

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STANDING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

November 14, 2013

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

REGRETS: Councillor Waye Mason

STAFF: Ms. Karen Brown, Senior Solicitor
Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councillor Watts referred to page 4 of the minutes, and the presentation provided on the Irving Shipyard project update, and asked that the comment Mr. Brownlow made in regard to the number of parking spots that would be provided, be double-checked.

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Councillor Outhit that the minutes of October 10, 2013, and the In Camera minutes of July 22, 2013. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

The Chair noted that the today's presenters were not able to be in attendance until 3:00 p.m., therefore the Committee would deal with the other agenda items until they were able to join the meeting.

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Outhit that the agenda as presented 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

5.3 Presentations:

5.3.1 Nova Scotia Housing Strategy – Kevin Malloy, CEO, Housing Nova Scotia; Dan Troke, Housing Nova Scotia

This item was dealt with later in the meeting. See page 7.

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

7. REPORTS

7.1 Mainland Halifax North – Bedford Corridor Transportation and Wastewater Servicing Strategy

A staff report dated November 4, 2013 was submitted.

Mr. Austin French, Manager, Planning, addressed the Committee and advised that at the February 9, 2012 meeting, the Committee approved a staff recommendation that transportation and wastewater studies be undertaken for the Halifax Mainland North – Bedford Corridor in response to five developments where higher density mixed use developments were proposed. These were at Mill Cove, Birch Cove, Paper Mill Lake, the former radio transmitter site and the Sisters of Charity “Motherhouse” property. The Committee also approved that public consultation on these proposals be deferred until the servicing study has been completed. The recommendations were forwarded and approved by Regional Council February 28, 2012.

Mr. French provided a synopsis of the Study, advising of the key findings as follows:

- Applying the higher development scenario to each site did not have a significant impact to the road network relative to the low development scenario, other than on the Bedford Highway between Hammonds Plains Rd. and South Gate Drive. During the afternoon peak hours, some additional delays could be expected in the south-bound direction.
- Regardless of the level of improvements to the transit system, the road improvements identified in the Regional Plan will be needed to maintain an acceptable level of service on the road network.
- Both the medium and high level of transit provision were found to benefit auto users. Transit usage was found to be slightly better in the high level relative to the medium but at significantly higher cost.
- Ferry service does not appear to be a viable option.
- Commuter rail may be in the longer term if density increases along the corridor.
- Higher density mixed use developments that are walkable tend to reduce dependency on the automobile and encourage transit use.
- Higher densities also make transit provision more viable.

Mr. David McCusker, Regional Transportation Manager reviewed the two alternative express routes under the medium scenario, with Alternative A being the Bedford Highway/Lady Hammond Route route, and Alternative B being the Highway 102/Bayers Road route. It was noted that Alternative B appears to be less costly, and that these proposals and the study recommendations will be considered in further detail in the strategic transit review process which is currently underway and in the future road network priorities plan.

In concluding the presentation Mr. French advised that the study findings are consistent with a number of principles and opportunities identified by the Regional Plan; most importantly, to manage development to make efficient use of land, infrastructure, energy and leave more land in a natural state; and develop integrated transit systems that improve transit use and reduce costs. Mr. French reviewed input received from Halifax Water on this matter, and noted that, overall, in the longer term, Halifax Water has

advised that development can be accommodated with an appropriate implementation plan.

Mr. French advised that if the staff recommendations are accepted, Regional Council would initiate a plan amendment application for the Motherhouse lands and instruct staff to schedule a public meeting; North West Community Council would be requested to consider the various recommendations made for the Paper Mill Lake and Bedford Waterfront lands and make recommendations to Regional Council; and Halifax and West Community Council would deliberate on the Birch Cove development proposal and make recommendations to Regional Council.

A discussion ensued with Mr. French, Mr. McCusker, and Mr. Jamie Hannam, Halifax Water, responding to questions.

Councillor Outhit indicated that he had concern with some aspects in the findings of the Study, in particular, the comment that the roadways will be able to handle medium to high level density development. Councillor Outhit noted that in addition to the larger developments outlined in the report, there were also several smaller developments planned for this area. He added that he supported development growth as long as it was well planned, and that he felt developers should be contributing through capital cost contributions. The Councillor also noted that there were several reviews ongoing, which are relevant to this matter, and that public consultation should wait until these are completed.

Councillor Outhit advised that he was prepared to put forward an alternative recommendation from the staff recommendation.

Ms. Karen Brown, Senior Solicitor, clarified that in accordance with Section 25 (8) of Administrative Order 1, if a committee member wants to bring forward a motion in opposition to the staff recommendation, the staff recommendation has to first be put and voted on and, if defeated, then the member can bring forward the alternative motion.

In this regard, Councillor Outhit advised that he would move the staff recommendation but requested that the Committee defeat it, so that he could bring forward an alternative recommendation.

MOVED by Councillor Outhit, that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee recommend to Regional Council that:

- 1. The Bedford-Halifax Mainland North Corridor Traffic Study Report (MRC, October 2013) be accepted by Council and that the findings of the study related to the capacity of the transportation network, to accommodate the low and high population scenarios be accepted in principle as a means to proceed with development applications;**
- 2. An amendment to the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy be initiated to allow for consideration of a mixed use development on a 63 acre**

- property, adjacent to Mount St. Vincent University (“the Motherhouse lands”) and that a public meeting be scheduled to present the proposal and solicit comments; and
3. **Public consultations and deliberations on all development proposals, which were held in abeyance pending completion of the wastewater and transportation studies be resumed.**

There being no seconder to the motion, the **MOTION WAS LOST.**

Councillor Outhit explained that the intent of the motion he wished to bring forward was to approve the staff recommendation to accept the Bedford-Halifax Mainland North Corridor Traffic Study Report and initiate a plan amendment process for the Motherhouse lands, but defer consultation for the other development proposals until such time as pertinent ongoing reviews and studies are completed.

The Committee recessed at 2:37 p.m. and reconvened at 2:46 p.m.

MOVED by Councillor Outhit, seconded by Councillor McCluskey that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee recommend Regional Council adopt the staff recommendations to accept the Bedford-Halifax Mainland north corridor traffic study report (MRC, October 2013) for consideration in planning future transportation improvements; initiate a plan amendment process for the Motherhouse lands; and defer consultation processes and deliberations for the other development proposals until the completion of the Regional Plan 5 year review, the 5 year Transit review, and the commuter rail study; and a decision is made on development charges for charges for transit and transportation

Councillor Watts advised that she could not support the motion as she has concerns about the transportation improvements. She added that, in her view, approving this today would be further confirmation of proceeding with what was always planned from 2006, without taking a different look at what can be done in regard to mobility, and this was not acceptable to her.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Watts suggested that it may be informative for the Committee to have an update from staff at a future meeting on the Regional Wastewater Functional Plan.

5.3.1 Nova Scotia Housing Strategy – Kevin Malloy, CEO, Housing Nova Scotia; Dan Troke, Housing Nova Scotia

Mr. Dan Troke and Mr. Kevin Malloy, representing Housing Nova Scotia provided a presentation on the Province’s Housing Strategy. Mr. Troke began the presentation by outlining the key components that created the context for the Strategy. He advised that it encompasses:

- concentration and segregation of public housing
- affordability
- unchecked market forces in some communities may further marginalize low income citizens
- changing demographics
- challenge of existing social housing stock, and a decline in Federal funding

Mr. Troke advised that the key components of the Strategy are:

- fostering healthy, diverse communities
- affordable choices for owners and renters
- paths to equity and home ownership
- catalyst for partnerships
- independence and dignity

Mr. Troke advised that in the future they are focusing on more involvement in involve in mixed-housing opportunities, citing the Bloomfield Project as an example. He added that in other areas of the Province with similar developments, the municipalities have been huge partners. Other areas of focus Mr. Troke noted were providing equity and home ownership opportunities; developing partnerships; and how to provide programs that enable seniors to stay in their own homes.

Mr. Troke and Mr. Malloy responded to questions.

Councillor McCluskey noted that she had seven senior's building in her district and concerns that have been raised to her have been about ensuring good quality construction in building new seniors housing complexes; and that there are seniors who are not able to live alone in a seniors building and would like to be able to have a family member live with them, so they wouldn't have to move. She also expressed support for the 'rent to own' idea.

Councillor Watts emphasized the importance of maintaining the current housing stock. She referred to the information report submitted and pointed out that it raises the point that long-term monitoring and maintenance of affordable housing unit is currently beyond HRM's capacity and mandate. She added that many developers would be interested in offering affordable housing but the question is who is going to carry out the monitoring. She suggested that if that was a role the Province could take on it would be a support for the Municipality. She also noted that the cost of land and development across the Province differs from municipality to municipality, and where these costs are higher in in this area, it lends support to the idea for more affordable housing in the urban area. The Councillor also suggested that the Province consider developing a percentage type of calculation that reflects the land and development costs of the municipality rather than using the same figure across all municipalities across the Province. She noted that transit and affordable housing are issues that are linked and that the promotion of transit could assist in housing affordability.

The Chair thanked Mr. Troke and Mr. Malloy for their presentation. She asked that, if possible, it would be appreciated if the presentation could be provided to the Clerk.

8. COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

8.1 Councillor Nicoll: Presentation Request – Halifax Chamber of Commerce – Strategic Plan

The Chair advised that representatives from the Halifax Chamber of Commerce made a request to the Mayor to provide Council with a presentation on their Strategic Plan. The Agenda Review Committee recommended that they provide their presentation to this Committee rather than Regional Council.

A brief discussion ensued and it was noted that the presentation would be something of interest to all of Council, and it was suggested that it be sent back to the Agenda Review Committee with a recommendation that it be scheduled for a Committee of the Whole. It was further suggested that the presentation be scheduled as part of the upcoming budget presentations. The Deputy Chief Administrative Officer advised that he would take the suggestion away for consideration.

9. ADDED ITEMS: None

10. NOTICES OF MOTION:

10.1 Councillor Mason

On behalf of Councillor Mason, Councillor Watts gave notice that, at the next regular Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting I proposed to move the following:

Resolved that Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee request a staff report to establish guidelines and standards for sidewalk construction, lighting and pole, street furniture and finishing in the HRM right-of-way on streets in the Downtown Planning (DH1) zone and the downtown Dartmouth BID area with the following considerations:

1. To determine where as a matter of policy the Red book Capital District standard will be applied outside of major streetscape areas,
2. To develop a standard for inclusion in the Red Book for the DH1 Precinct 3 – Spring Garden area that reflects but is less extensive than the elements and colour scheme introduced in the Spring Garden streetscaping,
3. Recommend a mechanism to allow partnership with and investment by private and other stakeholders to implement these standards and to draft and Administrative Order that will outline this procedure.

11. IN CAMERA:

11.1 Minutes – July 22 2013

The minutes were approved during the approval of the minutes on the regular agenda.

11.2 PERSONNEL MATTER – Citizen Appointments to the Heritage Advisory Committee

This matter was dealt with In Camera.

12. ANNUAL ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

MOVED by Councillor Outhit, seconded by Councillor Watts that Councillor Lorelei Nicoll be nominated as Chair for 2014. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

There being no other nominations, Councillor Nicoll was declared Chair for 2014.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Outhit that Councillor Wayne Mason be nominated as Vice Chair for 2014. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

There being no other nominations, Councillor Mason was declared Vice Chair for 2014.

13. NEXT MEETING DATE – December 12, 2013

13.1 Meeting Schedule for 2014

A proposed meeting schedule for 2014 was submitted.

Councillor Watts noted that the March and July meeting dates were scheduled during times when Council was on break. She requested, **and the Committee agreed**, that the meeting dates for March and July be rescheduled to coincide with a week during the month when Council would be holding a regular meeting.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:13 p.m.

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant