

RP+5 Stakeholder Consultation Session  
[Draft 2 – Revised Regional Plan]



## **Development Industry and Business**

Mic Mac Aquatic Club  
192 Prince Albert Road, Dartmouth  
June 6, 2013

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### **Question 1 – What brings you here today?**

- No defined timelines development applications
- How does plan address reinvestment (regional centre)?
- Getting a policy statement that supports pedestrian, accessibility, neighbourhood businesses and future streetscapes on streets like Quinpool
- Public awareness and buy-in
- Unfair property tax disparity (large businesses vs. small businesses)
- To understand the business case for RP?
  - Cost
  - Can we afford what's purposed
  - Disparity in property tax
  - Lack of timelines/no timeframes established
- Balanced approached / plan cannot achieve a balanced approach
- Growth management outside the Regional Centre - how does the plan address vitality, etc. in the Regional Centre?
- Housing choice – downtown or outside DT
- Affordable housing vs. housing affordability – they are two different things!
- Housing choice, home cost and affordability
- A plan with
  - Flexibility
  - Housing choice
  - Predictability
- Underground wiring
- Utility planning consistency with regional plan

- Negative economic impact
- Development/home costs
  - understanding the markets, what they want
- Clarity on direction and opportunities
- Balanced approach Urban/Rural
- Cost management
- Greenbelting - do not understand it; is it about environmental protection or growth control?
- A guiding pricing of R.P. – does not include affordability - (add it)
- Negative impact on industry in general
- Impact of density calculations (gross to net) - leaves little acreage for development
- Mandatory wiring
- Flexibility, predictability
- Choice of housing
- 25 year plan – do not need big changes; but focus on what is not working
- Development boundaries discussed in the past; certain things promised – not fair and does not consider land owners
- Hfx Water – utility planning consistency

**Question 2 – What do you like about the proposed changes; what do you think is working?**

- Density calculations based on gross acreage is working – do not change to net!
- Underground wiring at the developers choice – recognizing this as a voluntary decision; developers do so where the market can support it and is prepared to pay
- Traditional rural development where lot sizes are based on conditions verses clustering
- Open to having discussion about the plan

- The commitment to a strategic vision and growth
- Growth areas defined
- Boundaries in place is good
- HRM is extending services based on where development should go

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

- Mandatory underground wiring:
  - Based on what specifications?
  - Will add \$20,000 to the cost of a home!
  - Do not understand the rationale!
  - Could be upwards of \$50,000 in rural development
  - No rationale for large scale development
  - Burying in granite is not an option
  - Should not force this on development
  - Should not be required in areas where you cannot command the price
  - Policy need to change from “shall” to “shall consider”
  - Discussion needs to happen with the URB and common utilities
  - A clear cost model needs to be developed
  - Meeting the desired objectives could be explored through rear lane services (above ground)
  - Undergrounding everything should not be mandated; a lot of work is needed first!
  
- Growth Targets:
  - Regional Centre, but greater emphasis on the downtown core
  - Need to answer the question: Why is development not happening now in downtown?
  - Figure out how to create the circumstances so people will want to live in the downtown

- Set specific downtown targets, i.e. 2000 units within “X” years
- Housing Affordability:
  - Refine plan to include principles of housing affordability
  - Need to look at cumulative costs; what can people afford?
  - What is the impact on industry (contributes 10% of economy)
- Density Calculations:
  - Use gross acreage, not net acreage to calculate
  - If you take out wetlands (30%) and then require parkland HRM is leaving the developer with less the 60%

#### **Question 4 - What does successful implementation look like?**

- Underground wiring:
  - Keep it optional
  - Study it more
  - Understand the costs (actual costs based on our situation here!)
  - If we are protecting the utility, the private utility company should pay for the benefit
  - Agree to a common underground utility trench design that is cost effective; developers would be more likely to choose an underground utility model in new subdivision areas where it is appropriate
- Increasing residential development in the Regional Centre:
  - This should be the focus of the review!
  - This should not happen at the expense of the suburban areas
  - Populate the traditional downtown – state bold objectives and create an action plan
- Activate/hit the target:
  - No development in the urban reserves at all
  - Use a greenbelt to contain development

- No residential development in business parks:
  - Follow the business park functional plan
- Waive fees for affordable housing
- Create an urban core population strategy:
  - Identify challenges
  - Identify amenities
  - 5000 new units in Regional Centre (within a set time frame)
  - Use strong implementation and measurement practices
- Link greenbelting to parkland dedication; automatically goes to HRM; not to be maintained privately as a liability to developer
  - Open space development - land seen as a public good and there should benefit developer
- Greenbelting:
  - The way it is proposed is inflammatory and misleading!
  - A public expectation has been created, but will only create conflict
- High level objective needed in the plan stating that development is good
  - Secondary and functional planning – there is nothing in the plan to commit this to happening!
- 10% parkland:
  - Cash grab
  - Where are the usability criteria?
  - Why include wetlands?
  - If HRM can't find 10% that is acceptable, then HRM should not expect 10%
- Wetlands:
  - HRM has no authority and should not have policy in the plan
- Use gross instead of net to calculate density
- Limits like '100 lots' and 'numbers of lots on a driveway':
  - Where did this come from?
  - This is arbitrary
  - What is the rationale?
  - Clarification on policies

- Focus on real, genuine targets, achievable within a 5 year timeline:
  - Meeting targets (how do we ensure targets are met)
- Getting a policy statement that supports pedestrian use, accessibility, neighbourhood businesses and future streetscaping for Quinpool Rd.
- Fair development boundaries
- Respect of land owners

### **Question 5 – Reflections on the morning and next steps?**

- Articulate differences as “alternatives” in the staff report
  - A lot of concerns / a lot of discussion
  - Timeframe is too compressed; stick to a schedule
  - Add the time it needs and get it right
  - First time round (RP 2006) the time was taken to get it right and that paid off
  - 7 years +/- to the next review, so get it right; do not rush
  - Access to the next draft?
    - In July (to CDAC)
  - Will there be a detailed report about what we heard today?
  - Actually provide a report! We want to ensure the message is clear and that our input was recorded properly
- Circulate notes from today! (Demonstrate HRM listened)
- Next time for feedback?
  - Town-hall – June 17th
  - Public record – email notes and online
  - Public hearing – Sept/Oct
- Ensure input is captured and available!