

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

URBAN DESIGN TASK FORCE
MINUTES

September 10, 2008

PRESENT:

Ms. Dale Godsoe, Chair
Mr. Paul MacKinnon, Vice-Chair
Mr. Frank Palermo
Ms. Cathy Carmody
Mr. Bill Hyde
Mr. Paul Shakotko
Ms. Linda Garber
Ms. Adriane Abbott
Mr. David Garrett
Mr. Kendall Taylor

REGRETS:

Mr. Stephen Terauds
Mr. Bernie Smith
Mr. Kevin Riles
Ms. Margot Young
Councillor Mary Wile
Councillor Jim Smith
Councillor Dawn Sloane

STAFF:

Mr. Andy Fillmore, Project Manager, Capital District
Ms. Tiffany Chase, Communications Specialist, Heritage and
Urban Design, Capital District
Ms. Sandra T. Riley, Legislative Assistant

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Godsoe called the meeting to order at 11:38 a.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - None

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

Additions:

6.6 Plan Monitoring

MOVED by Mr. Garrett, seconded by Mr. Hyde that the Order of Business, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. **BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES** - NONE

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

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

6.1 **Update on Status of Documents: Downtown Planning Strategy, LUB, Design Manual, Barrington, Regional Plan Amendments, Fact Sheets**

Mr. Fillmore addressed the Task Force, stating that there are four documents that will be released for public review on September 15, 2008, regarding Draft 2 of the Secondary Planning Strategy of the LUB, the Design Manual, and the Regional Plan update. He advised that there will be a six week public review period, terminating on October 24, 2008. He stated that there is a new addition to the documents called 'Fact Sheets' that are like an Executive Summary. He further advised that the Task Force received a handout of the six fact sheets for their review, with the following titles:

- Affordable Housing Initiatives
- Design & Built Form Framework
- Development Approvals & Design Review
- Heritage Protection Initiatives
- Sustainability Initiatives
- Transportation Initiatives

Mr. MacKinnon addressed the Task Force and advised that there are issues regarding

heritage:

- Are the incentives strong enough to preserve heritage
- Is there fear that development will happen quickly as developers attempt to get in under the wire
- There should be a background study for heritage protection (not necessarily through HRM)
- There is a restriction in terms of demolition controls. HRM needs to set its own demolition policies (Heritage Property Act)

Mr. Palermo advised that one of the major things to be aware of is that there are subtle tradeoffs and connections between policies and parts of the Plan; bonusing. He advised that they have to be knowledgeable about what kind of tradeoffs can be made, as this is what developers will look at. He further advised that policies need to be tailored.

Ms. Godsoe advised that for the first two or three years of the Plan, the focus will be on one area and then move on to another; that the Plan is a living and changing thing that is performance based. She requested Staff supply an analysis of the dollar figures over the first five years for the Plan.

Mr. Garrett made a few suggestions regarding heritage including:

- Look at other areas that may want to be included as Heritage Conservation Districts
- Density bonusing for heritage should be restricted to downtown; there should be comprehensive development districts
- Restrictions should be considered on the re-use of land that has been vacated by the demolition of a heritage building
- If a property contains a heritage building and developers are trying to get bonusing for that property, that it does not supercede any design criteria required; design controls have to take precedence.

Mr. Palermo suggested that some disincentives to demolition should be provided, such as taxing empty land based on the full re-development potential, or that empty lots cannot be made into parking lots (has to become parkland, etc.). Mr. Garrett advised that 'heritage' and 'heritage protection' should be defined; what is the standard to use. Mr. Fillmore responded that the terms are defined in the Design Guidelines, Chapter Four.

The Chair advised that the Fact Sheets should be reviewed by the Task Force and brought back to a future meeting for further discussion.

Ms. Carmody pointed out that the Task Force and Staff were discussing issues discussed a year ago and should be moving on.

Mr. Shakotko stated that he would like the incentives and disincentives clearly set out and discussed by Staff in the next meeting.

6.2 Update on Public Review [including September 24, 2008 “Draft 2 Open House” at Cunard Centre]

Ms. Tiffany Chase, Communications Specialist, Heritage and Urban Design, gave the Committee a brief update on the HRMbyDesign schedule, Public Review Period concurrent with Economic Indicators Baseline Study handout. She advised that advertising would be in the Business Voice Magazine September issue, the Chronicle Herald, Metro News, Coast, and there would be 30 second spots on Eastlink TV Guide channel. She advised that the presentation on September 24, 2008 at the Cunard Centre will focus more detail on the changes that have been made since Draft 1 and to give the members of the public the opportunity to interact with Staff and the Task Force one on one. Ms. Chase further advised that there are scheduled presentations with the Regional Plan Advisory Committee, Heritage Advisory Committee, and the District 12 Planning Advisory Committee.

In response to a question from Ms. Abbott regarding audience diversity, it was suggested that advertisements be posted in libraries and other community facilities.

6.3 Demand/Capacity/Baseline RFP - Update

Mr. Fillmore circulated a document to the Task Force on the Downtown Halifax Demand, Capacity, and Baseline Indicators Study - Request For Proposals 08-330. He explained, in further details, the following items contained in the document:

- Project Background
- Deliverable #1: Anticipated Future Growth
- Deliverable #2: Development Capacity of the proposed Built Form Rules
- Deliverable #3: A Comparison Between HRMbyDesign’s Capacity and Foreseeable Demand
- Deliverable #4: Baseline Indicators of HRMbyDesign’s Success
- Changeability of Methodologies
- Client-side Project Management
- Project Schedule
- Project Objective

Mr. Fillmore advised that the RFP has been issued and the closing date is September 11, 2008. The project will be run by three members of the UDTF (Mr. Smith, Mr. Palermo, and Mr. Hyde) and three members of the Greater Halifax Partnership.

6.4 Cogswell Masterplan Study - Update

Mr. Fillmore advised that the Cogswell will follow a similar process, about a month behind, and at a larger budget. It has been expanded to include the recommendations on the downtown street traffic patterns; a complete system of traffic with new street grids. He advised that he would be co-running this with Mr. David McCusker, Manager, Regional Transportation. He advised that there will be at least two major public consultation events.

6.5 Communications/Schedule Update

The Urban Design Task Force and Staff reviewed the schedule and a discussion ensued suggesting some revisions to the timelines.

7. CORRESPONDENCE PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence dated August 07, 2008 from Ms. Beverly W. Miller

The UDTF reviewed this correspondence prior to the meeting.

7.2 Correspondence submitted by Mr. Phil Pacey - dated August 22, 2008 (circulated electronically prior to meeting)

The UDTF reviewed this correspondence prior to the meeting.

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Plan Monitoring

Ms. Chase gave a brief overview and Staff took questions of clarification from the Urban Design Task Force. Mr. Fillmore advised that should the Plan need amendments, the Plan has the criteria by which they expect Council to make a good decision.

Mr. Fillmore advised that on September 17, 2008 at the Lord Nelson Hotel, there will be an urban design lecture on "What Makes Good Streetscapes".

Paul Shakotko retired from the meeting at 1:00 pm.

Mr. Fillmore advised of the Mayor's reception for those who volunteer for boards/committees on Monday, September 29, 2008 at 6 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next regular meeting of the Urban Design Task Force is scheduled for October 08, 2008 from 11 a.m. to 2:00pm at Halifax Hall, City Hall.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:09p.m.

Sandra T. Riley
Legislative Assistant