

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
MINUTES

February 14, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor Lorelei Nicoll, Chair
Councillor Tim Outhit, Vice Chair
Councillor Darren Fisher
Councillor Waye Mason
Councillor Jennifer Watts
Councillor Gloria McCluskey

STAFF: Ms. Karen Brown, Senior Solicitor
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 13, 2012

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor McCluskey that the minutes of December 13, 2012 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions:

- 8.1 Future Committee Presentation by HIAA – Councillor Watts
- 8.2 Auditor General's report, *Economic Development through Partnerships-A Performance Evaluation* – Councillor Fisher

Councillor Mason asked that the following added item be dealt with as 7.5 on the agenda, to which it was agreed.

- 7.5 Motion Referred to CP & ED from Regional Council

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor McCluskey that item 7.4 be moved up on the agenda to be dealt with as the first order of business. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Fisher that the agenda as amended be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES/DEFERRED ITEMS: None

5. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

5.1 Correspondence: None

5.2 Petitions: None

5.3 Presentations: None

6. MATTERS REFERRED FROM REGIONAL COUNCIL/OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES: None

7. REPORTS

7.4 Halifax Memorial Library/Grafton Park Property

A staff report dated December 17, 2012 was submitted.

Correspondence dated February 9, 2013 was submitted from Judy Haiven.

Correspondence dated February 12, 2013 was submitted from Phil Pacey, Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia.

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Fisher that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

- 1. Declare the Memorial Library building, excluding the lands, surplus to municipal needs;**
- 2. Direct staff to grant an Option Period ending December 16, 2013, to The Assembly of Mi'kmaq Chiefs, to allow for the Assembly to Develop potential conditions of occupancy for the Memorial Library building;**
- 3. Direct staff to advance alternative plans including the demolition of the Halifax Memorial Library and the restoration of the full site as a public park, should the Assembly Agreement fail to produce agreeable terms.**

Councillor Mason advised the Committee that Mr. Ron L'Esperance was in attendance and could respond to any questions.

Councillor Outhit noted that if the Municipality does not use the building as a library or keep it as a park area, it reverts to the Province. He questioned why the Municipality would go through the expense of demolition if it was not HRM's responsibility. He also questioned what the likelihood was of the building being turned into a Centre for Mi'kmaq Governance and Culture, and noted that if this were to be the case it would be a decision for the Provincial Government.

Mr. Peter Bigelow, Manager, Portfolio Management, advised that staff's position is that the property is of strategic nature to the Municipality, and therefore are not recommending it be declared surplus. He added that if Regional Council agrees that it is not surplus to HRM's needs, then the terms of the grant compel the Municipality to remove the building if it is not to be used as a library, i.e. if it is not to be a library or park, the terms require that the property go back to the Province.

Mr. Ron L'Esperance addressed the Committee and advised that he was the Project Manager for the Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Governance and Cultural Centre Project and is interested in exploring the feasibility of re-using the Memorial Library as a Centre for

Governance and Culture. He noted that the Option Period they are requesting would give them the time to carry out a full review and gather all necessary information they require.

Mr. Bigelow responded to further questions.

Councillor Fisher advised that he was supportive of the recommendation but would like to include wording that would ensure staff would not submit any recommendation on demolition to Regional Council until after the December 16, 2013, the end of the Option Period.

Mr. Bigelow advised that staff recommendation states that it is not staff's intent to advance demolition or any other option before December 16, 2013 but that if the Councillor wanted to include wording to provide assurance, he had no difficulty with this.

Councillor Mason advised that he include Councillor Fisher's recommendation as an addition to the motion, which now reads:

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Fisher that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

- 1. Declare the Memorial Library building, excluding the lands, surplus to municipal needs;**
- 2. Direct staff to grant an Option Period ending December 16, 2013, to the Assembly of Mi'kmaq Chiefs, to allow for the Assembly to develop potential conditions of occupancy for the Memorial Library building;**
- 3. Direct staff to advance alternative plans including the demolition of the Halifax Memorial Library and the restoration of the full site as a public park, should the Assembly Agreement fail to produce agreeable terms; and defer sending a recommendation on demolition to Regional Council until after December 16, 2013.**

In response to a question from Councillor McCluskey, as to how much it would cost to convert the property to a park, Mr. Bigelow advised that he did not have the information at this time but if the Committee forwards a recommendation to Council, he would provide it before it is on the Regional Council agenda.

Mr. Bigelow and Mr. L'Esperance responded to further questions.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.1 Legislative Requests – 2012 Update

A staff report dated January 23, 2013 was submitted.

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Fisher that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee forwards the following recommendations to Halifax Regional Council for approval:

- **Endorse the issues raised in the January 23, 2013 staff report in regards to Bill 160 and direct staff to work with the Province towards resolving them in time for the Spring 2013 session of the Legislature.**
- **Review all of HRM's outstanding amendment request to determine their ongoing necessity and relevance.**
- **Authorize a joint review of the HRM Charter with Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.2 Strategic Urban Partnership - Presentation

Ms. Joanne Macrae and Mr. Andy Fillmore, representatives from the Strategic Urban Partnership provided a presentation on the Strategic Urban Partnership, updating the Committee on its activities and their 2013/14 priorities.

At 2:38 p.m. Councillor Watts entered the meeting.

The Presenters noted that, on February 5, 2013 the Strategic Urban Partnership met with the Mayor's Office to discuss partnering on an Ideas Expo, to be held in April 2013, that will give the public the opportunity to be informed, inspired, and involved with the Cogswell Interchange Project. In this regard, Mr. Fillmore and Ms. Macrae presented a proposed motion to the Committee for consideration, recommending Regional Council's involvement.

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Mason that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee recommend Regional Council engage and participate in the Cogswell Ideas Expo and commit to incorporating the information report from the Expo into the future HRM decision making process around the Cogswell Interchange.

Ms. Macrae responded to questions.

The Chair recognized that Mayor Savage was in attendance and wished to speak on this matter.

Mayor Savage indicated his support for the Cogswell Ideas Expo and the work of the Strategic Urban Partnership.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Mr. Andy Fillmore continued with the presentation, providing a review of the Economic Strategy, Regional Centre Goal. Mr. Fillmore concluded his presentation by providing recommendations for the Committee's consideration.

The Chair clarified that any motion should originate from the Committee.

Councillor Mason indicated that he was prepared to move a motion in regard to SUP's recommendations.

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Watts that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee:

1. **Request a staff report setting out a plan to establish a 5-year \$50 million intergovernmental capital improvement campaign to repair and enhance the urban core, for approval by Regional Council in the 2013/14 year.**
2. **Request staff to include HRM's share of the 5-year \$50 million campaign beginning in the 2014/15 budget.**
3. **Request staff to include in the "Strategic Urban Reserve" fund for urban core beautification, the pole free area, public art, and infrastructure improvements, in the 2013/14 budget.**
4. **Clarify that the 2013/14 Library Plaza project is already funded from other sources and does not fall within the new 5 year \$50 million campaign, or within the proposed Strategic urban Reserve (per the March 30, 2010 Council motion re Central Library Funding Strategy)**

Speaking in support of his motion, Councillor Mason noted that Regional Council has already endorsed the Economic Strategy, but two years into it, there is no impact on the downtown area. Councillor Mason stressed the importance of a thriving downtown and the impact it has on rest of the Municipality.

Councillor Outhit advised that the Municipality needs to look at incentives in the urban core in order to encourage commercial and residential growth, but advised that he could not support the motion.

A discussion ensued with regard to the motion with Mr. Michael Labrecque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer providing clarification and guidance. Subsequently, with the agreement of the mover and seconder, the motion was revised to read as follows:

The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee:

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Watts that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee:

1. **Recommends that a staff report be requested which sets out a plan to establish a 5-year \$50 million intergovernmental capital improvement campaign to repair and enhance the urban core, for approval by Regional Council in the 2014/15 year.**
2. **Request staff to include HRM's share of the 5-year \$50 million campaign beginning in the 2014/15 budget.**
3. **Request staff clarify in the report the "Strategic Urban Reserve" fund for urban core beautification, the pole free area, public art, and infrastructure improvements, in the 2014/15 budget.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Committee recessed at 4:01 p.m.
The Committee reconvened at 4:12 p.m.

7.3 2012/2013 Economic Strategy and the Greater Halifax Partnership's Second and Third Quarter Service Level Agreement Status Update – Presentation

An Information Report dated January 24, 2013 was submitted.

Mr. Paul Kent, President and CEO, and Mr. Fred Morley, Vice President and Chief Economist, Greater Halifax Partnership provided a status update on GHP's second and third quarter service level agreement.

Mr. Kent advised that prior to giving their presentation he would like to comment on the report released yesterday by the Auditor General (Economic Development through Partnerships-A Performance Evaluation). Mr. Kent advised that he has reviewed the report, and will study it further and reflect on the recommendations. He emphasized that Greater Halifax Partnership stands ready to work with HRM and their partners to improve upon and do what is best for the Municipality. Mr. Kent noted that the review that was done started in 2004 and ended in 2010, and he pointed out that the Partnership is in year 3 of a 5 year strategy. He indicated that this strategy was developed based on lessons learned from the previous strategy, and that that Auditor General had noted that he saw positive movements in this regard.

Mr. Kent and Mr. Morley provided their presentation beginning with a review of their mandate and objectives, who they partner with, and accountability. They addressed their role in the implementation of the Economic Strategy and in helping business grow and succeed. In concluding their remarks they advised that the opportunities they see are major project growth of over \$100 billion in Nova Scotia and the Atlantic Region provides huge potential; and the influx of economic activity provides a significant base for entrepreneurship, local innovation and building partnerships. With regard to challenges, the following points were noted: Halifax has the slowest growing population

of any major city in Atlantic Canada; HRM is investing less in economic development than it did five years ago and the other levels of government are cutting their investment in local economic development in Halifax; a better business climate is required which focuses on client service and alignment reducing the burden on business; and HRM needs to do more to attract, retain and create competitive opportunities for the area's young people. The top three issues for business are: access to capital, workforce availability/quality, and friendlier climate

Councillor Fisher made reference to the information report on this matter and noted that when he read it he was very pleased to see that it contained a number of measurables, which is something Regional Council is always looking for.

Councillor Fisher indicated that he had put the Auditor General's report on the agenda as an added item for discussion, but in light of the presentation received and due to time constraints, he was prepared to put forward a motion now with regard to his added item.

Moved by Councillor Fisher, seconded by Councillor Mason that CP and ED recommends:

- 1. Staff review the auditor general's report and its recommendations**
- 2. Staff meet with the GHP, Destination Halifax and others involved in economic development to consider the report and his recommendations in detail**
- 3. Have staff determine an effective review process beginning with CP & ED possibly followed by Committee of the Whole focused on making recommendations or priorities for staff.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.4 Halifax Memorial Library/Grafton Park Property

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting. See page 4.

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 HIAA Presentation

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Mason that representative from the Halifax International Airport Authority be invited to provide a presentation on their Strategic Plan. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

8.2 Auditor General's Report to the Audit and Finance Committee on February 13, 2013 (Councillor Fisher)

This item was dealt with in conjunction with item 7.3.

9. IN CAMERA:

9.1 In Camera Minutes – February 9, 2012 and January 16, 2013

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Outhit that the minutes of February 9, 2012 and January 16, 2013 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE – March 21, 2013

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant

The following information items were submitted:

An Information Report dated January 22, 2013 RE: Update to HRM's 2005 Immigration Action Plan.

A copy of the Economic Strategy 2011-2016.