

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes

March 11, 2009

PRESENT: Mr. Tom Creighton, Chair
Councillor Robert Harvey, Vice Chair
Ms. Catherine Thibeault
Mr. Stephen Terauds
Mr. Michael Cross
Ms. Susan Carroll
Ms. Lisa Miller
Councillor Dawn Sloane

REGRETS: Mr. Arthur Irwin

STAFF: Mr. Andy Fillmore, Acting Supervisor, Heritage & Design
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:09 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - None

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

The Chair advised that staff were requesting permission to make a presentation in regard to the briefing note sent out to the Committee members following the last meeting.

The Committee agreed that staff would make a short presentation, and that it would be followed by one round of questions of staff prior to the Committee entering discussion and making recommendation.

4. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**: None

5. **DEFERRED ITEMS**: None

6. **CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS**:

6.1 **Correspondence**: None

6.2 **Petitions**: None

6.3 **Presentations**: None

6.4 **Updates from HAC Members - HRM Committees and HAC Sub-committees**: None

7. **REPORTS**:

7.1 **HRMbyDesign (cont'd discussion from Feb. 25/09 meeting)**

The following documents were submitted:

- HRM By Design - HAC Briefing Note, dated March 6, 2009 RE: The Heritage Protection Program in the Proposed Downtown Plan
- HRM By Design - HAC Briefing Note ADDENDUM dated March 10, 2009 RE: Case Study: The Five Fisherman block
- Information from HRMbyDesign Re: Heritage Protection Initiatives, Design & Built Form Framework, Development Approvals & Appeals, Housing Affordability, Sustainability Initiatives, and Transportation Initiatives
- Information dated March 9, 2009 from Mr. Phil Pacey, President, Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia
- Peninsula Community Council forwarded submissions which had been presented at their March 9, 2009 meeting from the following individuals: David Garrett; Denault Blouin, Phil Pacey, and Ann Marie Norton.

Mr. Fillmore provided a brief presentation, and he, Mr. Luc Ouelette, Planner 1, and Mr. Austin French, Manager, Planning Services responded to questions.

At 2:17 p.m. Councillor Sloane entered the meeting.

Following the question period, the Chair invited Committee members to present their comments in regard to the HRMbyDesign Downtown Plan. The following points were noted:

- the City's heritage buildings are a manifestation of the City's culture, and what is done today is part of the psyche of City. I understand the intent of HRMbyDesign as a whole.
- the 'integration of the heritage building' is an important consideration that should be built into the Plan.
- want the heritage functional plan to commence immediately after adoption of HRMbyDesign; there should be a campaign for better heritage controls; height controls need to be looked at in several areas where streetscapes have heritage buildings; there should be an HRMbyDesign 'watchdog' that is arm's length; facadism needs to be addressed.
- concern that the Plan will be bringing in a process where Regional Council will not be making the final decision; strongly believe that the final decision should rest with Council.
- feel the policy is taking the wrong direction—it is adding another layer of policy and not fixing the original problem of heritage protection. Found it to be open to interpretation and believe it is open to manipulation. The issue of facadism has not been resolved and the issue of public oversight has been problematic because the only right to appeal is on procedural grounds, and it limits public access. Believe we elected representatives to protect the public interest and work for the public. Have a worry that HRMbyDesign is 85% good but the missing 15% is damaging.
- on the whole, the Plan gives me hope; hear that a lot of the criticism is the heritage issues, however it is difficult to evaluate the specifics because the plan is so theoretical, and it is difficult to determine what if any impact there would be.
- in light of three recent development proposals that were approved under existing policies and did not withstand appeal, feel the status quo is not acceptable, as there is no heritage protection with existing policies. Heritage conservation districts are key and they need to go forward as soon as possible.

MOVED by Councillor Harvey, seconded by Councillor Sloane that the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend that Regional Council:

1. **Give First Reading to the proposed Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy, the proposed Downtown Halifax Land Use By-law, the proposed Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Revitalization Plan & By-law, the proposed amendments to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy, the proposed amendments to the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy, the proposed amendments to the Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law, the proposed amendments to the Heritage Property By-law, the proposed amendments to the Building By-law, and the proposed amendments to the Encroachment By-law as provided in Attachments "A" and "B" of the February 4, 2009 staff report, and schedule a Public Hearing.**
2. **Approve the proposed Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy, the proposed Downtown Halifax Land Use By-law, the proposed Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Revitalization Plan & By-law and, the proposed amendments to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy, the proposed amendments to the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy, the proposed amendments to the Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law, the proposed amendments to the Heritage Property By-law, the proposed amendments to the Building By-law, and the proposed amendments to the Encroachment By-law as provided in Attachments "A" and "B" of the February 4, 2009 staff report.**
3. **Approve the Priorities after Adoption as outlined in Attachment "C" of the February 4, 2009 staff report.**
4. **Approve the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Financial Incentives Program Terms and Conditions for Capital Grants, Tax Incentives, and Permit Fee Waivers as outlined in Attachment "D" of the February 4, 2009 staff report pending Council budget approval including identification of a funding source for the program.**

A discussion ensued and the Chair questioned if it would be possible for the Heritage Advisory Committee to make a list of improvements to the Plan; improvements that are more of technical improvements rather than 'big issue' improvements. In response, Mr. Fillmore agreed and suggested that if the Committee had a list of refinements, then it would be up to the Committee to make specific requirements under the Regional Heritage Functional Plan, under the creation of the two remaining heritage conservation districts and through the ongoing Plan Monitoring process. He added that in all three processes, the HAC would have key, if not leadership roles.

The Chair suggested that, even though his term on the Heritage Advisory Committee was up after this meeting, the Committee should pursue this.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

8. **ADDED ITEMS:** None

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** March 25, 2009

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

Prior to adjourning, Councillor Harvey expressed appreciation to Mr. Tom Creighton for his many years of service on the Committee and providing guidance to the Committee in his role as Chair.

The meeting adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant