

**REGIONAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
August 15, 2007
MINUTES**

PRESENT:

Mr. Fred Morley, Chair
Councillor David Hendsbee, Vice-Chair
Councillor Gloria McCluskey
Ms. Margo Grant
Ms. Heather Bown
Ms. Cheryl Newcombe
Mr. Wayne Anstey, Deputy CAO, Operations

REGRETS:

Mr. Paul Pettipas
Mr. Robert Batherson
Ms. Bonnie Ryan
Mr. Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer
Councillor Brad Johns

STAFF:

Mr. Roger Wells, Supervisor, Regional & Community Planning
Mr. Austin French, Manager, Planning Services
Ms. Chrissy White, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 3:20 p.m. in the Maxine Tynes Room, Alderney Gate Public Library, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Ms. Margo Grant, that the minutes of July 18, 2007 be approved, as distributed. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

Additions:

6.1.1 Correspondence from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia - Chair

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Ms. Margo Grant, that the Order of Business be approved, as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. **BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES**

Mr. Morley advised that he requested information regarding ground rules and priority setting involving Community Committees. He noted that he would like this addressed as an agenda item at the September meeting.

5. **CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS**- None

6. **CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS**- None

6.1 **Correspondence**

6.1.1 **Correspondence from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia**

- Correspondence from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia dated July 27, 2007 was circulated.

Mr. Roger Wells, Supervisor, Regional and Community Planning, advised that he would draft a response to the Heart and Stroke Foundation for the Chair's signature, clarifying misconceptions. He further advised that the Mayor has also requested a response to this letter, and he will ensure consistency.

The Committee agreed that the response can be sent to the Heart and Stroke Foundation without Committee review.

6.2 Petitions - None

6.3 Presentations - None

7. REPORTS - None

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1 Presentation and Discussion - Preliminary Staff Recommendations for Wind Energy in HRM - Phase 1

- A Memorandum titled "*Wind Energy Project- Feedback on Preliminary Recommendations*" dated August 8, 2007 was before the Committee.
- Copies of the PowerPoint presentation were before the Committee.

Mr. Wells provided an overview of the above noted, advising:

- Preliminary recommendations regarding approach and regulation have been created,
- Staff are looking for informal feedback regarding suggested approach;
- The report is a work in progress;
- A presentation was given to the Energy and Underground Services Committee and preliminary feedback has been received;
- Staff plan to fine tune the policies and regulations to include Committee recommendations;
- The intent is to outline types of wind energy projects and plans for initiation;
- Rural parts of HRM will fall under Phase One for on-land applications;
- Urban areas would fall under Phase Two;
- A Consultant created a GIS analysis to undertake a locations suitability study according to geology and community, which went to public consultation last spring;
- Wind turbines can be classified as either large or small scale;
- Large scale wind turbines have heights of 164-300 feet and a typical power generation of greater than 300 kw;
- Main use turbines produce wind energy that are tied into the provincial energy grid;
- A private energy producing company owns the turbines;
- Potential wind generation impacts include visual, noise, safety and lighting;
- Small scale wind generators are not connected to the Provincial energy grid;
- Small turbines augment the power for a particular land use. They are generally 35-150 feet in height and few in number;
- Through public consultation it was determined that people do not want the turbines close to their dwellings;
- Processes should be expedited to encourage wind energy as turbines support environmental

sustainability;

- Three important considerations include sighting regulations, planning and development approval process and wind location suitability;
- As of right and discretionary processes are different and come with separate regulations;
- In May 2007 the Province advised that they would do an Environmental Assessment (EA) for wind turbine development for every turbine that will create two or more mega watts of power, which will contain 23 criteria to follow;
- Typically with an EA the opportunity for public input is limited;
- Phase Two would require public consultation depending on whether it is an undertaking or activity;
- The Province is planning discussions with HRM in the fall, but HRM can move ahead without that component;
- A generalized map has been created in terms of wind suitability, based on the results of public consultation;
- A suitable location for wind turbines would be away from population and have minimal impacts;
- Within a few months a new wind regime map will replace the existing one;
- The areas that have the best winds also have a high rate of population;
- The wind turbines have been placed in the ocean in other Countries, but HRM would not have jurisdiction over that specific location;

Mr. Wells advised that the Energy and Underground Services Committee made the following recommendations:

- No variance option,
- Some small scale wind turbines in Phase One,
- Consult with the Industrial Park Business Associations to obtain their input; and
- Remove the option of "discretionary approval by Regional Council" in areas of suitability as-of-right.

Mr. Wells advised of various staff options and recommendations pertaining to wind turbines in HRM, noting:

- In areas of general and potential suitability, staff recommend that wind turbine be permitted as-of-right and implications be addressed under the Provincial EA process;
- Staff recommend introducing a development agreement process in areas of potential suitability to allow for a community consultation element. This process would ensure a right of appeal as well as discretionary approval by Council for wind turbine development below two mega watts.

Councillor Hendsbee suggested having a Municipal representative available to comment on the analysis of the EA report.

Councillor McCluskey advised that the Noise By-law could be violated if wind turbines are approved for location in neighborhoods.

Mr. Wells outlined the staff recommendations for the large scale turbines, advising:

- 1000 metre distance separation from turbine to residential/institutional uses,
- 120 metres total height permitted;
- Visual impact assessment criteria as-of-right and/or through discretionary approval process;
- Greater reliance on Provincial EA guidelines published in May 2007.

Councillor Hendsbee commented that he believes a 1000 metre distance between a wind turbine and residential areas is excessive. He suggested amending the recommendation to suggest a 500 metre distance, as 1000 metres will deter the erection of turbines. He further advised that he has concern with the electrical permits for the smaller turbines.

Mr. Morley advised that the Committee and HRM as a whole should evaluate their environmental position regarding wind turbines, deciding whether to take a conservative, progressive or reactive approach.

Mr. Wells outlined the staff recommendations for the small turbines, advising:

- 600 metre distance separation from turbine to residential/institutional uses;
- 40 metres total height permitted;
- As-of-right capability in all areas, except for Phase Two lands.

Councillor McCluskey suggested that the Committee visit Pubnico, Nova Scotia to view the existing wind turbines and evaluate impacts.

Mr. Morley advised that economic constraints will come into play if the turbines are located too far away. He noted that the maps only outline conflict diversions and not economic impacts.

After a brief discussion regarding distance, Mr. Wells advised that he will provide more information to the Committee at a later meeting regarding statistics and distances in other cities.

Mr. Wells concluded by advising that the next series of regulations will come to the Committee in September.

8.2 Initiation of Business Parks Functional Plan

- A Request for Proposal titled "*Business Parks Functional Plan*" was circulated.

Mr. Wells provided an oral update on the above noted, advising:

- The RFP went out last month and are due back at the end of August;
- The plan reviews all HRM business parks.

Due to time constraints, Mr. Wells advised that he will present this item at a later meeting.

9. ADDED ITEMS - None

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Regional Plan Advisory Committee will be September 19, 2007.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Chrissy White
Legislative Assistant