

COMMUNITY PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES

November 10, 2011

PRESENT: Councillor Lorelei Nicoll, Chair
Councillor Sue Uteck, Vice Chair
Councillor Jerry Blumenthal
Councillor Steve Streach
Councillor Peter Lund
Councillor Darren Fisher

REGRETS: Councillor Mary Wile

STAFF: Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CALL TO ORDER.....	3
2.	ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR	3
3.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES.....	3
4.	APPROVAL OF ORDER OF BUSINESS	3
5.	BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/DEFERRED ITEMS:	
5.1	Update on Community Engagement for the Social Heritage Strategy	5
6.	CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS:	
6.1	Correspondence: None	
6.2	Petitions: None	
6.3	Presentations:	
6.3.1	Affordable Housing Functional Plan Update.....	3
7.	MATTERS REFERRED FROM REGIONAL COUNCIL/OTHER	
	STANDING COMMITTEES	6
8.	ADDED ITEMS	6
9.	NEXT MEETING DATE	6
10.	ADJOURNMENT	6

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:08 p.m.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Councillor Nicoll noted that she had advised the Committee members she was interested in continuing as Chair for the next year; and that Councillor Uteck had indicated that she was also interested in continuing to serve as Vice Chair for 2012.

MOVED by Councillor Blumenthal, seconded by Councillor Streach that Councillor Nicoll be nominated as Chair for 2012. MOTION PUT AND PASSED

There were no further nominations; Councillor Nicoll was declared Chair.

MOVED by Councillor Blumenthal, seconded by Councillor Streach that Councillor Uteck be nominated as Vice Chair for 2012. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

There were no further nominations; Councillor Uteck was declared Vice Chair.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED by Councillor Lund, seconded by Councillor Blumenthal that the minutes of October 13, 2011 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

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

The Chair noted that Councillor Uteck was running late and suggested that item 6.3.1 be dealt with first, as Councillor Uteck had wanted to be present for the staff presentation on item 5.1.

There was general consensus to deal with item 6.3.1 as the first order of business.

6.3 Presentations:

6.3.1 Affordable Housing Functional Plan Update - Information Report dated October 25, 2011

An information report dated October 25, 2011 was submitted.

Mr. Roger Wells, Supervisor, Regional and Community Planning, provided a presentation on the submitted information report, which identifies key opportunities for

study through the Regional Plan Review process with the subsequent goal for completing the Housing Affordability Functional Plan.

At 2:10 p.m. Councillor Outhit entered the meeting.

At 2:13 p.m. Councillor Uteck entered the meeting.

In his presentation, Mr. Wells reviewed the current programs and initiatives that have been completed or are in progress with regard to Affordable Housing. He then reviewed the following factors, as outlined in the Information Report, as key points of consideration and potential adoption, noting that amendments to the Halifax Charter may be required:

- Planning policy measures:
 - Density Bonusing
 - Inclusionary Zoning
 - Permitting Secondary Suites As-of-Right
 - Other Opportunities such as Seniors only Housing and adaptive reuse of existing structures.
- Financial measures addressed include:
 - Maintaining existing programs
 - Creating a financial grants reserve account
 - Seeking partnerships with the Provincial and Federal Governments
- Annual Housing Affordability Monitoring – yearly Housing Report will establish the following:
 - Methodology and Criteria
 - Targets
 - Number and mix of units

Mr. Wells concluded his presentation outlining the next steps staff will be taking on this issue, as part of the Regional Plan review process.

Mr. Wells and Ms. Peta Jane Temple, Team Lead, Tax, Grants, and Special Projects responded to questions from the Committee. Mr. Wells noted that staff was looking for feedback today from the Committee.

The Committee members provided the following comments and feedback:

- Staff are on the right track; With regard to the ‘Granny Suites’, the general feeling from residents on this matter is that they are supportive as long as there are conditions, such as, they have to be in a home that is owner occupied.
- Not all the proposed policies may be appropriate to apply to the entire Municipality; it was suggested that policies be applied to the areas that HRM wants to see more density occur, particularly with the financial measures.

MOVED by Councillor Outhit, seconded by Councillor Lund that the Committee recommend staff take into account the geography of the Municipality and consider different financial incentives for the regional centre, the suburban area, and rural areas in regard to developing a policy on affordability housing.

- Concern was expressed that the Municipality was getting involved in something that is the Province's mandate.
- It was noted that at the recent UNSM meeting a resolution in regard to density-bonusing was passed; staff were encouraged to review this resolution.

A suggestion was put forward by Councillor Lund that an incentive for parking bonusing could be offered to developers, i.e. reduce the number of parking spots required if the developer provides car sharing. **The Chair advised that with the consensus of the Committee, this suggestion would be included with the previous motion as feedback for staff, to which it was agreed.**

- Not in favour of a designated reserve fund.
- In favour of the 'Granny Suite' idea but concerned about the ability to ensure that it remains as such if the home changes owners over time.

In response to a question on what can be done in the immediate future, Mr. Wells advised that staff will continue to work on best management practices across the country; staff will work on the definition of affordable housing and bring this back soon to the committee; staff will explore the full range of incentives; and, within the next 9 to 12 months, to determine at high level if this what Council wants staff to implement. He also pointed out that this is part of Regional Plan review process.

Councillor Uteck indicated that where the Committee endorses the information report, it should be forwarded to Council for a presentation and feedback, **to which it was agreed.**

The Chair indicated that this, along with the points raised by Councillor Lund and Councillor Outhit would be included in the motion to forward to Council.

The motion now reads:

MOVED by Councillor Outhit, seconded by Councillor Lund that the Community Planning and Economic Development Committee endorse the Information Report as presented, including the points raised by the Committee, and recommend it be forwarded to Regional Council for presentation and feedback. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES/DEFERRED ITEMS:

5.1 Update on Community Engagement for the Social Heritage Strategy - Information Report dated September 27, 2011

Mr. Seamus McGreal, Social Heritage Planner provided a presentation, updating the Committee on the Community Engagement for the Social Heritage Strategy.

Mr. McGreal and Mr. Phil Townsend, Director, Planning and Infrastructure responded to questions.

Councillor Uteck expressed concern that with the recent administrative re-organization, there will not be enough staff resources to carry out the Strategy.

MOVED by Councillor Uteck, seconded by Councillor Lund that the Committee receive the Information Report and forward on to Regional Council as an Information Item. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

6.1 Correspondence: None

6.2 Petitions: None

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

8. ADDED ITEMS: None

9. NEXT MEETING DATE: December 8, 2011

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant