

**Chapter 2. Energy, Environment and Climate Change (written comments up to July 5, 2013)**

| PROPOSED POLICY CHANGE | SUBMISSION       | REF # | COMMUNITY FEEDBACK   | STAFF RESPONSE (no response indicated means Staff believe the proposed Regional Plan addresses this adequately or has been previously addressed.) | CDAC Direction |
|------------------------|------------------|-------|--|---|----------------|
| 2.2 Greenbelting       | Our HRM Alliance |       | Though the Alliance appreciates the use of a “Greenbelting lens” in approaching new subdivision development and applauds HRM for respecting corridors for wildlife and plant species as well as suggesting the Greenbelting and Public Spaces (GPS) Priorities Plan, the Alliance feels that these do not go far enough. These measures do not make a statement that growth within the municipality should be directed towards areas that are already serviced with water and sewer. The GPS would only apply to newly adopted secondary plans and would not be retroactive. <u>No timeline for the development of the GPS is defined.</u> The “Greenbelting lens” is not a viable Greenbelting system. It does not provide the boundaries which are so important for the public to understand where growth should and should not be directed. | Timelines for completing the Greenbelting and Public Spaces Priorities Plan should be included in the staff cover report.                         |                |
|                        | Our HRM Alliance |       | While modest progress has been made in some areas of the Plan, in other areas the revised Plan has actually moved backwards from the current Plan. The Alliance does not feel that the proposed Plan has any more teeth than the current Plan to ensure that growth is directed appropriately. In fact, the current revisions of the Plan have even fewer teeth. While all the specific deficiencies are too numerous to note, we have particularly identified the following four areas where the Plan needs to be improved: <u>directing growth; greenbelting and priority plans; transportation; inadequate measures to monitor success; buffers around and along watercourses</u>   |   |                |
|                        | Mensink, N.      |       | Strongly support greenbelting.   |   |                |

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|  | <p>Woodens River Watershed Environmental Organizations</p> |  | <p>Support the concepts and Seven Solutions proposed by Our HRM Alliance (of which WREO is a member) . Particular concern with policies SU-15 and G-16 (adjacency clause). Also:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Include a provisional Greenbelting in RP+5, with restrictions on development defined and remaining in place until the more detailed Greenbelting and Public Spaces Priorities Plan is completed and approved.</li> <li>2. Put a hold on any development on land currently designated Urban Reserve.</li> <li>3. <u>Please reference HRM land in the vicinity of Moore’s lake specifically as land that should be added to the FBLWA.</u></li> <li>4. Natural Corridors: please include reference to wildlife corridors across major highways, e.g., connecting natural areas across Hwy 103.</li> <li>5. Wetlands: Include complexes of smaller wetlands/vernal pools in the wetland schedule E--15</li> <li>6. Riparian buffers: require a minimum of a <u>30 m wide buffer</u> along all watercourses, and specify that wider buffers may be required according to site topography and other conditions.</li> <li>7. Change “may” to “will” under E--20: HRM will consider a by--law to protect existing trees and to manage the retention and/or existing trees within riparian buffer zones. <u>We would also like to see firm restriction on clearcutting of mature tree stands outside the buffer zone so that situations such as occurred at Boscobel in 2012, are not repeated.</u></li> <li>8. Change “may” to “will” under E--25: HRM will prepare a water quality protocol for water quality monitoring...</li> <li>9. Surface Water Protection: specify strict performance standards to control soil runoff in the site clearance and construction stages of new developments.</li> <li>10. Surface Water Protection: For larger developments adjacent to lakes or to streams that feed into lakes or river, require baseline measurements on the receiving waters and continuous monitoring of water turbidity, pH and electrical conductivity during landclearing, blasting and heavy construction phases. A similar provision should be applied for larger (e.g. &gt;20ha) forestry clearcuts in HRM.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Greenbelting principles are to be applied through secondary planning processes and rural conservation design subdivisions development agreements.</li> <li>2. Urban Reserves are permitted limited residential development until a community plan process is undertaken.</li> <li>3. HRM continues its collaboration with the Province to develop appropriate boundaries and controls for the Wilderness area.</li> <li>4. HRM continues its collaboration with the Province in ongoing identification of wildlife corridors.</li> <li>5. HRM continues its collaboration with the Province in identification of wetland complexes.</li> <li>6. The 20 metre riparian buffer is a minimum which may be increased though secondary planning processes.</li> </ol> <p>7&amp; 8 The word “may” is used as Council’s eventual approval of the tree bylaw is discretionary. The HRM charter restricts authority to create a tree bylaw to lands inside the Servicing Boundary or in riparian buffers.</p> <p>9. Policy concerning storm water by-law is contained in Ch. 8</p> <p>10. Requirements for watershed studies for larger new developments are established under policy E-2</p> |  |
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|              | Plache, B.    |  | Develop a vision for greenbelting, which keeps sufficient lands available for a interconnected network, benefiting residents as well as plant and animal life.  |  |  |
|              | Millward, H.  |  | [...] In line with the above examples, if the HRM plan is to adopt the term Greenbelt, then <u>the term should apply to all land use designations lying outside the growth boundary, with the possible exception of the Rural Resource lands, and excluding the designated Growth Centres.</u> Importantly, this would include the entire extent of the Rural Commuter lands. Along with this, the plan would do well to adopt the term Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), and to draw a long-term UGB around both the Urban Settlement and Urban Reserve lands. The Urban Service Boundary thus becomes an Interim UGB, lying inside the long-term UGB.                                  | The Urban Service Designation serves as HRM's Urban Growth Boundary. The proposed Greenbelting program is described above. |  |
|              | Smith, J.     |  | Supports growth targets, greenbelting, stricter conditions in policies SU-15 and G-16; more investment in active transportation, performance measures and increased buffers around watercourses.  |  |  |
|              | Peckham, R.   |  | Supports growth targets, greenbelting, stricter conditions in policies SU-15 and G-16; more investment in active transportation, performance measures and increased buffers around watercourses.  |  |  |
| Greenbelting | Purcell, V.   |  | The vision of a <u>Wilderness Greenbelt</u> as a substantial area of protected wild land surrounding the compact growth area of a dense urban core is a means of promoting an active healthy community. An additional benefit would be attracting more density to the core because of the availability of a permanent wilderness recreation area. People would feel they can work and re-create within their own community. Finally, a greenbelt is valuable to residents on both sides of it. We tend to focus on urban recreation but the same benefits accrue to suburban citizens as well. So, double good for HRM! Please consider the wisdom of the above in your next draft. |  |  |
|              | Rhineland, A. |  | I strongly support efforts to designate the Purcell's Cove/William's Lake Backlands as a Greenbelt Area completely off-limits to development.   |  |  |

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| <p>2.2.2<br/>Parks, Trails and<br/>Greenways</p> | <p>Our HRM<br/>Alliance</p> |  | <p>Another concern of the Alliance is the apparent lack of progress on HRM’s Regional Park network. This network could become the backbone of a Greenbelting strategy as pictured by the Alliance. Of particular concern is the <u>Blue Mountain – Birch Cove Lakes Regional Park</u>. The wording in the revised RMPS removes the word Regional Park from the description of Blue Mountain – Birch Cove Lakes (ch. 3, pg. 6).</p> <p>The private lands within the conceptual park boundary must be acquired. As the Alliance understood it, the Urban Reserve was only designated as a possible site for development after the end of the 25 years of the plan. The backlands in Purcell’s Cove are currently the subject of a study into the feasibility of extending water and sewer a mere six years into the plan.</p> <p>The Urban Reserve classification must be upheld for the life of the plan.</p> | <p>Table 2-3 and the paragraph preceding it, make it clear that Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes is intended to be a Regional Park.</p> <p>Council directed facilitated negotiation to acquire lands for Blue-Mountain Birch Cove Lakes in progress.</p> <p>Urban Reserve lands are subject to comprehensive community planning processes and are identified for growth beyond the life of the regional Plan. Limited edge development may take place under policy G-16.</p> |  |
|  | <p>Smith, J.</p>            |  | <p>The original regional plan, despite some weaknesses, is a good plan. This plan identified the Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness as a site for a future regional park and laid out the policies that would see HRM acquire private lands over time to create the park. However, it has been seven years, and not a single hectare has been acquired by the city for the park [...]. My main issue the regional park, therefore has been its lack of implementation. Indeed, we have also seen a lack of implementation in other areas of the plan with HRM failing, so far, to meet its growth targets.</p>  | <p>Council directed facilitated negotiation to acquire lands for Blue-Mountain Birch Cove Lakes in progress.</p>   |  |

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|   | Creighton, M.                    |  | <p>Table 2-2 Parks Classification System - Page 23<br/>         Neighbourhood parks “..typically provide centrally located recreational services for neighbourhoods of 8 -120 households.” Currently the HRM tax base or locally generated volunteer subscriptions are used to provide these facilities.<br/>         Why not require subdivision developers to provide turnkey “Neighbourhood Parks”? This requirement could be incorporated into the 10 (or 5) % “parkland dedication”.</p> <p>It is recommended that: Initially, a turnkey neighbourhood park (playground) be required for every 100 units developed in any development; and that this requirement be applied as of June 16, 2007 or, at a minimum, the date of the notification of this plan.</p>  | The 2006 RMPS increased the parkland dedication required of subdivisions to 10 per cent.with limited exceptions. |  |
| Regional Parks                            | Spryfield Residents’ Association |  | <p>(Pg.25)2.2.3 Regional Parks<br/>         Spryfield Residents’ Association supports additional parks throughout the municipality. However, we would like Long Lake Provincial Park in Spryfield to be an asset to the community and available to the public. After 30 years as a park, LLPP still has no groomed trails. The Park is almost unusable and is overdue to be funded for the residents of the Halifax Region. This Park has huge assets. Long Lake and its environs could be home to a paddling club, provide jogging/walking trails and still retain its natural habitat for wildlife. Perhaps when prioritizing Regional Parks in the system, Long Lake could be rated as needing a push to the top for any funding available.</p>   | Long Lake Provincial Park is maintained by the provincial government   |  |
| 2.2.5 Natural Areas and Natural Corridors | Spryfield Residents’ Association |  | <p>2.2.5 Natural Areas and Natural Corridors<br/>         (Pg.26) We looked at the map and noted trails along McIntosh Run and another southwest of Kidston Lake. The trail on the wooded Kidston Lake Land is not useable or marked and may only be used by wildlife. It should be removed from the map as it leads the viewer to think there is a cultivated trail there linking communities. Even worse, one thinks this land is still in public hands instead of sold in 2003 to a land developer.<br/>         The Spryfield Residents’ Association has lobbied for 10 years to have government reacquire the Kidston Lake lands (800+ acres). Section 2.2.5 was written to celebrate natural corridors. This parcel of forest, lake and wetlands around Kidston Lake is essential for wildlife to move from the Herring Cove backlands to Long Lake Provincial Park and Terrance Bay Reserve. It should be acquired and protected.</p> | Comment forwarded to trails staff.   |  |

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| 2.3<br>Water<br>Resources           | Our HRM Alliance                |  | In “Halifax Water Best Management Practices for Halifax Water and Crown Managed Lands”, a 30 metre buffer is required for any development along a watercourse. [...]. A 30 metre setback seems to be the new industry standard for setbacks along watercourses. However, in the RMPS, HRM only identified a 20 metre buffer (ch. 2, pg. 2). If HRM wants to protect the watercourses that are so vital to defining the character of Nova Scotia, including a 30 metre riparian buffer should seem obvious. The definition of watercourses must include all wetlands, not just wetlands that are joined to another water body. | The 20-metre watercourse buffer is a minimum may be increased by Council thorough secondary planning processes.  |  |
|                                     | Our HRM Alliance                |  | Also, because a quarter of the municipality depends on private wells for consumable water, it would make good sense for the municipality to pay close attention to the well being of all watercourses that exist within the municipality. A 30 metre buffer cannot reasonably be applied to residences that have already been built but it could apply to all future development. <u>Mandating a 30 metre riparian buffer would help ensure the health of water bodies within the municipality.</u>   | HRM continues to work with the Province in HRM watercourse identification and mapping.<br><br>Based on request from Halifax Water staff are proposing to establish a <b>30.5 m riparian buffer on public lands in protected water supply zones</b> in the watersheds of Pockwock, Lake Major and Bennery Lake. |  |
|                                     | Our HRM Alliance                |  | The Alliance is also concerned with the delay/change to developing a Harbour Master Plan. <u>The setbacks that were removed from the harbour designation should be put in place unless there is reason not to.</u> The precautionary principle should guide development. The lot grading by-law and stormwater management functional plan are long overdue.   | All residential development is required to be elevated 2.5 m above high water. This now includes Halifax Harbour as per policy E-23.   |  |
| 2.3.2 Wetlands and Riparian Buffers | Spryfield Residents Association |  | Today, subdivisions can build into wetlands and riparian buffers. For example, a house was built on one of two lots created by infilling Kidston Pond with rock fill. It is obvious to a casual observer that wetland extended into this new building lot. Someone is approving this. Riparian zones need buffering from human activity and wetlands need protection from infilling for development.  |  |  |
| 2.3.1 Potable Water Supply          | Halifax Water                   |  | Detailed comments on chapter 2 were received, including a map of HRM Water Supplies. Key comments include: Acknowledgement of the watershed advisory boards/committees; inclusion of 20 m buffers in designated watersheds In local LUBs; 30.5 buffers in restricted water supply areas; Review of planning applications by Halifax Water in designated watersheds – what is the best process; Provincial legislation related to wetlands   | Policies will also be updated to reflect comments from Halifax Water.  |  |

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|  | Pockwock Watershed Management Committee |  | Section 2.3.1 Potable Water Supply – request to streamline the development approval process with respect to Pockwock Lake Watershed protection policies; and bring attention to the current and future land use by-laws – <u>ie Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains, Upper Sackville &amp; Planning Districts 1&amp;3 (St. Margaret’s Bay)</u> ; ensure due diligence and consistency in each MPS and LUB. Recommendation: In paragraph 2, p. 28 insert “such that each municipal water supply area is considered within every one of its applicable community plans, and” and that activities and practices within provincially designated watersheds may be further restricted by watershed advisory boards/committees.                 | Staff recommend a new policy be added that will enable WABS the opportunity to make recommendations on amendments to land use by-laws to protect water supply watersheds. However, the approval authority will remain with Council. |  |
|  | Bennery Lake Watershed Committee        |  | Section 2.3.1 Potable Water Supply – request to streamline the development approval process with respect to Bennery lake Watershed protection policies; and bring attention to the current and future land use by-laws – ie Planning Districts 14/17 (Shubenacadie Lakes); ensure due diligence and consistency in each MPS and LUB. Recommendation: In paragraph 2, p. 28 insert “such that each municipal water supply area is considered within every one of its applicable community plans, and ” and that activities and practices within provincially designated watersheds may be further restricted by watershed advisory boards/committees.   |   |  |
|  | Lake Major Watershed Advisory Board     |  | Section 2.3.1 Potable Water Supply – request to streamline the development approval process with respect to Lake Major Watershed protection policies; and bring attention to the current and future land use by-laws – ie North Preston, lake major, Lake Loon, Cherry Brook and East Preston; Cole Harbor/Westphal; Planning Districts 8&9; and 14/17. Ensure due diligence and consistency in each MPS and LUB. Recommendation: In paragraph 2, p. 28 insert “such that each municipal water supply area is considered within every one of its applicable community plans”, and “and that activities and practices within provincially designated watersheds may be further restricted by watershed advisory boards/committees”. |   |  |
|  | Creighton, M.                           |  | 2.3 Water Resources - Page 28<br>Are gas stations allowed contiguous to the Pockwock watershed? If not, why are they allowed next to other potable water supplies in the municipality?   | Staff recommend a new policy be added to draft 3 to allow for zone amendments of lands within water supply watersheds to further protect the water supply.  |  |

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|                              | Creighton, M. | <p>Policy E-14 Although Lake Thomas and Grand Lake are mentioned in the preamble to this policy, neither are included in policy E-14. Lake Fletcher is also a source of domestic water to the surrounding communities</p> <p>·</p> <p>Additionally, a large portion of the residences in the river lakes watershed area draw groundwater for domestic use</p> <p>·</p> <p>It is recommended that: Lake Thomas, Lake Fletcher and Grand Lake be included in policy E-14; and That measures to protect the groundwater resource be included in policy E-14.</p> | <p>A map will be added to Draft 3 identifying public water supplies (watersheds and well heads). A new policy will also included to state that all public lands within these areas be zoned “protected water supplies”.</p>  |  |
| 2.3.4<br>Floodplains         | Creighton, M. | <p>Policy E-21 Future reconstruction of the historic Shubenacadie Canal might require construction of water control structures. Are structures of this nature, not co-located with historic feature sites (e.g. locks, inclined planes etc.), included in the permissions?</p> <p>It is recommended that any water control structure required for the reconstruction of the historic Shubenacadie Cana be included to remove any ambiguity.</p>   | <p>HRM staff and Halifax Water work collaboratively with the Shubenacdie Canal Commission when implementing infrastructure upgrades. Policies E-16 and E-21 to be amended to grant exemption for water control structures and structures related to conservation uses, such as fish ladders.</p> |  |
| 2.4<br>Watershed<br>planning | Creighton, M. | <p>2.4 Watershed Planning - Pages 32/33</p> <p>This section focusses on the quality of the water supply. The Shubenacadie River-Lakes water study identified quantity problems extant in the area. Are there other areas in HRM with like problems?</p> <p>It is recommended that the problem of water quantity be also addressed in section 2.4.</p>   | <p>Staff may consider adding “quantity” in E-24b.</p>  |  |



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| 2.5 Energy and Climate Change                                   | Heritage Gas |  | <p>Increase access to natural gas by addressing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve permitting through increased staffing and streamlining the process for new subdivisions and standards installations (one week application timeline)</li> <li>2. Reduce construction costs through standard pipeline alignment</li> <li>3. Consistent enforcement of the subdivision by-law and individual lot permit approvals.</li> <li>4. Expedite conversion of HRM and arms-length facilities to natural gas</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Comment has been forwarded to Development Approvals staff.</li> <li>2. There were changes to the HRM Streets By-law (S-308) and Administrative Order 15 (Amendment #18) in 2008. These changes were designed to better capture to true costs of all utility cuts on HRM's streets related to the reduced life cycle of the asset. These changes were made after extensive research and comparisons to how other municipalities are recuperating these costs. See reports to Council on this matter can be found to the following locations:<br/> Recommendation Report - <a href="http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/080624ca93.pdf">http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/080624ca93.pdf</a> Supplemental Report - <a href="http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/080708ca81.pdf">http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/080708ca81.pdf</a></li> <li>3. Comment has been forwarded to Development Approvals staff.</li> <li>4. Comment forwarded to HRM facilities staff.</li> </ol> |  |
| <b>SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS FROM JUNE 13 FALL RIVER OPENHOUSE</b> |              |  |  |   |  |

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| <p>Map 5 Significant habitats and Endangered Species</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why are some lakes in the same system, not shown as “Yellow” species while others in that system are shown as “Yellow”? (e.g. 2nd Lakes vs Grand Lake)</li> <li>• Use COSEWIC criteria not just red, yellow &amp; green</li> <li>• Species @ Risk Act (SARA)</li> <li>• Trigger for DFO management plan is COSEWIC criteria “endangered” or “threatened”</li> <li>• COSEWIC (assessment) -&gt; DFO assessment – SARA listing (species at risk Act)</li> </ul> | <p>HRM continues to work with the province identifying lakes with species at risk.</p> |  |
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