

North West Community Council

TO: Chair and Members of North West Community Council

SUBMITTED BY: **Original Signed by Legislative Assistant on behalf of Chair**

Mr. Richard Hattin, Chair, Bedford Watershed Advisory Board

DATE: October 11, 2011

SUBJECT: **Bedford Waterfront Design Study**

ORIGIN

The Bedford Watershed Advisory Board meeting held September 14, 2011.

RECOMMENDATION

The Bedford Watershed Advisory Board recommends that the North West Community Council:

1. Endorse the initiation of the proposed amendments to the Bedford Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law in accordance with the recommendations of the Bedford Waterfront Steering Committee presented in the June 21, 2011 report and;
2. Forward them to Halifax Regional Council with a recommendation to initiate the process for amendment and to follow the public participation program as described in Section 6.0 of the June 21, 2011 report.

BACKGROUND

The Bedford Watershed Advisory Board reviewed the Bedford Waterfront Design Study as outlined in the staff report dated June 21, 2011 during their September 14, 2011 meeting.

Additional information can be reviewed in the June 21st staff report. The report can be found at: <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/bwac/documents/6.1BedfordWaterfrontDesignStudy.pdf>

DISCUSSION

The Bedford Watershed Advisory Board held a thorough discussion of aspects of the Bedford Waterfront Design Study which impact water, raising a number of questions and concerns.

With respect to Moris Pond, question was raised as to whether proper title to the square area of the pond still remains. Concern was raised as to the pond's brackish water situation, noting that it is a challenge to determine from one day to the next whether it is fresh or salt water due to stormwater entering from Papermill Lake. Marine biologists have been approached to determine how the water quality can be improved to accommodate a better marine habitat.

The Board discussed the planned canal and double-sided marinas and the corresponding infill process. In order to accommodate the marinas, the canal area will be partially sheet piled. The middle section will consist of shallow water that can be frozen over in the winter for use as a skating pond. The Chair questioned the design surrounding the double-sided marinas and expressed concern that it will act like a funnel when faced with South-westerly winds. Staff acknowledged that with further research, a breakwater will likely have to be established on both sides, which will need to be at least three metres above high water as a base elevation.

Staff outlined the Steering Committee's recommendation to further investigate protection of the Southern marine environment, indicating that the main area of contention is the island and the shallow reef to the South. As a shallow, intertidal reef, were it to be duplicated using a manmade approach, there is no reason the same type of marine species existing in the current environment can not be re-established. Three components of the area are being taken into consideration: physical attributes, shape and public accessibility. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans is interested in having the initiative put forth if an attempt to recreate an intertidal zone in the fill material proves successful. The Chair suggested adding an aquarium or marine environment with public access, noting that integrating an indoor space could be beneficial to coincide with the outdoor marine environment.

Concern was raised with respect to the planned 65 acres of infill in Phase 2 and the oxidation rate of the pyritic slate. The Chair questioned the hydrology, anaerobic and aerobic activities of pyritic slate when submerged in salt water. It was noted that pH levels must be measured at various depths because of both anaerobic and aerobic activity occurring in an area with sulphuric acid present. Staff assured the Board that ample engineering work will be conducted prior to the start of construction. It was noted that once the Waterfront Development acquires approval in principle of the entire plan, with the understanding that there are items identified within the plan that require further study such as traffic and sewage capacity; construction of the second access

point can proceed so that people do not have to continue dealing with truck traffic. Further development of Phase 2 can continue through usage of the second access point.

Staff reviewed the proposals for a series of green technologies, explaining how bioswales and rain gardens will allow for stormwater infiltration rather than convergence and how roof gardens will be multipurpose, providing an energy component for insulating buildings and adding to LEED certification.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The costs to process this project can be accommodated within the proposed 2011/12 operating budget for C310 Regional Community Planning.

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

The Bedford Watershed Advisory Board is an Advisory Committee to Community Council and Regional Council, and is comprised of volunteer citizens and two Councillors.

ALTERNATIVES

None.

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.

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