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Item No. 14.1
CPED Standing Committee
January 8, 2015

TO: Chair and Members of the Community Planning and
Economic Development Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY: Original signed on behalf of
Fred Morley, Chair, Community Design Advisory Committee

DATE: December 16, 2014

SUBJECT: Centre Plan – Draft Community Engagement Strategy

ORIGIN

A motion of the Community Design Advisory Committee from its meeting held on December 10, 2014

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Terms of Reference for the Community Design Advisory Committee states on page 2, under Mandate:

1. Reporting to Council:

At key project milestones the Community Design Advisory Committee will make information or recommendation reports on the Centre Plan to Regional Council through the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee. This reporting relationship will ensure that the Standing Committee and Regional Council remain apprised of the status of the projects and are given the opportunity for their incremental approval.

RECOMMENDATION

The Community Design Advisory Committee recommends that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee adopt the Community Engagement Strategy for the Centre Plan as outlined in Attachment 1 of this report.

BACKGROUND

The Community Design Advisory Committee received a staff presentation and provided input to staff on the draft Community Engagement Strategy for the Centre Plan at a meeting held on December 10, 2014

DISCUSSION

Staff provided a detailed presentation of the draft community engagement strategy components of which the Committee discussed in detail. The consensus of the Committee was that the proposed strategy responded to the engagement concerns of both the public and the Committee. The Committee approved a resolution recommending that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee adopt the draft Community Engagement Strategy for the Centre Plan

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable at this point in the Centre Plan process. This recommendation contained in this report provides for the community engagement relative to the Centre Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications were identified.

ALTERNATIVES

No alternatives were provided by the Committee.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Centre Plan – Draft Engagement Strategy
2. Extract of Draft Minutes of Community Design Advisory Committee meeting of December 10, 2014

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Sherryll Murphy, Deputy Clerk, 902-490-4211

Attachment 1

Extract of draft CDAC Minutes – December 10, 2014

7.1.1 Presentation – Proposed Public Engagement Strategy – Centre Plan

A document entitled 'Centre Plan Draft Community Engagement Strategy' dated December 5, 2014 was distributed to the Committee.

Mr. Jacob Ritchie, Urban Design Manager introduced the draft engagement strategy stressing that the singular thread throughout the proposal is clarity – clarity in communication, clarity in form and clarity in the intended outcomes of the project. He went on to present the draft Community Engagement Strategy highlighting the Project Governance, the Engagement Strategy Goals, and the Parameters and Tools and Techniques. He went on to briefly review the Action Plan and the proposed Measures of Success. During the presentation Mr. Ritchie clarified various aspects of the proposed strategy and Committee members provided feedback and commentary to the proposal.

In response to concern regarding the use of words such as 'reach' and 'all' in the Centre Plan Parameters on page 12, Mr. Ritchie explained that the outcome goal of 'all' can be focused such that it is respectful of the need for all to have an opportunity to be heard. Explaining staff's position with regard to the use of 'reach', the question being asked is if staff has reached people either to provide information or seek input. The consultation envelope will focus this terminology. 'All' is an inspirational word which can be measured quantitatively with a larger sample size in the centre than in the rest of the municipality (i.e. 30% in the centre and 15% outside). There are resources outside the municipality that can assist with developing a tool to capture this data.

Members liked the proposal to reach people through employers and organizations. Attention must be given to reaching people in their communities to ensure that residents that have traditionally been left out because they do not have an articulate spokesperson or are marginalized are included. Inventive strategies will be required to be inclusive in this manner.

Seeking further clarity/definition of the term 'reach', Mr. Burchill indicated that success in his opinion would be providing residents the opportunity to engage. 'Reach' could be defined as residents knowing of the opportunity and knowing something about the Centre Plan.

Referring to development and gentrification pressures in the north end of Halifax, Councillor Watts stressed the importance of parameters 6 and 7 on page 12. She went on to suggest that the north end community needs to be participating now in order to be prepared and to understand that the outcome will not solve all issues. Strategic preparation of the community is required.

Responding to a concern from Mr. Book that Business is not included in the parameters, Mr. Ritchie noted that Business is captured under parameter 2.

Councillor Watts pointed out that HRM should seek out convenors within the community who can invite staff into the community. Mr. Ritchie noted that a broad stakeholders list exists; however, input from the Committee to fill any gaps or focus stakeholders would be appreciated.

Referring to the engagement parameters for geography and complexity, the Committee agreed that Figure 2 on page 14 provided greater understanding of the complexity of the Center Plan project.

With regard to stakeholders, the Committee noted that large and small developers (i.e. one man shop) should be engaged. Student Union and university students should be included in engagement and should also include high school students. Additionally particular attention must be given to stakeholders who have plans in place for future development (e.g. Dalhousie, Capital Health, etc.).

Following a review of the proposed tools and techniques to be utilized, Mr. Ritchie advised that staff is projecting that the plan amendments for Downtown Dartmouth will be considered by Community Council in February and the interim Development Agreement Policy is projected for mid- 2015. Mr. Burchill noted that it is very important to knit these projects and the Center Plan. Mr. Bob Bjerke, Director/Chief Planner, noted that messaging for all these projects will lead with the link to the Center Plan.

Responding to the outcome of Center Plan, Mr. Bjerke indicated that the ideal situation will see the existing secondary and tertiary plans embedded in the Center Plan. The technical components are complex and will take time. The goal is unity and clarity with a similar number of plans for each area.

Mr. Ritchie confirmed that the Local Event Planning Tool will provide a facilitation tool for small group discussion. The Planning Workbook is more a fluid discussion tool.

Councillor Way stressed that clarity and alignment between the Center Plan and any discussion regarding a proposed North End Plan or other plan is vitally important.

Mr. Moorhouse endorsed the trade show style planning workshop over the public meeting style.

Ms. Watson-Creed requested, in response to concerns/questions around clarity relative to the various plans, requested that staff provide a diagram similar to Figure 2 – Regional Planning Initiatives on page 14 to complement members understanding and to assist members in responding to questions.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Mr. Burchill that the Community Design Advisory Committee recommends to the Community Planning and Economic Development the adoption of the Community Engagement Strategy for the Centre Plan as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.