

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY STANDING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

January 10, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor Barry Dalrymple, Chair
Councillor Jennifer Watts, Vice Chair
Deputy Mayor Reg Rankin
Councillor Darren Fisher
Councillor Lorelei Nicoll

STAFF: Mr. Joshua Judah, Solicitor
Mr. Richard MacLellan, Manager, Energy and Environment
Mr. Gord Helm, Manager, Solid Waste Resources
Mr. Ted Aubut, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m. in the Dartmouth Chamber, 90 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 6, 2012

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Fisher that minutes of December 6, 2012 be approved, as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions:

- 9.1 Councillor Dalrymple - Information Report dated January 2, 2013 regarding East Port Energy Project
- 9.2 Deputy Mayor Rankin – Update on Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Regional Park
- 9.3 Deputy Mayor Rankin – Community Engagement Component of Solid Waste Review
- 9.4 Correspondence from the Halifax Chamber of Commerce dated January 10, 2013

The Standing Committee agreed to discuss all items related to the Municipal Wood First Policy, namely items 5.2, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 9.4 and Information Item 3 immediately following item 6.3.1, the presentation from the Atlantic Concrete Association.

The Standing Committee similarly agreed to defer discussion of an Information Report dated December 7, 2013 regarding Solar Orientation Regulation (Information Item 1) to the next meeting.

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

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

4.1 Status Sheet Update

The Clerk reminded the Standing Committee that Heritage Gas would be delivering a presentation, on installation plans for 2013, at the next scheduled meeting. He wished to know if members had specific questions that Heritage Gas could answer in their presentation.

Councillor Watts explained that Heritage Gas had undertaken a pilot project in District 8 during the summer of 2012. She asked that the presenter provide an assessment of that project, specifically of efforts taken to encourage residents to sign-up for gas service.

Councillor Fisher requested that Heritage Gas explore establishing an alert system to inform Councillors of work underway in their districts.

Councillor Nicoll asked that the presenter provide an overview of how Heritage Gas sets geographic priorities.

The Chair asked that members submit any additional questions to the Clerk who will forward the complete list to Heritage Gas.

The Clerk then provided an update on the fourth item on the status sheet, the Future of Municipal Access Agreements, confirming that Daniel Rubinstein of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities will deliver a presentation to the Standing Committee at the meeting of April 4, 2013. He noted, further, that the sixth item, Fair Trade Town Designation for Halifax, is on hold pending a response from partner Fusion Halifax.

Councillor Watts wished to know why staff is recommending that the last item of the status sheet, Contaminated Soils and Sediment, be removed.

The Chair indicated that staff was not prepared to proceed with that recommendation.

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

5.1 Presentation Request from Harvey & Mackenzie Architects

A presentation request from Harvey & Mackenzie Architects dated September 27, 2012 was before the Standing Committee.

The Clerk reminded the Standing Committee that it deferred consideration of this request until an information report on district energy was tabled.

Mr. Richard MacLellan, Manager of Energy and Environment, added that the report in question, District Energy: Municipal Role, was presented to the Standing Committee on December 6, 2012.

MOVED by Councillor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Watts that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee accept the presentation request from Harvey & MacKenzie Architects. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5.2 Staff Report dated September 13, 2012 regarding Municipal Wood First Policy

Discussion of item 5.2 was deferred until the Standing Committee heard from the Atlantic Concrete Association.

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

6.1 Correspondence

6.1.1 Correspondence from S.M. Mandaville regarding Lake Studies in HRM

The following pieces of correspondence were before the Standing Committee:

- A report from S.M. Mandaville dated December 13, 2012; and
- A report from S.M. Mandaville dated December 18, 2012

The Standing Committee agreed to forward these reports to staff for comment.

6.1.2 Correspondence from Construction Association of Nova Scotia regarding the Municipal Wood First Policy

Item 6.1.2 was deferred until the Standing Committee heard from the Atlantic Concrete Association.

6.1.3 Presentation Request from Cement Association of Canada regarding Municipal Wood First Policy

Like the previous item, 6.1.3 was deferred until the Standing Committee heard from the Atlantic Concrete Association.

6.1.4 Presentation Request from Nova Waste Solutions Inc. regarding Thinking Outside the Landfill

Correspondence from Stephen J. Mader, President and CEO of Nova Waste Solutions Inc., dated December 14, 2012 was before the Standing Committee.

Councillor Watts asked staff to comment on the request before them.

Mr. Gord Helm, Manager of Solid Waste Resources, explained that staff had reviewed the company's technology and recommended that the presentation be held.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Fisher that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee accept the presentation request from Nova Waste solutions and set the presentation for February 7, 2013. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

6.2 Petitions - NONE

6.3 Presentations

6.3.1 Atlantic Concrete Association regarding Municipal Wood First Policy

The following were before the Standing Committee:

- A presentation entitled "Say Yes to Fair Competition among Environmentally Responsible Choices"
- The Winter 2012 edition of the Atlantic Concrete Association's newsletter *Ready Mix News*

Mary Macaulay, Executive Director of the Atlantic Concrete Association thanked the Standing Committee for the opportunity to present. She explained that her association represents the interests of 60 concrete plants, the majority being small businesses that operate solely in Atlantic Canada. The Association also serves as the certification body for regional mixed concrete production.

Ms. Macaulay indicated that her presentation was a response to the proposed Municipal Wood First Policy which, if passed, would have HRM give wood first consideration, subject to financial approval and performance feasibility for structural and material options when designing new and recapitalization facility projects. The proposed policy, she continued, came together after Atlantic WoodWORKS! delivered a presentation to the Standing Committee in September 2012. She wished to counter some of the claims made by the wood industry and highlight the advantages of concrete.

Pointing to data from the Worker's Compensation Board, Ms. Macaulay explained that the forestry industry is not, as it claims, the engine of economic growth. Combined, the accommodations, food and beverage industry contributes more to the economy than wood, and depends, in part, on the natural beauty of our province. Clear cutting does not encourage tourism, she added.

Second, she agreed that wood is a versatile product, but so too is ready-mix concrete. Laminate timber, by contrast, lacks versatility and is difficult to plank.

Next, she disputed WoodWORKS!' claims that wood meets code, noting that wood is excluded from certain buildings because it does not meet code. While fire retardants and other chemicals can improve the performance of wood, Ms. Macaulay warned that the result can be very toxic.

Ms. Macaulay agreed that wood is a renewable resource but only if grown as a crop. She reminded Councillors that Nova Scotia's forests are mixed and that growing trees as crops would require monoculture.

Ms. Macaulay similarly called into question wood's low carbon footprint. She noted that oceans store most of the world's carbon, with soil coming in second. Deforestation,

meanwhile, contributes to the release of carbon into the atmosphere by way of exposing soil to the elements.

Finally, Ms. Macaulay indicated that the wood industry contributes to the local economy but so too does ready mix concrete, adding that her industry has made large investments in Atlantic Canada. She found it unfair and anti-competitive that HRM would consider favouring one environmentally-responsible product over another and cautioned that this could have important implications, direct and indirect, on the economy.

Ms. Macaulay then provided a quick overview of the benefits of ready-mixed concrete, noting that it is produced locally and delivered within a maximum radius of 30 km from the production facility; that it is recyclable, disaster resistant, and energy efficient and minimizes waste. She concluded by expressing support for initiatives that encourage use of green materials and requested that ready-mixed concrete be included in these discussions given its environmental advantages.

The Chair thanked Ms. Macaulay for her presentation. There being no questions of clarification, Councillor Watts introduced the following motion:

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Nicoll that the Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee direct staff to prepare a supplementary report on the Municipal Wood First Policy in light of feedback received from the Atlantic Concrete Association, the Construction Association of Nova Scotia and the Halifax Chamber of Commerce and which takes into account Resolution 19A passed by the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities; and request that staff to meet with the Cement Association of Canada in order to include their feedback in the report as well.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

6.3.2 Clean Nova Scotia regarding Pilot Stormwater Management Program

The following were before the Standing Committee:

- A Clean Nova Scotia report entitled "RainYards: a Stormwater Management Program"
- A summary of the RainYards project, including pre and post project survey results

Gina Patterson, Director of Programs for Clean Nova Scotia explained that her organization is in the business of environmental education, including on stormwater issues. She then introduced her colleague, Ms. Valerie Francella, who had coordinated a pilot project to more effectively manage stormwater on residential properties.

Ms. Francella explained that the project ran during the summer of 2012 and was the first project of its kind in Nova Scotia. It stemmed from the realization that simple

landscaping changes can have a large impact on stormwater. Conducted in South Dartmouth, the pilot project sought to initiate discussion at the community level, to facilitate one on one discussions, and to tailor recommendations to participating homeowners.

Pointing to photos, Ms. Francella explained that participants were invited to paint their storm barrels, many of which were donated by Halifax Water. Following one on one discussions, which gauged the homeowner's ability to take on the project, Clean Nova Scotia then provided specific recommendations on how to decrease flooding and avoid polluted run-off from properties.

Ms. Francella noted that most participants planned to implement the recommendations and were particularly excited about installing their rain barrels. She estimated that 815,000 litres of water would be collected in the rain barrels installed. Some participants, she added, have even re-graded their properties and installed French drains.

Ms. Francella invited the Standing Committee to review a more detailed assessment of the project, which was in the information package before them.

The Chair thanked Ms. Patterson and Ms. Francella for their presentation and opened the floor to questions.

Councillor Watts indicated that Halifax Water valued these types of programs because stormwater, especially after a heavy storm, can be a shock to public infrastructure. She was pleased to see that such projects were underway, including HRM-run projects at the George Dixon Centre and possibly, in the near future, at the Halifax Forum. She commended Clean Nova Scotia's two-pronged approach, namely providing rain barrels and landscaping advice to homeowners.

Mr. MacLellan confirmed that HRM had participated in stormwater management projects at the George Dixon Centre and the University Avenue Fire Station with the support of the Green Municipal Fund. Unfortunately, the funds received were earmarked for HRM properties and could not be used for homeowner projects. He also noted that Halifax Water had run a small rain barrels program.

Councillor Watts thought it worthwhile to explore the possibility of providing a rain barrel to each home, in the same way that homes are provided with green bins.

Ms. Patterson replied that the rain barrel is an important tool, but it is but one of many. She estimated that it would cost approximately \$70,000 to equip 400 homes with rain barrels.

Councillor Watts wished to know how Clean Nova Scotia selected candidate neighbourhoods for their stormwater management project.

Ms. Patterson replied that they are targeting middle-income neighbourhoods which ideally have a community centre. As there are many neighbourhoods that fit these criteria, she wondered if HRM could help narrow down the list.

A brief discussion ensued around which neighbourhoods or HRM-run multi-district facilities would be appropriate for the program's expansion in spring 2013.

Councillor Nicoll indicated that, like Councillor Watts, she would like to see rain barrels at each home. However, she explained that over-flowing rain barrels can create problems. She wondered if participants had been warned about this.

Ms. Francella confirmed that participants learned about the hazards of overflow but was unsure whether they were following all of the suggestions provided to them.

The Chair asked if Clean Nova Scotia had specific requests of HRM.

Ms. Patterson asked that HRM consider funding the project and that it help identify communities, or public facilities, that could be candidates for the project.

The Chair asked that Clean Nova Scotia post its final report on its website and provide the link to Councillors by way of Mr. MacLellan.

Mr. MacLellan indicated the project may be eligible for funding from HRM's Community Grants program.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Fisher that the Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee direct staff to prepare a report exploring ways in which HRM could support Clean Nova Scotia's stormwater management program and identifying potential neighbourhoods and public facilities that would be appropriate candidates for an expanded RainYards program.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

6.3.3 Eco Resource Management regarding the Recovery of Oil Content from Plastics

A briefing note prepared by Eco Resource Management and the Adams Management Group was before the Standing Committee.

Mr. Dietmar Tholen of Eco Resource Management introduced his partners, Mr. Scott Travers, formerly of Minas Basin Pulp and Power, and Mr. Wayne Adams, former Minister of the Environment. He explained that they have been working on a plastic to oil recovery system since 2006 and are keen to bring HRM on board as a partner.

Mr. Tholen noted that HRM is the largest producer of waste in Nova Scotia. Plastics account for approximately 10% of that waste but takes up a disproportionately high

amount of space in the landfill. He explained that the system his company has developed reduces the volume of plastics by recovering its oil content, thereby extending the life of a landfill. Another advantage is that the salvaged oil can be used for another purpose.

The plastics-to-oil system integrates existing equipment into a specific form. The result, he continued, is cutting edge technology that recovers 80 to 90% of the oil, which would be enough to run the plastics processing facility. While the system would not employ large numbers of people, he believed that it would have significant spin-offs, making Halifax a centre of excellence in this field.

He hoped that HRM would consider becoming a partner in this venture, which could process up to 40,000 tons of plastic per year. Approximately half of that stock, 20,000 tons, could come from HRM alone. As for funding, he listed a number of potential sources, including the Resource Recovery Fund Board, the National Research Council of Canada and the Municipal Green Fund.

Mr. Tholen explained that Phase 1 of the company's Market-Ready Strategy, R&D, is nearing completion. In Phase 2, the company intends to design, construct and operate a technology demonstration system with a commercial scale prototype in Halifax. To facilitate this next step, he requested that HRM consider providing feedstock and land on which to process it.

The Chair thanked Mr. Tholen for his presentation and asked staff to comment on HRM's plastic recycling capabilities.

Mr. Gord Helm, Manager of Solid Waste Resources indicated that while HRM separates plastics at its Burnside facility, it does not have the capacity to recycle Plastic Types 4-7, which are shipped to Ontario for processing. He indicated further that if HRM were to give Eco Resource Management access to its plastic feedstock, then it would first have to decide how much to contribute and at what cost to the waste management system.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Nicoll that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee direct staff to prepare a report exploring the request outlined in Eco Resource Management's presentation, including access to materials and to land, and assessing foreseen implications on HRM's waste management system.

Councillor Watts congratulated Mr. Tholen and his partners for their important work, noting that recycling raises a number of questions about who should pay for resource recovery. On this, she indicated that both the producer and the consumer should be contributing to these programs, not just the taxpayer.

Councillor Nicoll wished to know how Mr. Tholen's business evolved and if it had considered only treating styrofoam.

Mr. Tholen explained that Mr. Adams had introduced him to Mr. Travers in 2006. Together, they had explored and eventually partnered with a German company, which has since closed. He then clarified his intention to process Plastics 4-7, including styrofoam.

Deputy Mayor Rankin acknowledged the presence of Mr. Adams and commended his leadership at the helm of the Department of the Environment. He asked that the staff report requested address costs and revenue streams.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7. REPORTS

7.1 Reports from Members of the Standing Committee

7.1.1 Councillor Watts – Request for Presentation from QUEST

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Fisher that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee invite a representative from QUEST to an upcoming meeting to deliver a presentation on the municipal role in community energy projects.

Councillor Watts requested that staff invite Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan of QUEST to deliver a presentation in March or April, 2013. Should she be unavailable, then staff would invite another representative of QUEST.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

8. MOTIONS

8.1 Councillor Watts

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Nicoll that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee request a staff report reviewing options for future RRFB funding opportunities in light of findings presented in the Hogg Report.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9. ADDED ITEMS

9.1 Information Report dated January 2, 2013 regarding the East Port Energy Project

The following documents were before the Standing Committee:

- An Information Report dated January 2, 2013 regarding East Port Energy

- Correspondence from John W. Lindsay Jr., President of East Port Energy dated November 26, 2012

Mr. Greg Keefe, Director of Finance and ICT provided a brief overview of the project, noting that it represents an investment of \$8.5 million.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Nicoll that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee request that the Audit and Finance Standing Committee recommend to Regional Council that HRM recognize the unique opportunity to enable a district energy system for the Municipality and identify the East Port District Energy Project as a 2013/14 capital project to be taken to the next stage of development as per these specific instructions:

Council will ask staff to analyse the proposal and develop options for Council with the objective of:

- Ensuring the project has technical merit;
- Minimizing the financial risks to the taxpayers; and
- Providing sufficient return on any investment to prevent the general tax rate from subsidizing the project.

In advancing the project, Council will undertake to:

1. Instruct staff

- a. To work with East Port Energy and proposed partners (Emera and Alta Gas), and the Province of Nova Scotia to confirm the project scope and timeline, to identify equity/governance models and to draft a partnership and governance agreement that takes into account HRM's interests ;**
- b. Produce draft documents necessary to advance the project including a development and management agreement between the parties and other documents as are reasonably required;**
- c. Begin work to get enabling legislation as required for HRM investment and provincial district energy regulations in place including the ability to borrow funds for this project; and**
- d. Report back within one month with respect to a draft partnership and governance agreement and identify project milestones for Council's consideration in 2013/14 based on the tasks outlined above.**

- 2. Approve investing up to \$300,000 in 2013/14 to enable the due diligence required to fully explore the proposed district energy project. Due to the urgency of project timing, instruct staff to propose options for immediate interim funding for the project;**

In order to facilitate consideration of this motion, the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee requested that this motion be forwarded to the Audit and Finance Standing Committee meeting of January 16, 2013 for consideration and recommendation to Regional Council on January 22, 2013.

Councillor Watts described the project as an historic offering to HRM and emphasized that it must be undertaken with some urgency, to accommodate new construction in the downtown core, like the Nova Centre and the Central Library. She explained that HRM must, as next steps, explore the technical merits of the project, its regulatory implications, and whether HRM has sufficient capital reserves. She concluded by requesting that this matter be brought before the Audit and Finance Standing Committee as soon as possible.

Mr. Keefe explained that because of the timeline and the nature of the project, his unit will need external advice, which would be the only real cost to HRM at this point. He noted, further, that the Province is supportive of this initiative and has indicated that it will make the necessary changes to the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter to allow it to go ahead.

Deputy Mayor Rankin and Councillor Fisher wished to know if the Province intended to participate in other ways.

Mr. Keefe replied that the Province has committed to interim funding and is willing to change legislation as early as spring 2013. Under the current Charter, he added, HRM is not allowed to partner with private companies

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Chair asked that this matter be added to the agenda of the January 16, 2013 meeting of the Audit and Finance Standing Committee.

9.2 Deputy Mayor Rankin – Update on Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Regional Park

Deputy Mayor Rankin noted that legal issues had put a hold on the Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Regional Park Conceptual Plan and Objectives. He wished to know if staff could provide an update on this matter at the next meeting.

Mr. MacLellan explained that a Birch Cove Lakes watershed study is complete and will be presented to the Bedford Watershed Advisory Board in March. Legal issues are also being reviewed by staff. He committed to bringing an Information Report forward at the Standing Committee's February meeting.

Deputy Mayor Rankin thanked Mr. MacLellan for his response, noting that residents of his district are looking forward to receiving answers as quickly as possible.

9.3 Deputy Mayor Rankin – Community Engagement Component of Solid Waste Review

Deputy Mayor Rankin wished to know when the Regional Solid Waste Strategy Review would be complete and if it will outline how the public consultation process will unfold.

Mr. Helm replied that staff is waiting for the finalized report, which will include a community engagement component.

Deputy Mayor Rankin explained that community criteria are important elements of the review process. He therefore hoped that the final report would identify (and justify) the model of community engagement to be used.

9.4 Correspondence from the Halifax Chamber of Commerce dated January 10, 2013

Correspondence received from the Halifax Chamber of Commerce was reviewed in conjunction with item 6.3.1, namely the presentation from the Atlantic Concrete Association.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION – NONE

11. NEXT MEETING DATE - February 7, 2013

12. IN CAMERA

The Standing Committee recessed at 3:00 pm to convene in camera in order to nominate members to the Halifax Water Commission.

12.1 Appointments to the Halifax Water Commission

This matter was dealt with in camera.

The Standing Committee reconvened in public session at 3:26 pm.

MOVED by Councillor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Fisher that the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee ratify the motions made relative to councillor and citizen nominations and forward the nominations to Halifax Regional Council for decision. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:27 pm.

Ted Aubut
Legislative Assistant