

Culture, Heritage and the Arts

Art Gallery of Nova Scotia

1723 Hollis Street, Halifax

June 5, 2013

Questions 1 and 2 – What brings you here today? What do you like about the proposed changes; what do you think is working?

- Vibrancy of the arts community
- Diversity
 - Arts
 - Dance
 - Theatre
- Commitment to engagement process
- Commitment to public art
 - Hiring of staff is working
- Rich in Heritage – what’s been identified in objectives
 - Affordable housing
 - Neighbourhoods
 - Community engagement
 - Partnerships
 - Lighthouses
 - Buildings
 - Reuse of heritage buildings
 - Parks
 - Good at preserving bricks and mortar
- Current Halifax and Dartmouth Heritage Policies; excellent existing neighborhood plans
- Natural strength, passionate, people involved in the sectors
- Diversity – dance, film, live theatre
- Arts Ad-hoc committee - commitment to engage with community
 - Making decisions to recommend with council
 - Adds legitimacy
 - Indicates a “desire to engage”

- Engagement around public art
- Hiring of staff specifically for arts purpose
- Museums
- Region rich in heritage assets
- Creative reuse of heritage assets
- Partnerships of community organizations
- Dense, vibrant existing communities
- Economic benefits of culture and heritage
- Tradition of extensive community engagement
- Affordable existing housing
- Cultural buildings, theatres, galleries, libraries
- Lighthouses
- Parks e.g. Commons
- Trees e.g. Lindens
- (1990's – not much is working; 1999 – nothing recognized since then - since original plan, except staff hiring because we haven't defined investment
- Hill study – did our own #'s
 - Can't fund individual artists
 - Artist in residence
- Supplementary funding / Civic events - have to measure apples against apples
- Halifax charter
- People - oriented

Question 3 – How could the draft plan be further refined; what needs to change?

Refinements - Table 1

- Clear definitions of 'culture', 'heritage', 'arts'
- Recognize in the plan these activities are important
- Integration – the Regional Plan must be cross-referenced with other plans; not viewed as a stand-alone
- Investment – not simply viewed as a land use document; clear measures and clear actions
- Taxation review needed

- Stable funding, including the professional arts

Refinements – Table 2

- Engagement of community (metric) – go beyond an inventory of buildings and people - leading to better policy development
- Identify the stewardship role
- Culture and Heritage must be informed by stewardship
- Address the storage of artifacts
- Differentiate between Culture, Heritage, Arts - they are related, but they have their own unique needs
- Arts & Culture & Heritage – projects within our recreation facilities (integration)
- Sustainability and financial considerations:
 - Lost local area rates @ amalgamation
 - Loss of predictable funding

Refinements – Table 3

- Take the view beyond a land use plan with respect to Culture, Heritage and the Arts
- 35,000 new dwelling units can be accommodated (Stantec) without going into existing neighborhoods; be creative about what can go on vacant lands
- Provide clear timelines to address issues before what we have is gone!
- Leave stable areas alone
- Leave existing plans – residential, commercial, etc. alone and instead focus on opportunity areas
- Chapter 7 – more robust re arts, culture, heritage

What is NOT working in the plan?

- Measureable for investments not defined
- Needs to be foundation of engagement
- Better definitions
 - We are all very distinct
- What's been identified in objectives need more specific targets and outcomes
- Are people engaged? How do we measure that?
- It's day-to-day for many organizations
 - Keeping the doors open

- Need to reflect WHO our community is.
- Museums
 - Programming gives value to community?
- Page 74 - Phase One: Inventory:
 - “Aboriginal and diverse ethnic cultures” – suggest, “Aboriginal, Acadian and African Nova Scotian...”
- Add another Arts, Culture & Heritage objective:
 - “Ensure opportunities for cultural activity and for creative economy”
- Reference Greater Halifax Arts Coalition
- Section 2.5.2 (page 34) – the Community Energy Plan is presented in much more detail; please provide the same level of detail (objectives) from the Cultural Plan of 2006
- Should the section be split?
 - Arts & Culture / Heritage
- Page 73-75 - “Culture” Section
- Pages 75-81 - “Heritage” Section

Question 4 – What does successful implementation look like?

- Refined program funding
- Reaches beyond festivals and events
- Steps are taken to address the gap to professional arts funding
- The need for investment is acknowledged
- The economic underpinnings are understood - stable, specific, long term
- More flexibility in terms of land use planning and partnerships that can be developed – use of spaces, both public and private (for broader use)
- The value of cultural clustering and resource sharing is acknowledged
- There is collaboration within existing programming (i.e. trail groups)
- A risk assessment is completed within 5 years!
- There is greater integration of culture, heritage and the arts in the schools
- Archives – we have a plan around this within 5 years
- The inventory – comprehensive, needs time and resourced (do this = good product) and use to inform policy and program development
- The municipal responsibility to the Dartmouth Heritage Museum – address immediately

- A heritage committee is established to compliment the new ad-hoc arts advisory committee
- Culture and Heritage staff component needs to be there to do a good job
- Accessibility (in many different forms!)
- Investment is measured – apples to apples
- The value of supporting Arts, Artists & Arts Institutions (professional) is defined
- Investment of time is valued
- There is commitment to follow through
- We keep listening to other voices
- We know who we are and the way we live

Other comments:

(Note – participants were free to discuss others aspects of the plan if they wished. Some of the comments provided during this session therefore speak to other chapters/issues in the draft Regional Plan and will be considered as the other chapters are further reviewed and refined)

Section 5.3.3:

- Halifax Stanfield International Airport
- Beaverbank should be spelled differently - i.e. Beaver Bank