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Halifax Regional Council  
June 22, 2004

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**

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Mike Labrecque, Director, Real Property and Asset Management

**DATE:** June 17, 2004

**SUBJECT:** Point Pleasant Park Restoration Planning Timelines

**INFORMATION REPORT**

**ORIGIN**

The clean-up of Point Pleasant Park resulting from Hurricane Juan is essentially complete. Work on the shoreline is slated for this fall. Staff are now beginning the planning phase for the restoration of Point Pleasant Park.

**BACKGROUND**

Point Pleasant Park has been closed to the public since September 29<sup>th</sup> 2003 due to the severe damage caused by Hurricane Juan. Staff have been working on the clean-up of the park since November of 2003. Through the course of the winter the media and public were kept up to date on the progress of work and the schedule for re-opening. The park was re-opened to the public on June 4, 2004. Staff have made it clear through updates, media reports and stakeholder meetings that a restoration effort will follow the clean-up and that there is still a great deal of work, resources and time required to bring the park back to its former state.

Past discussions regarding Point Pleasant Park have demonstrated that the park plays an important role in the lives of many of the citizens of HRM. Of significance is the need for a transparent process which melds public input with expertise in the fields of cultural resource management, natural resource management, forestry, park design, recreation, park administration and ecology.

## DISCUSSION

While the devastation of Point Pleasant Park has been tragic it does offer a unique opportunity to shape the park for future generations. The park holds a special function as a naturalistic forest in an urban setting. The general consensus indicates that this role should continue, however, the hurricane and ensuing clean-up has uncovered some positive attributes which have been diminished or been forgotten over the years. These include the park's fortifications, views, cultural assets and shorelines and beaches. In restoring Point Pleasant as an urban forest there are opportunities to strengthen the natural systems, cultural assets and overall enjoyment of the park for citizens. To that end staff plan to engage in a restoration planning exercise for Point Pleasant Park. The process is intended to be public and rely on expertise from a number of sectors.

After discussions with the Point Pleasant Park Advisory Committee and other stakeholders, staff have determined that the public process will take place this fall. This will allow the park users to experience the park over the summer prior to the commencing of any public consultation process.

During the summer staff and consultants will compile information gathered for and during the clean-up. This information will be used during the Restoration Planning process.

Several significant resources are available to the Restoration Planning process. Of particular note are the;

- academic, volunteer sector and stakeholder groups who have expressed a desire to contribute time and expertise.
- Atlantic Provinces Association of Landscape architects who have volunteered to facilitate the public consultation workshops.
- of particular note is the donation of a \$100,000 to assist in public consultation and to fund a design competition for the park from Jim Spatz, President of Southwest Properties. Dr. Spatz is a longtime and frequent user of the park. The purpose of the competition is to generate ideas for consideration in the restoration plans for the park. The competition is expected to attract expertise that HRM might not normally have available to it. The competition format will be designed by a stakeholders group made of various groups agencies and interest groups and citizens at large interested in the Park. At this point the stakeholders group will include representation from the Point Pleasant Park Advisory Committee, Friends of Point Pleasant Park, Parks Canada, the area councillor, Halifax Field naturalists, the arts community, citizens at large and a representative of Southwest Properties. It is anticipated that this team will also comprise the competition's jury. The competition is

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slated to be integrated with public workshops and should help generate ideas and feedback from the public.

The final restoration plan will be produced within 9 months and will be brought to Regional Council for approval.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

At this point staff anticipate that the restoration planning process will be funded through the Disaster Assistance program associated with the recovery from Hurricane Juan. This will be confirmed by DFAA in writing prior to the beginning of the planning process. Any expenditures by HRM will require approval of Regional Council.

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN**

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

### **REGIONAL PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

The restoration of Point Pleasant Park is in congruence with the following HRM Regional Planning Principles;

Principle 1 - Ensure opportunities for the protection of open space, wilderness, natural beauty and sensitive environmental areas

Principle 2 - Preserve and promote sustainability of cultural and historical assets

### **ALTERNATIVES**

There are no alternatives to this information at this time.

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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