

ENERGY AND UNDERGROUND SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

October 15, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor Barry Dalrymple
Councillor Jennifer Watts
Councillor Darren Fisher
Councillor Jackie Barkhouse

REGRETS: Councillor Sue Uteck, Chair
Councillor Debbie Hum, Vice Chair
Councillor Stephen Adams

STAFF: Mr. Angus Doyle, Manager, Utilities Coordination
Mr. Julian Boyle, Energy Auditor
Mr. Richard MacLellan, Manager, Sustainable
Environmental Management Office
Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan, Municipal Solicitor
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Councillor Dalrymple, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Fisher that the minutes of September 17, 2010 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions:

6.1 QUEST (Quality Urban Energy Systems of Tomorrow) Memorandum of Understanding – Briefing

6.2 Article from *The Globe and Mail*

Item 5.1.2 to be dealt with as the first order of business

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

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

5. REPORTS:

5.1.2 Sierra Club Presentation – Community GHG Targets

Mr. Richard MacLellan introduced Ms. Gretchen Fitzgerald and Ms. Jen Powley who were representing the Sierra Club. They provided a presentation concerning greenhouse gas emission targets and climate change solutions for HRM. In their remarks they noted that cities can have a significant global impact locally, as they have the resources and economies of scale, and that climate solutions often solve other problems. The presentation highlighted the need for community-wide GHG reductions, pointing out that the citizens want this and that the municipality is missing the 'big picture' by focusing on corporate emissions.

In conclusion Ms. Powley noted that a review of the 25 year Regional Plan was coming up soon, and she suggested this would provide opportunities to set targets.

5.1 Staff:

5.1.1. Community Solar Project

A staff report dated September 28, 2010 was submitted.

Mr. Julian Boyle provided a presentation on a proposed community solar project designed to encourage individual homeowners to install solar panels for heating domestic hot water. He advised that it is a \$5 million pilot project and will encourage economic development in the region; reduce GHG emissions and assist in meeting reduction targets and it supports the Council mandate of alternative energy use. Mr. Boyle highlighted the following points:

- HRM has good experience corporately with utilizing solar hot water and now want to apply it to a community scale.
- Noted that there is a manufacturer in Dartmouth who has been in the solar business for 30 years.
- Solar hot water is a labour intensive business and a lot of jobs are created.
- Capacity is being built through the community college and the training that is carried out there.

Mr. Richard MacLellan explained the scope of the project advising that there would be 1000 panels installed on 500 homes in HRM. The homeowner would sign up for the program and over time the cost savings of their energy bills would pay back the installation costs – with it being paid off within five to ten years. He noted that with a manufacturer in Dartmouth, the economic spinoff would be substantial, and from an environmental point of view it will reduce GHG's and help meet the community targets.

Mr. Boyle added that this project is designed to be cost neutral to the Municipality and that staff have consulted with the industry, and believe that through a pilot project they can begin to engage the public on the best practices of solar hot water technology. He noted that staff will develop best practices on the financing, installation and maintenance.

Mr. Boyle and Mr. MacLellan responded to questions.

Mr. MacLellan advised that the next step would be to consult with the public. He noted that staff have presented the idea to the Province and Conserve Nova Scotia and they have expressed an interest in working with the Municipality on the public consultation. Mr. MacLellan indicated that staff would carry out the consultation and come back with an update no later than December.

In response to a question about an amendment to the HRM Charter, Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan, Municipal Solicitor explained that the amendment would only be enabling legislation, which means that the Municipality could choose to use it or not.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Barkhouse that the Energy and Underground Services Advisory Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

- 1. Continue to explore the potential financial, administrative, environmental and local economic impacts of a community solar project, and update Council as required.**
- 2. Hold public engagement sessions to gauge residents feedback on the uptake of a voluntary pilot program for solar hot water installations.**
- 3. Request the Province of Nova Scotia amend the HRM Charter to enable security of financing of energy conservation or environmental improvement of a property via lien authority.**

Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan introduced Mr. Bruce Cameron, staff member from the Policy Department, Department of Energy, Province of Nova Scotia and advised that he could provide a Provincial viewpoint of the project.

Mr. Cameron indicated that this project was consistent with the Province's Energy Policy and direction and other policies they are working on for cleaner energy. He noted that the Department of Energy would be supportive of an amendment to HRM's Charter and staff have met with their Service Nova Scotia colleagues. He added that they have asked them to consider the most effective way of giving HRM the legal authority to move forward.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5.2 Committee Members: None

6. ADDED ITEMS:

6.1 QUEST (Quality Urban Energy Systems of Tomorrow) Memorandum of Understanding – Briefing

A copy of a Memorandum of Understanding between HRM, Clayton Developments Limited, The Province of Nova Scotia, Efficiency Nova Scotia Corporation, East Port Properties Limited, Heritage Gas, and Alta Gas Limited dated October 13, 2010 was circulated.

Mr. Boyle explained that the QUEST initiative is a unique national collaboration between industry, government, and developers looking for integrated solutions for energy systems.

He advised that an MOU has been signed for a pilot project that is focused on the Bedford West Subdivision, and there is a lot of opportunity within that infrastructure and development to look at shaping things within the context of QUEST principles.

Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan noted that the excess heating capacity coming from the Four-Pad Area will provide opportunities.

In response to a question by Councillor Watts, Mr. Boyle advised that QUEST is a national organization and a local group within it has been created, and it is an informal alliance of interests. He pointed out that the pilot project is not the objective of QUEST but it is one tool.

Further to this Ms. Donovan explained that because the project does not interest all the participants the description of the objectives, called the Charter, would be developed and this will be the next order of business among the group, for the larger objectives.

6.2 Article from The Globe and Mail

Copy of an article entitled, *Summerside stores the wind* (by Richard Blackwell) from the October 13, 2010 edition of *The Globe and Mail* was circulated for information.

Ms. Mary Ellen Donovan advised that the article discusses the recent evolution of Summerside's efforts to become energy independent. She noted that a number of years ago a group of individuals who were interested in this topic had the opportunity to have Terry Murphy, who is CEO for Summerside, give a tour of the community and their work in regard to wind energy. She referred to the article and advised that Mr. Murphy has made significant movement from five years ago. Ms. Donovan suggested that if he were willing to conduct a tour, the Committee may want to visit Summerside, perhaps next spring, and see their initiatives.

7. NEXT MEETING DATE: November 19, 2010

8. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 11:38 a.m.

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant

The following information items were submitted:

1. Information Report dated October 4, 2010 entitled, Park Spark Project
2. Information Report dated October 4, 2010 entitled, Solar Hot Air Initiative