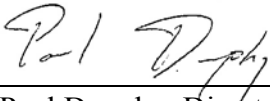


Heritage Advisory Committee
March 23, 2011

TO: Chair and Members of the Heritage Advisory Committee

SUBMITTED BY: 
Paul Dunphy, Director of Community Development

DATE: March 9, 2011

SUBJECT: **2010 Annual Report for the Heritage Property Program**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

This report originates with staff as means of keeping the Heritage Advisory Committee informed on the Heritage Property Program.

BACKGROUND

Community Development is bring forward an annual heritage report to the Heritage Advisory Committee to improve communication and education on the activities and achievements of HRM's Heritage Division for 2010 as well as future initiatives. This report is in response to an internal audit of the HRM Heritage Program which recommended that staff establish an annual heritage report.

HRM Heritage Division

The Heritage Division consists of two heritage planners and a shared administrative support person. All three individuals are supervised under HRM Planning Services.

Governance

The work of the Heritage Division is governed by the Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act and HRM's Heritage By-law (H-200). The Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act authorizes the Municipality's to establish a registry of buildings, streetscapes, sites, conservation areas and conservation districts of municipal significance by the adoption of a heritage by-law, By-law H-200. The HRM's Heritage Property Program maintains the Municipal Registry of Heritage Properties, which includes those buildings, sites and areas reflecting the rich heritage of the communities which make up the Halifax Regional Municipality.

DISCUSSION

Of the work performed by Heritage staff, there are 8 major categories of activities as outlined below:

1) Heritage Incentives Program (Residential & Commercial)

The aim of the Heritage Incentive Program is to encourage conservation of privately owned municipally registered heritage properties in residential and commercial use. The program has an annual budget of \$100,000, and provides matching grants of up to \$10,000 for eligible exterior conservation work.

An information report outlining the approvals 2009-10 under the Heritage Incentives Program (Residential and Commercial) was submitted to HAC in July 2010. Of the 22 applications received in 2010, only twelve were able to be supported within the budget. The approved grants leveraged an additional \$225,000 in private investment.

Of the approved projects, 11 were residential and the range of work included:

- Repair/restoration of front porches or steps (3 projects);
- Window repair/replacement (6 projects);
- Door repair/replacement (6 projects)
- Chimney restoration (1 project);
- Parging/stucco restoration (2 projects);
- Painting (3 projects).

The single commercial project involved storefront restoration and repainting.

2) Barrington Street Heritage Incentives Program

The Barrington Street Heritage Incentives Program offers grants and tax credits for heritage building restoration and renovation within the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District. The program came into effect in October 2009 upon establishment of the Conservation District with an annual grant budget of \$200,000. In January of 2010 staff completed revisions to the program Terms and Conditions based on experience gained from reviewing the 2009 applications. In February 2010 a report outlining approvals under the Barrington Street Heritage Incentives Program for 2009 was submitted to Regional Council.

During the 2009/10 budget year, Council approved three applications under the program while in 2010/11 Council approved nine applications as shown below.

Year	Grants	Tax Credits	Total
2009	\$200,000	\$696,138	\$896,138
2010	\$200,000	\$1,018,686	\$1,218,686
Total	\$400,000	\$1,714,824	\$2,114,824
Overall Program Budget	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$3,000,000
Remainder	\$600,000	\$285,176	\$885,176

Several of the projects are quite significant, including major refurbishment of the Freemasons building, the Green Lantern building, the former Sam the Record Man and Granite Brewery buildings, the Farquhar (Venus Pizza) building, and a new building construction behind the old NFB façade.

While the uptake on the program has been positive, the actual progress of work has been slow. So far, only one small project (storefront restoration and new boiler system in the Colwell building) has reached completion, and one major project (the Freemasons Hall) is about 85% complete. It is anticipated that the others will commence in 2011. The total value of private investment represented by all of the approved projects is in the order of \$13 million.

During 2010, staff presented two reports to Regional Council regarding the Barrington Street Heritage Incentives Program:

- March 2010 - a report clarifying special conditions relating to the former NFB façade under the Barrington Street Heritage Incentives Program which Council approved; and
- June 2010 - a report outlining approvals under the Barrington Street Heritage Incentives Program for 2010 which Council approved.

3) Registrations

One of the purposes of Heritage Property Act is to provide for the designation of buildings which impart our historic, architectural or cultural value. The Act outlines the process by which heritage registrations may occur, and in accordance with Section 14 & 15, HRM may include a building into the Municipal Registry of Heritage Properties. In 2010, staff prepared a report for Heritage Advisory Committee on three new heritage registrations which Council approved. The three properties are as follows:

- 1) old Necum Teuch Schoolhouse;
- 2) former Misener property at 15 Pine Street, Dartmouth; and
- 3) Finntigh Mara Estate in Jollimore, overlooking the Northwest Arm.

4) De-registrations

Under Section 16 of the Act, Council may de-register a municipally registered heritage property. During 2010, staff worked on one de-registration for the former Wanderers Grounds Dry Canteen. The de-registration was due to the seriously deteriorated condition of the building and the inability of the owners, Regional Council, to spend the nearly 1.1 million estimated to restore the building. Council approved the de-registration.

5) Demolitions

Under Section 17 of the Act, Council may approve a substantial alteration or demolition of a municipally registered heritage property. There were no heritage property demolitions during 2010. One demolition application was submitted for the former Bloomfield House on Fuller Terrace but it was withdrawn after staff worked with the property owner illustrating other options for adaptive re-use of the building.

6) Permits/Certificates of Appropriateness

In the one year period from January 2010 to January 2011 heritage staff reviewed over 100 building and development permits. These included small projects such as signage permits and larger projects involving additions to buildings.

There have been 24 planning and subdivision application reviews. The subdivision reviews include both subdivision applications for heritage properties, and those applications where there is a suspected adjacent heritage resource or registered heritage property. The planning application reviews include requests for development agreements, discharge of development agreements, and requests for site plan approval.

Staff have reviewed 12 applications for Certificates of Appropriateness (under the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District) resulting in the issuance of 11 of those.

7) Planning Applications

Heritage staff is routinely involved in planning applications when those application directly affect a municipally registered heritage property. Two such cases are listed below:

- a staff report outlining the Substantial Alterations proposed for three buildings in the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District (former Sam the Record Man buildings and the Granite Brewery building) was submitted to Regional Council in February 2010; and
- Staff contributed to a development agreement report to Regional Council regarding substantial alterations to a registered heritage property at 5757 Inglis Street, Halifax.

8) Inquiries

Of the eight activities listed in this report, inquiries (by telephone or e-mail) are the main avenue by which heritage staff directly communicates information to the public. Inquiries typically relate to the following:

- Potential purchase of registered heritage properties,
- Heritage Incentives Programs,
- Regulations regarding alterations or potential new registrations,
- Student inquiries regarding heritage related projects,

- Internal inquiries
- Inquires from the general public regarding heritage related redevelopments,
- Other municipal units and organizations from across Canada.

In response to some of the inquiries, staff have undertaken a number of site visits to ensure proper information is provided to individuals before and during applications for building permit and Certificate of Appropriateness applications, heritage incentives grants, alterations to a heritage property (no building permit required), heritage gas installations, and heritage registration or development agreement requests.

In addition to the eight activities listed above staff have also been involved in:

a) Amendments to Heritage Property Act (amended December 2010)

In 2010 the Province initiated a public consultation process aimed at determining if amendments to the Heritage Property Act were required. HRM Heritage staff participated in this process by drafting proposed amendments to the Act in writing, attending stakeholders meetings and presenting HRM's proposed amendments, and finally responding to the draft amendments (Bill 125) which resulted from the public consultation process.

On December 10, 2010 Bill 125, the Heritage Property Act (amended), came into effect. The amendments include: provisions to designate public-building interior and cultural landscapes, new definitions of 'heritage values', 'character defining elements', and 'substantial alteration'. Perhaps most significantly, through an amendment to section 18, the time period for municipalities to consider applications for substantial alteration or demolition of a municipally registered heritage property was changed from one year to three years, thus providing stronger protection to heritage resources.

b) Updating HRM's Heritage Property Program Website

Late in 2010 heritage staff released an updated version of the website for the Heritage Property Program: <http://www.halifax.ca/planning/HeritageProperties/index.html>. The new site is visually more attractive and easier to navigate, as well as updated information and all of the necessary application forms easy to find in one location.

UPCOMING PROJECTS – 2011

1) Heritage Conservation Districts – Old South Suburb (South Barrington)

The major focus of heritage staff in 2011 will be the establishment of a Heritage Conservation District for the southern end of Barrington Street, known as the Old South Suburb. The establishment of a Heritage Conservation District for the South Barrington/Hollis Street (also referred to as the Old South Suburb) area is identified as a priority under the new Downtown Halifax Plan.

In late 2010, a contract was issued for historical research on 22 buildings in the area to complement existing information already on file. This work will provide a foundation for the necessary Background Study required by the Heritage Property Act. It is anticipated that this

project will unfold in 2011, with further analysis and public consultation towards the establishment of a Heritage Conservation District Plan & Bylaw.

2) Heritage Functional Plan

The second major initiative of staff will be the Heritage Functional Plan. Staff has prepared a Heritage Functional Plan Outline by scoping out Goals and Objectives relating to Heritage Inventories, Heritage Incentives, Policy Development, and Stewardship of Publicly-Owned Heritage Buildings, along with the steps needed to reach the goals. In early 2010, an RFP was issued for a Best-Practices Study to further refine this scope of work; however, there were no responses to the RFP. In 2011, Staff intends to re-issue the RFP and to complete the Best-Practices study.

3) Updated Brochures

In this coming year, staff anticipate undertaking a review of existing brochure: 'Heritage Matters: a guide for owners of Municipally Registered Heritage Properties', as well as possibly creating one or more new brochures that deal more with particle preservation by educating property owners on good maintenance and repair methods for their historic building. These could deal with topics such as maintaining wooden windows, stone cleaning and restoration, architectural styles of Halifax, how to hire a contractor, or an explanation of the benefits of owning a building in a heritage conservation district.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This report is an internal operating process for HRM and is consistent with the intent of the HRM Community Engagement Strategy to provide information that informs others on the activities and actions of HRM staff.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

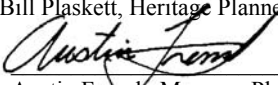
There are no budget implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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