

**OLD SOUTH SUBURB HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
STAKEHOLDER STEERING COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
April 6, 1016**

PRESENT:           Mr. John Lawen  
                      Ms. Elizabeth Pacey  
                      Ms. Aurora Camaño  
                      Mr. Dylan Ames  
                      Ms. Kerry Gosse, Chair  
                      Mr. Brian Vallis

STAFF:             Mr. Seamus McGreal, Heritage Planner

*The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting. Supporting documents and information items circulated to the Old South Suburb HCD Stakeholder Steering Committee are available online: <http://shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/old-south-suburb>.*

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. and adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

## **CALL TO ORDER**

This meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. in Room 302, Halifax Central Library.

## **MEETING OVERVIEW/ APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. McGreal presented the meeting agenda and objectives of the meeting. He then presented the minutes from September 2, 2015, and December 9, 2015 for review and approval.

*Moved by Mr. Ames, seconded by Ms. Camaño to approve the meeting minutes from the committee meeting on September 2, 2015 and December 9, 2015. Motion put and passed.*

## **REVIEW COMMUNITY FEEDBACK FROM OCTOBER 2015 WORKSHOPS**

The Committee discussed the three workshops held in October 2015 and reviewed the discussion notes.

## **REVIEW 1284 BARRINGTON STREET (TIMOTHY NOONAN BUILDING)**

This building is one of nine buildings that were evaluated as contributing heritage resources based on their level of integrity. The building is valued for its historical associations with individuals in Halifax. Ms. Pacey indicated that “contributing resources” are defined in the background study as resources that are not registered heritage properties but contribute to the heritage value of the District. This building should be considered for its historic significance not necessarily its architectural significance.

Mr. McGreal presented research indicating that the building lot was one of the first in the area. There is evidence that a building existed on this lot in 1749. The existing building likely replaced this earlier building. However, there are no records indicating that this early building was ever replaced with another building. The inn holder, Timothy Noonan, acquired the property between 1784 and 1803. This is likely the period in which the building was constructed. It used to be a commercial building and these types of old buildings do change over time.

Ms. Pacey explained that it is not unusual for Georgian buildings to have had many alterations over time and for there to be little recorded evidence of changes to Georgian buildings.

Mr. Lawen indicated that the building has been severely altered. He explained that every time there is an alteration to a heritage building there is opposition to it. There won't be any development at all in the District if the Committee wants every building to be protected and saved. He suggested that there could be a new building on this lot that can go up on the foundation of the existing building.

Mr. Vallis explained that business owners make a living in residential neighbourhoods with lots of density. There needs to be opportunity for densification where appropriate.

Ms. Pacey explained that the building's age and its historical associations meet the definition of a contributing building.

Mr. McGreal indicated that this building is likely the second oldest if not the oldest building in the District. He added that the integrity of a building is a factor when considering buildings as registered municipal heritage properties and integrity should be considered when evaluating this building as a contributing resource.

Ms. Camaño explained that there is no evidence that this building is the building that was constructed c. 1803. It is just the lot that has heritage value.

Ms. Elizabeth Pacey added that there is no evidence that it is not the original building from 1803. The documentary evidence indicates that this building was constructed prior to 1803.

Mr. McGreal indicated that building permits were not required until incorporation in 1841 and there were no demolitions or new construction on this lot after this date. He maintained that the Committee does not make decisions. It makes recommendations to the municipality. Any member of the public, including members of the Committee, can address Regional Council directly at a Public Hearing if they do not agree with policy directions in the Heritage Conservation District Plan.

*MOTION: The building is not a contributing heritage resource in the District. (Mr. Ames)*

Seconded by Ms. Camaño

Vote results: 4 to 2

## **REVIEW DRAFT #1 OLD SOUTH SUBURB HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT PLAN & BY-LAW**

Many changes have taken place in the area of downtown Halifax known as the Old South Suburb in the recent past including the construction of new buildings in a variety of designs and several historic buildings have been lost to fire, demolition and removal. The municipality has identified three new areas to be considered as Heritage Conservation Districts within and near downtown Halifax. Processes for two of these areas are currently underway to establish HCDs in the Old South Suburb and Schmidville. An HCD is a defined area of historical or architectural value which can include a process to control demolition and exterior alteration of structures within its boundaries. It can also include guidelines for new development, financial incentives, public amenities and amendments to the existing municipal plan and land use

bylaw. The project definition and initiation phase is complete and we are currently in the community engagement phase of the project where a plan and bylaw will be drafted in consultation with the community. This phase will be followed by a third phase to formally adopt and implement the plan and bylaw.

The Old South Suburb is significant due to its heritage values associated with the early settlement, economic life and traditional architectural character of the city. Conservation measures are justified in this area due to the heritage values. The area also includes a high concentration of historic buildings and has experienced a loss of many of these buildings. There is continued pressure for development in the area and several large undeveloped spaces. Existing policy and regulations, pertaining to this area, are insufficient in protecting and conserving the heritage values and character defining elements of the district.

A heritage planning approach to an HCD in the Old South Suburb can introduce: 1) investments in public amenities to promote the district as an area of heritage value and character; 2) financial incentives to encourage property owners to invest in the maintenance and conservation of their historic properties and governance of demolition and substantial alteration to secure historic resources and public investments; and 3) guidelines for appropriate new development to “fill in the gaps” of the district and, in turn, further contribute to a unique community identity.

The municipality will seek to cost share expenses with utility companies and include post-bonus height within the District in exchange for underground wiring. People want to see more trees – The program will introduce tree infrastructure to support tree growth. Landscape and Interpretation Strategy- the area has lost much of its cohesiveness, so the Plan will introduce cohesiveness. Have one strategy for comprehensive approach.

Mr. Vallis explained that there is a problem with the truck traffic through the area and, as a result, people will avoid lingering on the streets even with the extra streetscape features. There is noise pollution.

Mr. McGreal explained that he will look into issues relating to truck routes through the area. Public Hearings will be required for demolition of heritage buildings and conservations standards will apply to all new construction in the District. There are also many changes to the heights framework.

Ms. Pacey requested that the Plan and Bylaw include a policy describing the process of demolition and substantial alteration of registered heritage properties and contributing resources.

Mr. Lawen requested “before and after” maps of the heights framework to see what will change from the existing framework.

Ms. Gosse requested a 3D illustration of the heights framework for the next meeting.

Mr. McGreal explained that the draft Plan include policy to reduce street wall heights to the match the height of existing heritage buildings. Appropriate streetwall setbacks are currently under review.

Mr. Vallis asked what audience we are trying to attract to this area.

Mr. McGreal explained that we are trying to create a pleasant atmosphere for all residents and visitors to engage with their history and built heritage. In particular, we want to highlight this area for cultural heritage travellers who are seeking to explore heritage areas of the city.

Mr. McGreal mentioned that he is working with Dixel Development to address their demolition applications on the Barrington Street properties.

Mr. McGreal invited Committee members to send any comments concerning the draft Plan and By-law to him before the next meeting.

The Committee set the next meeting date for Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.