



**COMMUNITY DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
April 22, 2014**

**PRESENT:** Dale Godsoe, Chair  
Fred Morley, Vice Chair  
Eric Burchill  
William Book  
Joanne Macrae  
Gaynor Watson-Creed  
Councillor Gloria McCluskey  
Councillor Waye Mason  
Councillor Lorelei Nicoll  
Councillor Jennifer Watts

**REGRETS:** Geoff LeBoutillier  
Peter Moorhouse

**STAFF:** Jane Fraser, Director, Planning and Infrastructure  
Bob Bjerke, Chief Planner  
Richard Harvey, Major Projects Planner  
Sherryll Murphy, Deputy Clerk

*The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.*

*The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to the Community Design Advisory Committee are available online:*

<http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/CommunityDesignAdvisoryCommittee.php>

*The meeting was called to order at 11:43 a.m. and adjourned at 1:36 p.m.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order thanking members and staff for being present. Roundtable introductions were made.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 8 and 15, 2013**

**MOVED by Mr. Book, seconded by Councillor Mason that the minutes of November 8 and November 15, 2013 be approved, as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

The agenda was accepted as circulated.

**4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - NONE**

**5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE**

**6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS - NONE**

**7. REPORTS**

**7.1 STAFF**

**7.1.1 Regional Centre Plan Project Next Steps – Staff Report to Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee**

The following was before the Committee:

- A staff report to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee (CPED) dated February 25, 2014
- A draft extract of the recommendation of the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee regarding the above report from their March 20, 2014 meeting

The Chair noted that the purpose for the meeting was to provide input to staff on the appropriate role of the Committee. Referring to the CPED recommendation, the Chair indicated that part 2 of the recommendation called for a review of the Terms of Reference and a staff recommendation relative to the Terms of Reference.

Ms. Fraser confirmed that the purpose of today's meeting is to have a conversation about the staff report and the role of the Committee. She noted that Mr. Bjerke is the Chief Planner and will have an active role with the Committee.

Mr. Bjerke indicated that he was interested in learning from the Committee how they see moving forward with the Centre Plan. He suggested this would include what the Committee saw as the areas about which to make recommendations and what the public consultation would look like.

Following a brief discussion regarding Mr. Bjerke's experience with Committee's, Mr. Harvey made a presentation regarding the staff report to the Community Planning and Economic Development Committee and the proposed Regional Centre Plan Next Steps.

Mr. Harvey began his presentation providing background information relative to the RP+5 process and as set out in the staff report.

Mr. Harvey noted that legislative amendments were approved by the Province in February 2014 allowing for density bonuses and site plan approval in the regional center. He further advised that discussions with the Province are ongoing given that the provision for the density bonus requires an affordable housing component.

He went on to indicate that staff is recommending that the Regional Centre Plan be moved forward under three initiatives as follow:

1. Planning for low density residential areas
  - Assurances that large changes are not envisioned
  - Building blocks for more complex areas
  - No density bonus or site plan approval envisioned

Mr. Harvey indicated that staff proposes this initiative will be the focus of work for the Committee.

He advised that staff have identified the following issues to be discussed/resolved through this work:

- Secondary apartments
- Home occupations
- Urban agriculture
- Other typical planning matters (e.g. inappropriate development that does not fit the character of the neighbourhood)

2. Update Development Agreement Policies

Mr. Harvey indicated that the present policies were not up to date, nor did they provide sufficient guidance to the public, developers, or Council. He indicated that a significant amount of multi-unit and/or mixed-use development has occurred by Development Agreement in the Regional Centre. He noted that this was not anticipated to be a long project, but would provide good, more comprehensive criteria for Development Agreements.

Mr. Book requested a list of the properties/developments which have been developed through Development Agreement and those that are in the process and a map locating those sites, to which Mr. Harvey responded that this information would be provided.

Mr. Harvey indicated that the third initiative is Regional Centre Based Projects, including:

1. Local piped service capacity issues
2. Opportunity Sites in Dartmouth
3. Dartmouth Cove Plan
4. Heritage Conservation Districts
5. Fairview Commercial district amendments
6. 5 Year Review of the Downtown Halifax Plan

Mr. Harvey indicated that some of these projects would feed into the work of the Committee on the Regional Centre Plan and would be considered by the Committee.

Referring to the requirement for an affordable housing component in density bonusing, Ms. Macrae noted that there are provisions in place to accept money in lieu of affordable housing.

Mr. Harvey cautioned that if money in lieu of affordable housing was to be offered without restriction, developers would opt for that option. He noted that this may be an option offered to smaller developments, however, he saw benefit in having a mix of housing in larger mixed use development. More work needs to be done before density bonusing is implemented.

Mr. Harvey responded to a question regarding the percentage of affordable housing to be included in a development, noting that this is one of the matters to be decided.

Councillor Mason expressed concern around the administration of payments made in lieu of affordable housing and how these would be handled administratively. He pointed out that systems would have to be put in place to transfer these monies to the Province and to ensure that these monies are utilized in the Regional Centre rather than being distributed throughout the province. Councillor Mason went on to indicate that he generally liked staff's approach and pointed out that the Committee would not be involved in secondary plans. He went on to request a list of the matters the Committee noted would be dealt with under the Center Plan during RP+5 discussions.

Members discussed the role of the Committee in depth and provided the following:

- Committee to be guided by a set of overarching principles
- Work to be based upon a vision for the regional centre, underpinned by clear/strong goals
- Role is to be strategic and high level

- Avoid excessive detail, hold broader conversations on such things as ‘what is density’, housing affordability, how metro transit plan impacts the Center Plan, site plan approval versus Development Agreement
- Mechanism for transparency and how other related or impactful plans will be integrated with Center Plan
- Members seeking some level of input into some other initiatives – i.e. update of criteria for DA is policy decision and CDAC should have input. Suggest also should have some input to Downtown Dartmouth opportunity sites.
- CDAC would not be involved in secondary plans
- Discussion on the public engagement process: what has worked, what makes the best process. How do we engage Council throughout the process. Citizens of HRM have high expectations re public engagement. They expect different approaches and not only the traditional methods (i.e. public meetings). (Authentic Leadership in Action format for public engagement is the standard)
- Get on with articulating goals. Visionary discussion would be based on the RP+5 Parking Lot (referred to above). How we begin and carry on that discussion is key.
- Greater understanding of key documents for Council and the public alike. That is, the Regional Plan and Economic Development Plan and how they work together for Council and the public.

Mr. Harvey responded to an inquiry regarding the rationale for the split into three initiatives, with Mr. Harvey indicating that the planning for the low density areas of the Regional Centre was seen as more of a visioning proposal.

Councillor Watts asked that consideration be given to including the Neighbourhood Planning Project for the North End in the Regional Centre Based Projects initiative.

Following a further short discussion, the Chair thanked members and staff for their input.

**8. ADDED ITEMS - None**

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING –TBD**

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 1:36 p.m.

Sherryl Murphy  
Deputy Clerk