will take years to grow. There is also concern that the noise from the terminal will have a greater impact on Dartmouth High School. Note was made that this terminal was located by a high school and a sport/fitness facility and not integrated with businesses which utilize transit. Option 1 is the preferred option.

Transit Driver Needs

Transit drivers, represented by members of ATU, are concerned with the safety of the existing terminal and need basic accommodations such as a washroom. Transit drivers want to see this terminal move forward and urged members of HECC to decide upon a design and move forward now.

School Board/Dartmouth High School

The School Board has reviewed Option 2 and have determined that it is in fact a better fit with Dartmouth High School. The original proposal addressed concerns Dartmouth High had with buses idling on Thistle Street adjacent to the High School. Option 2, without the bridge/walkway to the High School, addresses concern with safety of students in that not as many people will be crossing on High School lands. Concern was expressed regarding what size of sport field will be left once the terminal is complete and with students using the sport fields and how close the bus fumes would be to these youth. There was a suggestion there should be some benefit to both the High School and the Commons to having this terminal located adjacent.

In response to concern regarding noise from the terminal operations and its impact on the High School, staff committed to reviewing the matter with the consultant to provide a more complete understanding of this aspect of the project.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Please refer to the attached staff report for budget implications.

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

Harbour East Community Council hosted a public meeting on February 3, 2011 to ensure there was public consultation relative to the proposed changes to the Dartmouth Terminal project. HRM staff have consulted with staff of both the Sportsplex and Dartmouth High relative to these changes. Please refer to the attached staff report for further information on community engagement.

ALTERNATIVES

Please refer to the attached staff report for alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

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

Report Prepared by: Sherryll Murphy , Deputy Clerk
