

REGIONAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
December 19, 2007
MINUTES

PRESENT: Mr. Fred Morley, Chair
Councillor David Hendsbee, Vice-Chair
Councillor Gloria McCluskey
Ms. Cheryl Newcombe
Mr. Paul Pettipas
Mr. Robert Batherson
Ms. Margo Grant
Mr. Wayne Anstey, Deputy CAO, Operations

REGRETS: Councillor Brad Johns
Ms. Heather Bown
Ms. Bonnie Ryan
Mr. Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer

STAFF: Mr. Roger Wells, Supervisor, Regional & Community Planning
Ms. Susan Corser, Planner, Regional Planning
Mr. Marcus Garnet, Senior Planner, Regional Planning
Ms. Maria Jacobs, Planner, Regional Planning
Ms. Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 3:08 p.m. in the Maxine Tynes Room, Alderney Gate Public Library, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** - October 24, 2007

MOVED by Robert Batherson, seconded by Cheryl Newcombe, that the minutes of October 24, 2007 be approved. **MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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

Staff requested to present Item 7.2 prior to 7.1, to which the Committee agreed.

The agenda was approved as amended.

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

Referring to the Community Energy Functional Plan discussion from the October 24, 2007 minutes, the Committee discussed sustainable energy plans for the Farmer's Market.

The Committee requested that staff email dates and times for the upcoming Wind Energy public consultation meetings.

Councillor McCluskey arrived at 3:14 p.m.

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

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

6.1 **Correspondence** - None

6.2 **Petitions** - None

6.3 **Presentations** - None

7. **REPORTS**

7.1 **Community Visioning Pilot Project Evaluation**

This item was addressed later in the meeting. See page 7.

7.2 Community Visioning Prioritization

C A memorandum on the above noted dated December 12, 2007 was before the Committee.

Mr. Marcus Garnet, Senior Planner, and Ms. Maria Jacobs, Planner, presented the Community Visioning Prioritization, noting that this was also presented at the November 21, 2007 meeting. Mr. Garnet and Ms. Jacobs reviewed the following:

- C Changes from original evaluation matrix:
 - C The 25 criteria matrix replaced by 3 tables;
 - C Identified required foundational work, synergies;
 - C Maintained balance between land use & social planning;
- C Prioritization Tables:
 - C Table 1 - Direct Implementation
 - C Community vision & Action plan
 - C MPS Review
 - C HRM By Design
 - C Masterplan
 - C Land use planning
 - C Business Park Functional Plan
 - C Streetscape study
 - C Table 2 - Foundational Work Required
 - C Business Park study
 - C Action for Neighbourhood change
 - C Watershed Study
 - C Joint Planning
 - C Joint Vision
 - C Land Transfer
 - C HRM By Design
 - C Table 3 - Land Use & Socio/Economic Drivers
 - C Imminent growth pressure/Opportunity Site
 - C Major roadway infrastructure
 - C Major piped infrastructure
 - C Transit / TOD
 - C Distinct Socio/Economic Characteristics / impact (potential to increase social capital)
- C Changes to prioritization tables:
 - C Table 1 - alphabetical order and three additional growth centres
 - C Table 2 - updated to reflect priorities of watershed & servicing studies
 - C Table 3 - additional comments in columns 1 & 3
- C First 10 Priorities (in order of priority):
 - C Penhorn Mall
 - C Spryfield

- C Middle Sackville
- C Woodside
- C Upper Tantallon
- C Porters Lake
- C East Preston
- C Enfield
- C Shannon Park
- C Sheet Harbour

Responding to questions from the Committee, Mr. Garnet and Ms. Jacobs advised that depending on resources, it is planned to carry out the visioning process for three communities per year. They clarified that Shannon Park may be a joint effort with Canada Lands and Enfield may be a joint effort with Hants County.

Staff discussed with the Committee the Penhorn Mall site, indicating that it is privately owned property, and the owner is anxious to participate in the process to look at potential redevelopment. It was noted that a transit oriented, mixed-use development would be ideal for this site. The Committee also discussed the impact a major development on this site would have on transit capacity and capacity at the sewage treatment plant.

Councillor Hendsbee noted several corrections and additions to Table 3.

Staff reviewed the additional remaining centres with the Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor McCluskey, that the Regional Plan Advisory Committee endorse the methodology and priorities for the future Community Visioning Program as contained in the December 12, 2007 Memorandum, and that staff prepare a report to Regional Council recommending approval of this Program.

Ms. Newcombe suggested that it would be helpful to have maps identifying the boundaries of each growth centre. Mr. Garnet indicated that the community group would define the boundaries of the visioning project.

Mr. Batherson noted that the factors for North and East Preston are similar, and it may be beneficial to combine the visioning processes for these areas. Councillor Hendsbee indicated that North Preston has higher developed infrastructure than East Preston, whereas North Preston already has piped water and sewer, transit services, and a community facility. The Chair noted that the Greater Halifax Partnership has opened an office in East Preston to work within the broader area. Councillor Hendsbee agreed that the visioning projects for both East and North Preston may be able to be combined.

It was clarified that watershed studies are not required for the first four priority areas, and the studies could be completed for the next several communities while the visioning processes are taking place for the first four communities.

Councillor McCluskey commented on the threat to Russell and Morris Lakes with ongoing development in Dartmouth. Staff assured that the Dartmouth Lakes Advisory Board would be consulted in the visioning process, and an extensive storm water management plan would be undertaken.

The Committee discussed the learning process with the first three pilot communities, including greater efficiencies coming out of the lessons learned from the process. Members encouraged Council to increase staff resources to increase momentum with the visioning projects.

It was clarified that Fall River and Spider Lake would be included in the Waverley watershed study. It was also clarified that Peninsula Halifax is not on the list as HRM By Design will be addressing many Peninsular issues. Staff indicated that further information on this would be coming forward in the near future.

Councillor Hendsbee indicated that for the multi-year financial strategy of the capital budget process, it is important to identify the ten priority communities, although some may not be completed for another four years.

The Committee discussed rural transit express service. Councillor Hendsbee requested that the Regional Transit Plan be included on the next agenda for further discussion.

Councillor McCluskey discussed the importance of capital budget planning to align with the implementation of the visioning process action plans.

With the agreement of the Mover and Seconder, the Committee agreed to amend the motion, as follows:

MOVED by Margo Grant, seconded by Cheryl Newcombe, that the Regional Plan Advisory Committee endorse the methodology for the future Community Visioning Program as contained in the December 12, 2007 Memorandum, and that staff prepare a report to Regional Council recommending approval of this Program. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Margo Grant, seconded by Cheryl Newcombe, that the Regional Plan Advisory Committee endorse the priorities for the future Community Visioning Program as contained in the December 12, 2007 Memorandum, and that staff prepare a report to Regional Council recommending approval of this Program. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Paul Pettipas, seconded by Robert Batherson, that the list of priorities be amended to combine the visioning projects for East Preston and North Preston. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Committee discussed the process for bringing this matter forward to Council. The Committee requested that an extract of today's discussion be included with the report and that the report be circulated to Committee members via email.

7.1 Community Visioning Pilot Project Evaluation

- C A draft Information Report on the above noted dated December 11, 2007 was before the Committee.

Ms. Susan Corser, Planner, provided an overview of the evaluation process with the Committee, noting that the evaluation was essential before moving on with the next phase of the community visioning project. Ms. Corser reviewed the following with the Committee:

- C Goals of the evaluation were:
 - C Highlight areas of the pilot project requiring improvement;
 - C Have a sound basis for measuring success of the pilot project;
- C 13 performance measures were identified in council report initiating community visioning
- C These measures were expanded upon and grouped based on accepted goals of public engagement;
- C Evaluation participants
 - C CLG members
 - C Project staff
 - C Participants (residents and other stakeholders)
 - C HRM staff and Councillors
- C Evaluation results:
 - C Community Visioning was successful in its mandate to engage community;
 - C Majority of CLG and participants wish to participate in the future;
 - C 90% of CLG members felt they had a great deal of participation in visioning process themselves;
 - C Most CLG members and participants have confidence in visions and actions plans being implemented.
- C In the next round:
 - C Ensure clear communication of project goals and outcomes;
 - C increase representative public participation;
 - C Provide clear and accurate information about level of volunteerism required;
 - C Continue collaboration between community developers and planners on project team;
 - C Create better structure for interaction with other HRM divisions and business units;
 - C Use information gathered on educational and experiential outcomes to promote VisionHRM;
 - C Improve the functionality of the tool kit;
 - C Establish guidelines on how detailed the Action Plan should be;
 - C Identify/undertake necessary prerequisite studies first;
 - C Proceed with enthusiasm!

Ms. Corser indicated that a Community Visioning Tool Kit is being prepared for the use of communities that wish to engage on the project on their own or may be used for preparing pre-requisite work for the projects.

The Committee made the following comments and suggestions:

- C To further explore the issue of affordable housing and make an effort to be as inclusive as possible during the next phase of the project;
- C Look into the possibility of co-op programs with universities or community colleges to increase momentum with the visioning communities;
- C Suggestion to sub-contract to professionals whenever possible so as not to deplete staff resources;
- C Corporate communications are important to engage the communities in the visioning projects;
- C A suggestion for HRM inter-governmental affairs to research Federal and Provincial funding opportunities that could be applied for in conjunction with this project.

The Committee asked that feedback from the Committee be included in the information report and suggested that the evaluation be presented to Council first, and then lead into the recommendations for the community visioning priority communities. They also requested that the report be circulated to them by email before going to Council.

8. **NEW BUSINESS** - None

9. **ADDED ITEMS** - None

10. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** - January 16, 2007

The next meeting of the Regional Plan Advisory Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, January 16, 2007 at 3:00 p.m. in the Helen Creighton Room, Alderney Gate Public Library, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

Mr. Wells indicated that the Committee's workload will be increasing in new year, and extended meetings may be required. The Committee agreed to extend the meetings to 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Wells also indicated that staff are preparing the Regional Plan Advisory Committee annual report to present to Council in the new year.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

Jennifer Weagle
Legislative Assistant

