

Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee
April 16, 2012

TO: Chair and Members of Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY:



Peter Stickings, Acting Director, Planning & Infrastructure

DATE: March 13, 2012

SUBJECT: **Municipal Engagement with Halifax Chamber, Energy Advisory Committee and Atlantic Chapter, Green Building Council**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

March 1, 2012: Motion passed to direct staff to provide a report identifying appropriate Regional Council engagement with the Canada Green Building Council Atlantic Chapter and the Halifax Chambers of Commerce Energy Advisory Committee, with regard to green buildings.

BACKGROUND

On October 4, 2011, Halifax Regional Council (HRM) approved the scope of the Regional Plan 5 year Review project (RP+5). (<http://halifax.ca/boardscom/documents/RP5.pdf>)

On February 9, 2012, The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee approved the Engagement Strategy for the project. (<http://halifax.ca/boardscom/documents/RP5.pdf>)

Multiple municipal stakeholders, in preparation for Regional Plan review, have prepared submissions intended as input and information for the policy review. Notable submissions received to date include:

- HRM Alliance;
- Halifax Chamber, Energy Advisory Committee; and
- Atlantic Chapter, Canada Green Buildings Council.

DISCUSSION

It is highly expected that during the engagement period of the Regional Plan review (with Phase 1 underway at time of writing this report, and Phase 2 coming in a few months) that staff and members of Regional Council will receive a number of sophisticated and thoughtful submissions related to municipal policy direction.

An overview of the submissions received to date:

Our HRM Alliance (www.ourhrmalliance.ca): This alliance of stakeholders offers a seven solution policy submission including:

1. Greenbelting;
2. Investing in Centres;
3. Improving Transit;
4. Meeting growth targets;
5. Having growth self-funded;
6. Protecting water; and
7. Measuring Success.

Halifax Chamber, Energy Advisory Committee: This committee offered a recommended Energy Chapter to Regional Plan which provides eleven recommendations:

1. Energy Touches Everything: Energy to play a significant role in HRM's Municipal Planning Strategy;
2. Sustainable Urban Energy Planning: use proven, integrated and systematic approaches to urban energy planning;
3. Energy in Policy and Legislation: leverage Nova Scotia's advanced energy policies and legislation to aggressively deploy energy efficiency and renewable energy policies and by-laws in HRM and reduce the community's carbon footprint;
4. Energy and Environment: target significant reductions of HRM's energy-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions;
5. Energy and Housing: support and promote energy efficient housing in HRM with advanced Energuide ratings as an initially voluntary target;
6. Energy and Commercial Infrastructure: utilize established best practices, protocols and tools to support and promote a transformative green building market in HRM;
7. Energy and Transportation: advance clean energy public transportation infrastructure in HRM;
8. Energy and Utilities: support the investigation and deployment of "Smart Grid"-enabling technologies to facilitate "Smart Power" for a "Smart City" concept in HRM;
9. Energy and Municipal Economic Opportunities: identify, communicate, and enable economic benefits of sustainable energy strategies;
10. Energy and Communications: launch a municipal energy awareness program; and
11. Energy and Education: establish advanced levels of energy awareness and energy literacy in HRM.

Atlantic Chapter, Canada Green Building Council: Representatives provided a presentation to Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee on March 1, 2012, overviewing the CaGBC Sustainable Communities Toolkit which offers seven tools:

1. Introduction to Sustainability;
2. Community Planning;
3. Natural Environment;
4. Transportation;
5. Buildings;
6. Infrastructure; and
7. Energy.

The toolkit is a 250 page document.

In addition to these submissions, Staff is hearing from stakeholders, seeing opinion pieces and editorials printed in the newspaper, and receiving comments via social media channels. The variety and quantity of input on Regional Plan policy review is growing by the day. In totality, the collection of submissions will inform the Staff recommendations to Regional Council at the conclusion of RP+5.

To ensure staff receipt and consideration of submissions, including the above referenced, the project team ensures dissemination of submissions to project staff. The three submissions are in the hands of the staff participating in the public engagement and drafting policy for the review. In addition, the CaGBC and Chamber submissions have been circulated to members of Regional Council (directly from the submitting organization). Further, the Chamber submission has been forwarded to the Economic Strategy Advisory Committee for consideration for future oversight of the Council approved 5 year Economic Strategy.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications to this report.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This report is about community engagement.

ATTACHMENTS

None

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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