

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

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HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
MINUTES  
December 14, 2004

PRESENT:

Deputy Mayor Len Goucher  
Councillors: Steve Streach  
David Hendsbee  
Harry McInroy  
Gloria McCluskey (2:25 p.m.)  
Andrew Younger  
Bill Karsten  
Becky Kent  
Jim Smith  
Mary Wile  
Patrick Murphy  
Dawn Sloane (2:00 p.m.)  
Sue Uteck  
Sheila Fougere  
Russell Walker  
Debbie Hum  
Stephen Adams (2:15 p.m.)  
Brad Johns  
Robert Harvey  
Reg Rankin  
Gary Meade

ABSENT  
WITH REGRETS:

Mayor Peter J. Kelly  
Councillors: Krista Snow  
Linda Mosher

STAFF:

Mr. Dan English, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. Wayne Anstey, Municipal Solicitor  
Ms. Jan Gibson, Municipal Clerk  
Ms. Julia Horncastle, Legislative Assistant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - December 7, 2004**

**MOVED by Councillor Meade, seconded by Councillor Wile, that the minutes of December 7, 2004, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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

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

**4. PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES FOR THE REGIONAL PLAN**

Ms. Carol Macomber, Project Manager, Regional Planning, recapped the presentation made at the November 7<sup>th</sup> Regional Council meeting advising the Regional Planning Committee is looking for Council to endorse a strategic direction/vision that can be used to prepare detailed policy and financial implications. She noted these would come back to Council for approval after further consultation with the public.

**MOVED by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Walker, that:**

- 1. Halifax Regional Council, after discussion at Committee of the Whole on December 14, 2004 endorse the recommended alternative - the proposed regional plan, for the purposes of:**
  - **detailed policy development**
  - **public consultation on the final level of Regional Plan detail**
  - **preparation of a detailed regional planning financial analysis**

In response to Councillor Younger with respect to a need for new routes to the airport, Mr. Dave McCusker, Manager, Transportation, Regional Planning, advised transit service will be provided to the airport as it is along one of the transit corridors.

Councillor Younger questioned what emphasis has been given to ensuring existing areas outside the water service boundary, would have access to safe water, preferably before new areas are built. In response, Mr. Peter Duncan, Manager, Environment, Regional Planning, advised the intent of the Regional Plan would be to put more homes on central services and

for those areas that are outside the water service districts, the intention would be to require hydro geological and groundwater assessments prior to subdivision. He noted this would require an amendment to the MGA which is hoped to be received at the spring sitting of the Legislature.

Councillor Younger noted the MGA allows for ten percent of a subdivision to be taken as parkland or payment in lieu but the current Municipal Planning Strategies only take five percent. The Councillor asked how this issue will be addressed and, in reply, Ms. Macomber advised it is the intent, through the Regional Plan Policy, to recommend ten percent parkland dedication noting, they are still planning to work with the stakeholder groups to determine the best way to achieve this.

In response to Councillor Younger, Mr. Austin French, Manager, Settlement Pattern, Regional Planning, advised that the Regional Plan will become a planning strategy for HRM and all other existing plans will become secondary plans to it. The Regional Plan is consistent with most of the community plans and it will make it easier, in many cases, to achieve the goals of community plans through creation of more efficient patterns for growth. Creation of Mixed Use centres will protect the stability of existing neighbourhoods as well as the resource land in the rural areas.

In response to Councillor Smith, Mr. Roger Wells, Senior Policy Advisor, Harbour Plan, Regional Planning, advised that one of the development centres would be in the Shannon Park area with residential being a strong possibility for development intensification in Shannon Park. The RFP deals with the property immediately north of Shannon Park from BIO north to and including Wrights Cove.

In response to Councillor Streach, Ms. Macomber advised the plan is proposing centres disbursed throughout the entire region which provide location choice and those centres would be planned with a community based bottom up approach. In addition, between the centres, it is anticipated that staff will work with the stakeholders and the development community to come up with options to do cluster style development. A limited amount of large lot development will be permitted if the hydro geological pieces are there such as drinking water, if on site services can be put in, if the soil is suitable for septic and if the capacity is there in the transportation system. She noted Regional Planning will work closely with development community such that if they are losing one ability will gain another.

In response to Councillor Streach regarding a private land owners ability to develop, Mr. French advised sites would have to be looked at specifically. Growth between the centres will be permitted but it will be limited by certain factors such as the availability of potable water and the traffic issues. Where growth between centres occurs the preference would be to encourage a clustering form of growth in order to promote protection of open space which would involve identification of the appropriate means of septic disposal to allow for a common

septic field or some other form of sewage and wastewater handling. Each case would have to be looked at, but the plan does not say that this type of growth cannot happen.

Councillor Murphy asked if the Regional Plan incorporated the principles of universal design in the recommendation. In response, Ms. Macomber stated they are intending to come back to Council with more information on this and an effective mechanism to build that into policy.

In response to Councillor Hendsbee, Mr. French advised the sites identified for growth on the maps are the target areas being brought forward by the committee. The Nova Scotia Home for Coloured Children lands are not specifically targeted for growth. Those lands were analysed for potential suburban expansion along with nine other sites through the Greenfield servicing analysis and the identified suburban areas for expansion for both sewer and water would be the Morris/Russel Lake and Bedford West area in addition to those previously approved by Council.

In response to Councillor Hendsbee with regards to service capacity along Main Street, Mr. Peter Duncan advised the map in front of Council does not add any significant new population into that sewer catchment area, noting Environmental Management Services is doing a wastewater study on the watershed and will be coming forward with recommendations including an assessment of the Main Street sewer.

Councillor McInroy noted Cole Harbour has not expanded services in years. This plan does not accommodate development beyond where Cole Harbour presently stops. The plan does not permit the old fashioned type of subdivisions as has been the case in the past. There will be cluster development permitted between growth centres but it is going to be restricted and limited both in terms of sharing septic facilities and smaller lot sizes. The number of people who will live in those areas will be limited as the plan is directed toward the growth centres or the urban core areas.

In response to Councillor Younger as to whether this would be taking away property rights, Ms. Macomber advised this would change property rights in some locations but it is proposing new options and opportunities be open to the development community that they don't have now, noting this would be done in consultation with them.

In response to Councillor Younger as to how the plan would address those persons with large tracts of land, Mr. French advised that with the major sites that are contiguous with or adjacent to the existing central sewer and water Regional Planning is not offering to add additional rights to the areas.

In response to Councillor Younger, Mr. French advised one of the advantages of the approach being advocated is predictability, not just for the municipality but for all levels of government and the private sector in terms of where services will be provided and where growth will occur.

In response to Councillor Streach regarding transportation hubs and links, Mr. McCusker advised there will be some level of transit service provided, noting the level of service will have to be determined and may be express routes.

In response to Councillor Streach, Ms. Macomber advised that when a full proposed package is brought to Council for approval, staff would not be asking for Council to sign off on it for twenty five years. It is foreseen that the plan would be monitored with a report on a yearly basis and a review at five year intervals.

Councillor Streach stated there is a need for development in rural areas and to limit new immigration to those areas may end up being contradictory. There is a need for development that is flexible and reflects the location and dynamics of the traditional way of life in the rural area.

In response to Councillor Hendsbee, Council was advised there is no decision to remove existing rights; whatever rights existed prior to Council debate on a site continues after Council makes a decision, provided it meets the appropriate conditions. That would apply to all holding zones providing they meet the criteria.

In response to Councillor Murphy with regards to placement of power and gas lines underground, Mr. Duncan advised an underground services study has been undertaken and staff will be in discussion with NS Power on the results.

In response to Councillor Younger regarding lake protection, Ms. Macomber advised that that part would come out in the written policy. The Councillor suggested baseline testing be done on the lakes.

In response to Councillor Goucher regarding the Water Resource Management Plan, Ms. Macomber advised it was the understanding that the Regional Plan was to incorporate the policy from that plan into the environment section of the overall Regional Plan.

Councillor Streach stated people need to know what the downside is for the residents in rural areas. When the meetings are held with the public they need to be told what can and cannot be done in certain areas. Mr. French advised that the proposed centres will be carefully designed and will have a certain level of service. It will not be that you cannot do anything outside the designed centres but you would not receive the same level of service.

In response to Councillor Streach, Mr. French advised Enfield is envisioned as a potential growth centre but the Plan would look to the area that is in HRM and the services that are just outside the HRM borders and their potential.

Councillor Hendsbee asked if the plan will reevaluate some of the transportation links that are not shown on the map. Mr. McCusker stated this is the foundation to a transportation plan, noting there will be a more detailed analysis of a number of corridors to actively reserve and pursue as future corridors.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

At this time Council agreed to discuss item 10.4.1 - Regional Planning Consultation and Communication Plan January to April 2005.

**MOVED by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Karsten that Regional Council endorse the consultation and communication plan for the “ regional plan preferred alternative - the proposed plan” as outlined in Attachment B of the staff report dated December 6. 2004.**

During discussion the following points were made:

- C Hold more meetings in the rural areas
- C Hold meetings in communities and not have people leave their home community to attend meetings
- C Hold meetings more central to a district
- C Residents have to know what is going on and have an opportunity to be part of the process
- C This process has to be completed within the next twelve months
- C It was suggested meetings be held in conjunction with Community Council meetings

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m

Jan Gibson  
Municipal Clerk