

REGIONAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

April 21, 2010

PRESENT: Councilor David Hendsbee, Vice-Chair
Ms. Margo Grant
Councillor Peter Lund
Mr. Paul Pettipas
Councillor Gloria McCluskey

REGRETS: Mr. Fred Morley, Chair
Ms. Cheryl Newcombe
Ms. Alison Baker
Mr. Floyd Dykeman
Ms. Carole Pelletier
Mr. Robert Batherson

STAFF: Mr. Roger Wells, Supervisor - Regional & Community
Planning
Mr. John Charles, Planner
Ms. Maureen Ryan, Planner
Mr. David McCusker, Manager, Regional Transportation
Planning
Mr. Scott Leblanc, Planning Technician
Ms. Sharon Webber, Legislative Support

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Councillor David Hendsbee, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:13 pm on the 2nd Floor of the Alderney Gate Library, Helen Creighton Room, Dartmouth, NS.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 17, 2010

The minutes have been delayed because the Legislative Assistant for this Committee is on a leave of absence. However, these minutes are being worked on and it is anticipated they will be available for next month's agenda.

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

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - NONE

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - NONE

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

6.1 Correspondence:

6.1.1 Letter dated April 14, 2010 from The Board of Directors, Halifax West Trails Association

The Chair read the letter to Committee Members and asked if there were any problems or concerns. He then asked that this document be acknowledged and a reply sent indicating it was under review.

Ms. Margo Grant inquired if there were any further negotiations in regard to this land.

Mr. Roger Wells stated that this property is not sitting dormant. HRM is continuing to meet the proponents for all three (3) areas as per the direction from this Committee in the October, 2009 meeting. All submissions which have been received are being compiled and will be part of the supplementary report that comes back to this Committee. That presentation on the supplementary report will be given at either the May or June meeting.

The Chair requested acceptance of the letter, which was given by Members.

6.2 Petitions - NONE

7. REPORTS:

7.1 Transportation Study: Fall River / Waverley / Wellington

Mr. David McCusker and Ms. Maureen Ryan gave a presentation to the Committee regarding the Transportation Study for the Fall River, Waverley and Wellington areas of HRM. The detailed report was distributed via CD by Ms. Ryan to members.

Mr. McCusker distributed a handout and gave a presentation. It was noted that this plan was done jointly with the Provincial Parks and Infrastructure departments.

The short term recommendations included:

1. Fall River Road / Trunk 2 intersection:
 - (a) Channelized right turn lane
 - (b) Eliminate left turns from Fall River Road to Wilson's
 - (c) Improve pedestrian facilities at intersection
 - (d) Add northbound advanced green
2. Ash Lee Jefferson Drop Off:
 - (a) Relocate existing sidewalk to provide lay-by-area
 - (b) Drop off area behind adjacent church
3. Improve signal timing and detection at Highway 118 NB Ramp and Perrin Drive
4. Construct roundabout at Trunk 2 and Perrin
5. Improve primary connector trail.
6. Implement secondary multi-use trail along Trunk 2.

The long term recommendations included:

1. Upgrade Fall River Road/Trunk 2 intersection
2. Replace Fall River Road Bridge
3. Future connection to Highway 102 (four options were reviewed) – the following two options were discussed in detail:
 - (a) Option 1, Aero Tech Interchange-provided longer term benefit for growth areas; has existing ramps and could tie some of the costs of connector roads through development plans;
 - (b) Option 3, Cobequid Road-could provide immediate traffic relief however do not have interchange ramps today;
4. Implement secondary multi-use trail system
5. Installation of signals where warranted

Mr. McCusker asked for questions from the members.

Councillor McCluskey asked when this plan is expected to be implemented and indicated that HRM is currently under budget restraints. She also asked if there could be a possibility that the Province could help with these costs. Mr. McCusker indicated that work such as intersection improvements and other improvements were costed out to be approximately \$2 million. He also indicated that the Province is definitely a major player and will look to partner with HRM especially in regard to the interchange ramps that do not perform properly and the channelizing of the right hand lane and turns.

Councillor McCluskey then asked if there were development plans in place for these improvements. Mr. McCusker indicated that these plans will be in the master plan once approved, however, this area does not have a lot of capacity for new traffic.

Ms. Ryan indicated that there were two main factors when considering the long range plan for Fall River and where the interchange would go:

1. The community forwarded the detail design regulation for the community centre to get the growth they wanted to see without jeopardizing the long range vision which Council adopted in principle in 2007; and
2. They needed to look at the implications of growth coming out of the Transportation Study and the Watershed Study. The intent is to merge the two documents and in the fall will seek Council's direction on options of growth.

Councillor Lund asked what the growth is for Fall River. Mr. Paul Pettipas indicated that it was one of the fastest growing communities within HRM today. Ms. Ryan indicated that today in the rural community centre there is approximately 8,000 people. There is a broader area when you are taking into account Wellington and Windsor Junction. There are another 1,000 lots proposed for the communities of Hemlock Estates and St. Andrews Village West. Under the grandfathered clause, growth would be 25 lots per year added, and to date there are 100 which have already been approved.

Councillor Lund inquired if this caused congestion. Ms. Ryan indicated that there is an approximately a 1.5 km backlog on the 118 during the morning rush hour. Members then proceeded to have discussion on the various possible routes which could be taken to alleviate this problem. The problem of congestion is a priority and is being worked on.

Councillor Hendsbee asked if the local Councillor had a copy of this report. Ms. Ryan indicated that he had a copy and was in agreement with it.

Councillor Hendsbee asked if there were further questions and asked that this report be accepted as presented.

MOVED by Councillor McCluskey, seconded by Mr. Pettipas that the documented, as presented, be accepted. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.2 Wilderness Common Master Plan

Mr. John Charles gave a presentation on the Draft Wilderness Common Master Plan. Some of the highlights included:

1. Advisory Committee for Master Plan included 11 people, one of which was Councillor Rankin;
2. This plan is mentioned in the current Regional Plan as part of the overall regional parks system;
3. Land is dead centre of Chebucto Centre; also known as Western Common;
4. 16,000 hectares of land (wilderness area regional park)'
5. There has been a 2 year community consultation process;
6. There is development on 3 sides of the park, which makes it quite unique;
7. The Master Plan includes 5 phases over a 20 year period and cover different areas:
 - (a) Phase 1: 2010-2014
 - (b) Phase 2: 2015-2019
 - (c) Phase 3: 2020-2029
 - (d) Phase 4: 2025-2029
 - (e) Phase 5: 2030 +
8. Some of the projects which will occur include upgrades to trail systems, manning a temporary lifeguard service at Nichols Lake Beach and establishing various canoe launches within the area. All these projects will coincide with the preservation of historical and cultural resources.
9. The project will cost approximately \$50,000 per year. This figure was based on information provided by Gordon Radcliff, who has done work for HRM in the past. The figure is calculated on a per meter basis.
10. Phase 4 will take up most of the budget for trails due to its size.
11. Phase 5 will be problematic as the landfill is in this area. The landfill will be monitored and when land is rehabilitated HRM will take over.

Mr. Charles concluded his presentation and asked for questions.

Mr. Pettipas asked why we were looking at land which HRM or the province did not own. Mr. Charles indicated that the lands in question were not part of the original project however they include waterways and watersheds which drain into the headwaters of Bedford Basin. By managing these water systems we can monitor and manage the quality of what goes into the Bedford Basin.

Mr. Pettipas asked if this Committee have considered having groups adopt certain areas for funding. He suggested that this would be an ideal situation to do this and asked Mr. Wells if there were any policies which would stop this type of funding. Mr. Wells indicated that he was not aware of any such policy.

Councillor Hendsbee asked that if this project is to alleviate urban sprawl then where are we going to put our next landfill. Mr. Charles indicated that, in a separate process, soil samples were taken in different areas of the land fill to see if expansion could be included with the park reserve. He said there were 2 zones which were excluded for expansion and there is a 1 km and 2 km buffers around the site. As the landfill expands so would these buffers as required. There has not been any further action taken at this time.

Councillor Hendsbee then asked about the use of ATV's within this area. The members then discussed various concerns they had about this activity. There is an area set inside this site which could be used by responsible ATV users. There are currently discussions taking place with some ATV groups who might be interested in maintaining this area.

Councillor Lund asked if damn shown in the presentation had been assessed and what reclamation projects are in place for this area. Mr. Charles indicated that HRM owned all the dams and they have been assessed by the Water Commission and given a clean bill of health.

Councillor Hendsbee asked for motion to accept this presentation.

MOTION by Councillor Lund to accept this document as presented; seconded by Councillor McCluskey.

7.3 Draft Letter to Province Regarding NS Wetland Conservation Policy (to be circulated)

Councillor Hendsbee asked the Committee if they had any questions or concerns regarding this document.

All members were in agreement that the information contained all of their concerns which were raised at the previous meeting.

Councillor Hendsbee asked for motion to accept and send this document.

MOVED by Mr. Pettipas, seconded by Councillor McCluskey that the document be to accepted and forwarded as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

8. ADDED ITEMS - NONE

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - Wednesday, May 19, 2010 @ 3:00 pm / Location:
2nd Floor, Alderney Gate Library, Helen Creighton Room, Dartmouth, NS

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Sharon Webber
Legislative Support