



**SCHMIDTVILLE HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE  
MEETING #2 MINUTES  
April 25, 2016**

PRESENT: Mr. William Breckenridge  
Ms. Mary E. Donovan  
Mr. Larry Haiven, Chair  
Ms. Kristina Chapman  
Ms. Beverly Miller  
Ms. Janet Morris  
Mr. Lyndon Watkins

REGRETS: Mr. Benjamin LeBlanc

STAFF: Mr. Seamus McGreal, Heritage Planner, Halifax Regional Municipality

*The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.*

*Supporting documents and information items are available online:*

<http://shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/schmidville>.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm in the Spencer House. He explained that the purpose of the meeting is to review a rough draft of the Heritage Conservation District Plan and discuss broad directions.

### **Application to Register 1456 and 1460 Brenton Street as Municipal Heritage Properties**

Mr. Haiven related to the Committee that he had submitted an application to the municipality to register both 1456 Brenton Street and 1460 Brenton Street as municipal heritage properties to avoid the risk of demolition of these significant heritage resources prior to the adoption of the Heritage Conservation District. The owner does not know that the applications were submitted.

Mr. McGreal explained that his office had received these applications. There is a risk that these applications will be perceived as being part of the process to establish a Heritage Conservation District in the neighbourhood. We should make a clear distinction between the process to prepare a Heritage Conservation District Plan and Bylaw in consultation with a community and heritage registration of third party properties without notice or consent of the owners.

Mr. Haiven suggested that the applications may bring a negative view of the Committee's work in trying to establish a Heritage Conservation District.

Ms. Donovan explained that losing these buildings would be a loss to the area. We are losing so much of our cultural and natural heritage and there is nothing being done about it. She used birch trees along the Bedford Highway and rail cut as an example.

Mr. McGreal explained that HRM is undertaking a culture and heritage plan that will identify and inventory heritage in need of protection throughout the region. Part of this process will include a character study of the Regional Centre, mapping heritage resources, and integrating with GIS.

Ms. Morris expressed support for Mr. Haiven's application. We are losing all our old and beautiful buildings and we need to find ways to suspend their demolition until they can be protected.

Mr. McGreal explained that the Mayor had sent a letter to the Province requesting a provision in the Heritage Property Act to allow for a one year suspension of demolition in an area where a Heritage Conservation District is being established.

Mr. Breckenridge suggested that original neighbourhoods on a grid must be protected first. Individual properties should be considered separately. We should approach the property developer intent on demolishing these two properties and ask them to reconsider.

Mr. Watkins suggested that the developer will do as they wish as the buildings belong to them.

Ms. Chapman expressed that she is not in support of Mr. Haiven's application as it could bring negative attention to the Committee and Heritage Conservation District planning process.

Ms. Donovan suggested discussing the issue with the local councillor so that he can advocate for the protection of these buildings. Mr. Breckenridge relayed that this would be of no use. Halifax needs to follow the lead of Toronto and Vancouver and treat heritage areas as prestigious.

*Motion (Ms. Donovan) that the Committee ask Mr. Haiven to consider withdrawing his application to register 1456 Brenton Street and 1460 Brenton Street as municipal heritage properties.*

*Seconded by Ms. Chapman.*

*Vote: 4 in favour; 3 against.*

Motion passed.

### **Appropriate Heights of Heritage Buildings**

Mr. McGreal presented results from a lot analysis of Schmidville. Approximately 82 per cent of all the properties in Schmidville do not have opportunity under the current regulations for additional gross floor area. Approximately 18 per cent or 26 lots do have some opportunity under existing regulations for additional gross floor area. For the lots where there is an opportunity for additional gross floor area, the average additional gross floor area permitted is 274 square feet and their average lot coverage is 31 per cent with maximum lot coverage currently set at 40 per cent. This implies that there is opportunity to use that gross floor area at the rear rather than altering the existing heights or roof lines.

Mr. Breckenridge suggested that capping heights may impact property values. Ms. Morris replied that studies show property values will improve because the neighbourhood character as a whole will be preserved. Mr. Haiven asked if there was consensus that heights should be capped in the District.

*Motion (Ms. Donovan) that any addition to a heritage building shall not exceed the height of the heritage building. This measure shall also protect the character of the roof and dormers.*

*Seconded by Mr. Watkins.*

*Vote: 6 in favour; 1 against.*

Motion passed.

### **Development in Rear Yards**

Mr. Breckenridge suggested that the 40 per cent lot coverage is not appropriate for the District. Ms. Donovan suggested that a 20 ft rear yard requirement is insufficient and the District should require a 30 ft rear yard instead.

Mr. McGreal suggested that a 30 ft rear yard may require some additions to extend to two storeys instead of just one in the rear yard.

There was general consensus that the 40 per cent lot coverage should be reconsidered in the District and that the rear yard requirement should be increased to 30 ft.

Mr. McGreal explained that some community members at a workshop in January talked about jacking up heritage houses to get more space in basements.

Mr. Watkins suggested that property owners should be able to raise the foundations by a maximum of two feet to improve on the basement space. He also suggested that rear additions to the roof be allowed as long as two feet of the roof is preserved on both sides. There was general consensus on these two points.

Mr. McGreal asked if both side yards setbacks are necessary for heritage character. Ms. Donovan suggested that a side yard should be preserved on one side of the lot where there is an existing space between the building and lot line. This setback should be at least eight feet total to allow right of way for back yard parking. Mr. Breckenridge emphasized the importance of maintaining historic rights of way throughout the neighbourhood.

Mr. McGreal suggested eight draft policies for the Committee to review as priorities prior to making the draft Plan and Bylaw available to the public.

Mr. Haiven suggested meeting again after the May long weekend.

Meeting adjourned.