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Halifax, Nova Scotia
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11.1.12

Halifax Regional Council
June 12, 2007

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Dan English", written over a horizontal line.

Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Wayne Anstey", written over a horizontal line.

Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

DATE: June 12, 2007

SUBJECT: Case 00989 - Amendments to the Regional MPS and Subdivision By-law regarding Parkland Dedication for Small Lot Subdivisions

ORIGIN

Motion of Regional Council on January 9, 2007

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Regional Council:

1. Give First Reading and set a public hearing date to consider amendments to the Regional MPS and Subdivision By-law to reduce the park dedication requirement from 10% to 5% for three lots or less within the Rural Resource Designation (Eastern Shore East) and Agricultural Designation (Musquodoboit Valley) and the Open Space Designation under the Regional MPS and Subdivision By-law, as per Attachments 1 and 2 of this report.
2. Adopt the amendments to the Regional MPS and Subdivision By-law as provided in Attachments 1 and 2 respectively of this report.

Executive Summary:

An exemption for park dedication could potentially detract from HRM's financial ability to carry out the vision of the Regional Plan to build upon the natural beauty of the region and invest in the development of healthy and vibrant communities. The park dedication account is the primary source of funding to acquire lands that have had longstanding value to the region for leisure and recreation and for the preservation of cultural heritage (e.g. Blue Mountain/Birch Cove Lakes, Prospect High Head, Long Hill View Plains, Magazine Hill and others yet to be identified). It is also pivotal for the acquisition of central community features that are beginning to emerge from the Community Visioning Process (e.g. waterfront parks, community squares, multi-purpose trails, bikeways).

Public sentiment is divided over whether to exempt small scale subdivisions from park dedication requirements in rural areas. The 10% land dedication was actively discussed throughout the three and a half year consultation process and was desired by many across the board. Thus there was a strong lobby during this consultation process to maintain the 10% land dedication policy intact. Others argued, on the other hand, to introduce some form of amendment to allow landowners to give land to family members or to subdivide a few lots for sale to supplement their retirement.

Even though there were many competing voices in the consideration of parkland exemption, it is felt that there is general public support to enable a landowner to give land to their children without having to pay into the park dedication program. If HRM allows this exemption, it has no legislative authority to limit the exemption to family members. It has to provide the same opportunity to all landowners and cannot discriminate on the basis of family relationship. It is therefore, recommended that Regional Council adopt the amendment which has the least financial impact on the Municipality's ability to carry out its park development program. This would be Option 2 which reduces the park dedication requirement from 10% to 5% for the first three lots from any parcel of land in the Agricultural, Rural Resource and Open Space and Natural Resource designations. The By-laws to amend the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy and Subdivision By-law to allow this reduction are provided in Attachments 1 and 2. It is recommended that Council give First Reading to adopt these amendments at a public hearing.

Background

At its meeting of October 31, 2006, Regional Council directed staff to provide a report on options to enable a reduction or exemption of the 10% parkland dedication requirements for small scale (three lots or less) subdivisions. The requested report was tabled with Regional Council on December 21, 2006. As per the report's recommendation, Regional Council directed Staff to explore the three following options with the public at a series of public meetings:

1. Exempt the parkland dedication requirement for 3 lots or less for subdivision developments within the Rural Resource Designation (Eastern Shore East), Agricultural Designation (Musquodoboit Valley) and Open Space and Natural Resources Designation under the Regional MPS and Subdivision By-law.

2. Reduce the parkland dedication requirement to 5% for 3 lots or less for subdivision developments within the same geographic areas as outlined in Option 1.
3. Re-establish the previous exemption for small lot subdivisions (3 lots or less) from any parcel of land created prior to March 31, 1978 in the former County area and apply it to the same areas as outlined in options 1 and 2 plus the Rural Commuter Designation which applies to the areas surrounding the Urban Settlement Designation under the Regional MPS.

The park dedication requirements were increased from 5 to 10% under the Regional Plan to ensure that there will be useable open space in all communities for leisure and recreation. This was considered essential to the future success of the designated community centres which are intended to be well designed with parks, pedestrian facilities and other public spaces that make these centres attractive and vibrant. The park dedication increase is also intended to assist in the purchase of regionally significant lands that are valued for their outstanding natural beauty, recreation and leisure and the preservation of HRMs cultural heritage and its quality of life.

The goal to increase the park dedication process was presented early in the Regional Planning Consultation process. There was substantial public comment in support of the increase in park dedication requirements throughout the three and a half years of consultation. However, since the adoption of the Regional Plan, concerns have been expressed by Council, about the impact these fees are having on landowners who are creating small scale subdivisions (3 lots or less) in rural areas. It was mentioned that the increase in parkland dedication in some rural areas appeared onerous, as some areas had previously been exempted from paying fees.

DISCUSSION

Public Information Meetings

Staff held four Public Information Meetings (PIMS)¹ to gauge feedback on the proposed options (see Attachments 3-6). Approximately 65 people attended these meetings with the largest number (40 people) attending the meeting at the Eastern Shore Community Centre. Two written submissions were also received (see Attachment 7).

Financial Analysis

The parkland dedication program is the primary source of funding for parkland acquisition. From 2003-2006, HRM collected approximately \$2 million for parkland acquisition from the park dedication fund. As shown in Table 1 below, a substantial portion of these funds are derived

¹These meetings were held at 1) Sackville High School, March 5, 2007; 2) Halifax West High School, March 19, 2007; 3) Eastern Shore Community Centre, March 26, 2007; and 4) Cole Harbour Place, April 26, 2007. Advertisements were placed in community newspapers and in the Herald/Chronicle Mailstar.

from small lot subdivisions. Over the period of 2003-2006 an average of 57% of the funds were collected from subdivisions of three lots and under. The remaining 43% was collected from subdivisions over three lots.

**Table 1
Park Dedication Revenues
2003 - 2006**

	2003 (000's)	2004 (000's)	2005 (000's)	2006 (000's)	Total (000's)
Total	\$460	\$555	\$343	\$629	\$1,986
subdivisions of 3 lots & under	34%	56%	60%	63%	57%
subdivisions over 3 lots	66%	44%	40%	37%	43%

HRM allows the park dedication fees to accumulate in the Park Reserve Account so that Council will have a range of options to acquire or undertake improvements to parkland that it would not otherwise be able to finance. For example, the \$2 million generated from 2003-2006 has been used to acquire parkland (\$510,100) and undertake park development projects (\$1,161,000). Some of the higher investments have been made in the development of the regional trail system (\$435,000), remediation of Upper Musquodoboit's Bill Bolong Memorial Park(\$190,000), and construction of sports fields in Dartmouth (\$300,000) and the Mainland Common (\$200,000). Regional Council has also approved \$428,000 for the acquisition of the former Irving lands, in Lake Echo (\$168,000), lands for the Lake Charlotte Boat Launch (\$150,000), and Micou Island, in St. Margaret's Bay (\$100,000).

The increase in park dedication requirements has resulted in a substantial increase in park revenues since it was brought into effect on April 29, 2006. Over the eight month period after the 10% land dedication requirement took effect, a total of \$302,000 of the \$629,000 revenues collected came from the 10% parkland dedication requirement. This resulted in a 55% increase in park revenues over the year 2005 and is an early indication that the park dedication fund is meeting Council's policy to increase the park funds to offset the future anticipated costs for increased park development requirements arising from the Regional Plan and Community Visioning Process.

Evaluation of Options

The annual revenue loss is calculated based on information recorded in the Hansen system. In comparison to the SAP system, staff have noted some discrepancies and are currently investigating possible timing differences in the recognition of revenue. Given the possible timing issues, it is possible that the estimated loss of revenue could be in the range of \$25,000 to \$56,000. Staff is investigating the cause of the discrepancy and will provide a Supplementary Report to Council to address the differences.

Table 2 provides the estimated annual and cumulative revenue loss from an amendment to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy to exempt or reduce the park dedication requirements in the options that were presented to the public.

Table 2
Parkland Dedication Options
Estimated Revenue Loss

Options	Annual Revenue Loss 2007	10 Year Cumulative Revenue Loss 2007	20 Year Cumulative Revenue Loss 2007
Option 1	\$56,151	\$561,510	\$1,123,020
Option 2	\$28,075	\$280,755	\$561,510
Option 3	\$179,700	\$1,797,000	\$3,594,000

See Attachment 10 for methods of estimation.

Option 1: Exempt the parkland dedication requirement for 3 lots or less in the Rural Resource, Agricultural and Open Space and Natural Resources designations (Attachment 8).

Option 1 would exempt the park dedication requirements for the first three lots from any parcel of land in the Agricultural, Rural Resource and Open Space and Natural Resources designations. The Agricultural Designation encompasses the Musquodoboit Valley and the Rural Resource Designation encompasses areas east of Jeddore, along Highway No. 7. The Open Space and Natural Resource Designation encompasses the interior lands throughout the Municipality that are predominantly inaccessible by road. The exemption would be granted only once to any parcel of land that is in existence on the day when Council gives notice of its intention to adopt

this amendment at a public hearing. The exemption would not be granted to any subsequent subdivision of that property after the first three lots have been exempted from the park dedication requirements.

The revenue loss for Option 1 is estimated to be \$56,151 which is 57% of the revenue collected for park dedication over a one year period (April 06 - April 07) from District 1.² Over a ten year period this would amount to approximately \$561,510 in 2007 constant dollars. Over a twenty year period this would increase to approximately \$1,123,020. This is significant, given that the parkland account is usually built up overtime to make long-term investments in land acquisitions (e.g. Birch Cove Lakes/Blue Mountain Regional Park costs 2-4 million).

Option 2: Reduce the parkland dedication requirement to 5% for 3 lots or less for subdivision developments within the Open Space and Natural Resource, Agricultural and Rural Resource designations (Attachment 8).

Option 2 would reduce the park dedication requirement from 10% to 5% for the first three lots from any parcel of land in the same geographical area as Option 1. Like Option 1, the reduction would apply to a parcel of land only once and the park dedication requirement would remain at 10% for all subsequent subdivisions on that parcel of land. Also like Option 1, the amendment would take effect on the first day that Council gives notice of its intention to adopt this amendment at a public hearing, should Council wish to proceed with a hearing. The revenue loss for Option 2 is estimated to be half of Option 1 at \$28,075.³ Over a ten year period this would amount to approximately \$280,755 in 2007 constant dollars. Over a twenty year period this would increase to approximately \$561,510.

Option 3: Re-establish the previous exemption for small lot subdivisions (3 lots or less) from any parcel of land created prior to March 31, 1978 and apply it to same areas as outlined in options 1 and 2 plus the Rural Commuter Designation (Attachment 9).

Option 3 would exempt the first three lots subdivided from any parcel of land that was in existence prior to March 31, 1978 in the former County area. It is an exemption that was established under the former Halifax County Subdivision By-law which exempted the first three lots from the park dedication requirements on parcels of land that were in existence before the former County began collecting park dedication fees in 1978. Like Options 1 and 2, this

² The annual park revenue loss was estimated by taking 57% of the revenue collected for a full 12 month period (April 29, 2006 - April 29, 2007) while the 10% land dedication was in effect. Only a portion of this revenue was used as revenue loss since past information reveals that 57% of the is collected from subdivisions consisting of 3 lots or less.

³ The annual park revenue loss was estimated by taking 57% of the revenue collected for a full 12 month period (April 29, 2006 - April 29, 2007) while the 10% land dedication was in effect. One half of this amount was calculated to be the projected loss from a 50% reduction in land dedication requirement from 10% to 5%.

exemption would apply to a parcel of land only once and the park dedication requirement would remain at 10% for all subsequent subdivisions. This option applies to all areas included in Option 1 and all lands within the Rural Commuter Designation. This includes all of the Eastern Shore (Western and Eastern portions), Musquodoboit Valley, Porters Lake, Lake Echo, Lawrencetown, the Prestons and Cherry Brook, Cow Bay, Upper and Middle Sackville, Fall River to Enfield and Goffs, Carrolls Corner and Dutch Settlement, Hammonds Plains and Tantallon, St Margaret's Bay and Prospect and the Chebucto Peninsula. It does not include the urban serviced areas of Halifax, Dartmouth, Cole Harbour, Eastern Passage, Lower and Middle Sackville, Bedford and Beechville, Lakeside and Timberlea.

The revenue loss for Option 3 is estimated to be \$179,000 given that it encompasses all of the rural and semi rural communities where the greatest proportion of subdivision development is occurring.⁴ Approximately 66% of the parkland revenue from 2003 to 2006 was collected from the Rural Commuter Designation and 9% was collected from the Agricultural and Rural Resource designations combined. Over a ten year period the cumulative revenue loss would amount to approximately \$1,797,000 in 2007 constant dollars. Over a twenty year period this would increase to approximately \$3,594,000.

Recommendation:

An exemption for park dedication could potentially detract from HRM's financial ability to carry out the vision of the Regional Plan to build upon the natural beauty of the region and invest in the development of healthy and vibrant communities. Public sentiment is divided over how to apply the park dedication requirements to small scale subdivisions in rural areas. Even though there are many competing voices in the consideration of an appropriate park dedication, it is felt that there is general public support to enable a landowner to give land to their children with some relaxation of the park requirements.

It is recommended that Regional Council adopt the amendment which has the least financial impact on the Municipality's ability to carry out its park development program. This would be Option 2 which reduces the park dedication requirement from 10% to 5% for the first three lots from any parcel of land in the Agricultural, Rural Resource and Open Space and Natural Resource designations. The By-laws to amend the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy and Subdivision By-law to allow this reduction are provided in Attachments 1 and 2. It is recommended that Council give First Reading to adopt these amendments at a public hearing.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

If Option 2 is approved, the Parkland Reserve Account contributions will be reduced by

⁴ The annual park revenue loss was estimated by taking 57% of the revenue collected for a full 12 month period (April 29, 2006 - April 29, 2007) while the 10% land dedication was in effect. Only a portion of this revenue was used as revenue loss since past information reveals that 57% of the is collected from subdivisions consisting of 3 lots or less.

approximately \$28,000. This will not have a significant impact on the Municipality's ability to acquire parkland over the short or the long-term future under the park dedication program.

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.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Council could consider adopting Options 1 or Option 3. This is not recommended as it would have a substantial impact on the Municipality's ability to carry out its plans for parks development over the short and long-term.
2. Council could decide not to amend the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy and Subdivision By-law at this time and review the matter again during its formal review of the Plan in 2011.

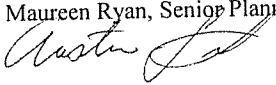
ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1:	By-law to amend the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy
Attachment 2:	By-law to amend the Regional Subdivision By-law
Attachment 3:	Minutes of Public Information Meeting at Sackville High School
Attachment 4:	Minutes of the Public Information Meeting at Halifax West High School
Attachment 5:	Minutes of the Public Information Meeting at the Eastern Shore Community Centre
Attachment 6:	Minutes of the Public Information Meeting at Cole Harbour Place
Attachment 7:	Written submissions
Attachment 8:	Map showing the areas affected by Options 1 and 2
Attachment 9:	Map showing the areas affected by Option 3
Attachment 10:	Method of Calculating Parkland Dedication Option Revenue Loss

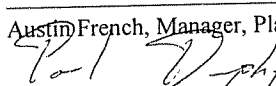
A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/agenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Maureen Ryan, Senior Planner, 490-4799

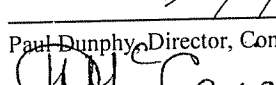
Report Approved by:


Austin French, Manager, Planning Services, 490-6717

Report Approved by:


Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Development

Report Approved by:


For Catherine Sanderson, Sr. Manager, Financial Services, 490-1562

Attachment 1

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

**AMENDMENTS TO THE
REGIONAL MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY**

BE IT ENACTED by the Halifax Regional Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality that the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy is hereby amended as follows:

Insert the following text after Policy E-5:

There is a strong community desire to reduce the parkland dedication for small scale subdivisions to 5% in the Agricultural, Rural Resource and Open Space and Natural Resource designations. This is primarily desired to enable family members the opportunity, to give land to one another without having to bear the full cost of a 10% dedication. HRM has no legislative authority to limit this reduction to family members but the impact of such a reduction on overall community development is anticipated to be minimal. These designations have vast areas of open space and the rate of subdivision development low. The park development in these areas, outside of the designated centres, is expected to take the form of regional trails and regional parks that are of benefit to HRM as a whole. In recognition of this contribution, HRM shall reduce the park dedication requirements from 10% to 5% for small scale subdivisions (3 lots or less) in these designations.

E-5A Notwithstanding Policy E-5, HRM shall, through the Subdivision By-law, reduce the park dedication requirements from 10% to 5% for small scale subdivisions (3 lots or less) within the Agricultural, Rural Resource and Open Space and Natural Resource designations . This reduction shall apply to any parcel of land in existence on the effective date of this amendment.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the by-law of which this is a true copy was duly passed at a duly called meeting of the Council of Halifax Regional Municipality held on the day of _____ A.D. 2007.

Given under the hand of the Municipal Clerk and under the corporate seal of the said Municipality this _____ day of _____, A.D., 2007.

Jan Gibson
Municipal Clerk

Attachment 2

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

**AMENDMENTS TO THE
REGIONAL SUBDIVISION BY-LAW**

BE IT ENACTED by the Halifax Regional Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality that the Regional Subdivision By-law is hereby amended as follows:

Insert the following after Section 82 (4):

- (5) Notwithstanding the 10% park dedication requirements of subsection (1), the subdivider shall provide a 5% park dedication for the first three lots subdivided from an area of land in existence on *[Insert the date for which the first notice of this amendment appeared in the newspaper]* within the areas designated on the Generalized Future Land Use Map in the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy as Agricultural, Rural Resource and Open Space and Natural Resource.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the by-law of which this is a true copy was duly passed at a duly called meeting of the Council of Halifax Regional Municipality held on the _____ day of _____ A.D. 2007.

Given under the hand of the Municipal Clerk and under the corporate seal of the said Municipality this _____ day of _____, A.D., 2007.

Jan Gibson
Municipal Clerk

Attachment 3
Sackville Public Information Minutes

Monday, March 5, 2007
Sackville High School
7:00 PM

STAFF:

Maureen Ryan, Senior Planner, Planning Services
Cara McFarlane, Administrative Support, Planning Services
Roger Wells, Supervisor, Planning Services
Sharon Bond, Manager, Development Services
Kelly Denty, Supervisor, Planning Services
Peter Bigalow, Manager, Real Property
John Charles, Parkland Planner
Rob Jahncke, Parkland Planner
Jan Skora, Parkland Planner
Kemp MacDonald, Parkland Planner

COUNCILLORS & PAC
PRESENT:

Councillor Brad Johns, District 19
Councillor Bob Harvey, District 20
Councillor Gary Martin, District 21
Walter Regan, member of North West Planning Advisory
Committee and Sackville Rivers Association

PUBLIC IN
ATTENDANCE:

Approximately 7

The meeting commenced at approximately 7:05 p.m.

1. Opening remarks/Introductions/Purpose of meeting - Maureen Ryan

This is the first of three public meetings regarding an amendment to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy which was recently adopted for the Halifax Regional Municipality. Regional Council asked staff to explore some options with the public on parkland dedication.

Ms. Ryan introduced Councillor Brad Johns, District 19; Councillor Gary Martin, District 21; Councillor Bob Harvey, District 20; Peter Bigalow, Manager, Real Property; Sharon Bond, Manager, Development Services; Kelly Denty and Roger Wells, Supervisors, Planning Services; John Charles, Jan Skora, Kemp MacDonald and Rob Jahncke, Parkland Planners.

A review of the agenda was given.

2. Presentation of Proposal - Maureen Ryan

Under the Regional Plan there are four pillars of growth.

The first is to ensure that we grow sustainable by protecting the natural environment (shown on screen). These are the large open spaces that have shaped our growth and development over the last 250 years, the inaccessible backgrounds that have formed the open space systems, and the protected areas. There are six of thirty-one protected areas in HRM that represent natural landscapes throughout Nova Scotia. HRM has a legacy of regional parks within the core of HRM. The Regional Plan proposes to build on this legacy by adding fourteen natural quarters to maintain activity between those large focal spaces and developing a system of significantly regional trails that have been identified by various trail associations through the Halifax Regional Development Agency. Six new regional parks are proposed (Porter's Lake Park, Western Commons Park, Birch Cove/Blue Mountain Park, Jack's Lake Park, Second Lake Park, Feely Lake Park.

The second pillar of growth is to allocate growth to fifty-five identifiable centres throughout the region. These centres are intended to become destination points of service to accommodate the 90,000 people that staff project will be living in this region in the year 2026. These centres will be well designed, compact, mixed-use centres that are walkable. They will be equipped with parks, pedestrian facilities and trails that interlink with the large open spaces around the region.

The third pillar of growth is to interlink these communities with transit of various forms to maintain activity between the centres and the urban core. The range of bus service, in terms of time and frequency, will vary depending on the type of centre (eg: the Metro Link).

The fourth pillar is to ensure that this growth is fiscally sustainable so strong economy can be supported.

Previous to the adoption of the Regional Plan, land owners were required to dedicate 5% of the land they were proposing to subdivide for parkland purposes. The land owner also had the option of providing cash in lieu where there was already sufficient parkland in the area or there wasn't any suitable parkland to dedicate for the development. HRM would also accept cash in lieu where the subdivision development was too small. Generally speaking, the municipality tended to accept, and still does accept, cash in lieu for the smaller subdivisions, five lots or less. However, HRM does accept land in the smaller subdivisions where the parcel is strategically located. The former dedication requirement applied everywhere except in the Musquodoboit Valley. In the areas of the former Halifax County, a parkland dedication program was formed on March 31, 1978. Council exempted the first three lots of those parcels that were already in existence prior to March 31, 1978, from the parkland dedication program. This would be on a one time basis only. Once the exemption was received, the land owner then paid into the program to provide for parks in the development and in the neighbourhood at the same rate other subdivisions were contributing.

Currently, with the adoption of the Regional Plan, the parkland dedication program was increased to 10%. All previous exemptions were removed. HRM needs the parks and the trail systems to make the previously mentioned centres work. The parkland dedication program was needed to provide for the regional parks, trail systems and natural corridors since the program represents the sole source of parkland acquisition within the municipality. The money is saved into a parkland dedication account and the money will be spent strategically in areas that will make a difference over time.

A slide referencing the revenue that was collected from 2003 to 2006 was shown. Historically, \$500,000 per year has been collected and in 2006 this rose to \$629,000. This was partly attributed to the fact that the parkland dedication requirement was increased and there was a spike in subdivision activity occurring before council adopted the Regional Plan. From 2003 to 2006 approximately \$2,000,000 was collected in parkland dedication. Roughly, \$300,000 of that was collected over a seven month period in 2006 from the time the Regional Plan was adopted to the end of the year, 2006. On average, the majority of the funds were collected from the subdivisions that consist of three lots or less. In all, 57% of money came from those types of subdivisions. The remainder came from subdivisions consisting of three lots or more.

Expenditures were shown on a slide. There was \$435,000 on regional trail development (eg: Musquodoboit Trail, Beechville to Tantallon, Eastern Passage Trail, Cole Harbour/Salt Marsh Trail). HRM invested in land acquisition for the Western Commons, development of an artificial field in Dartmouth, \$200,000 in the Mainland Commons, \$190,000 in the restoration of the Bill Bollong Memorial Park in Spry Harbour; \$45,000 in the acquisition of lands for the Cow Bay Moose. Funds have been set aside for the future development of the boat launch at Lake Charlotte (\$150,000); the acquisition of parklands in Lake Echo (\$190,000), and Micou Island in St. Margaret's Bay (\$100,000). Funds were also expended for the development of a park on Ochterloney Street, and for the acquisition of land on Prospect High Head (\$86,000); and the range park in Bedford (\$41,000). These are some of the major projects. There is still some funding left in the parkland dedication account which is being reserved for future projects.

Councillor Johns asked if any of the money for the regional trails go toward Sackville. How much? Mr. Bigalow said money was taken from a number of funding sources to go towards Sackville but he is not sure of the exact amount.

One resident wondered why the parkland dedication was doubled when the Regional Plan was adopted. Ms. Ryan said the increase was because of future plans to build more parks and communities which would be determined through community visioning programs. In terms of future plans, basically staff found it insufficient to meet the plan's outline under the Regional Plan. In addition, the Municipal Government Act (MGA) enabled this municipality to increase the parkland dedication. The 10% dedication measures up to other Provinces.

Throughout the four year public consultation, staff introduced, and the public supported, the idea to increase the parkland dedication from 5% to 10%. This was adopted by Council on June 26, 2006. Council, in reflecting on the implications on that parkland dedication requirement on some of its constituencies in the rural areas, directed staff to go back to the public with a series of three options

for possibly exempting or reducing the parkland dedication requirements for small scale, three lot subdivisions on a one time basis in the rural areas.

The first option is to exempt the parkland dedication requirement for three lots or less in the open space, rural resource and agricultural designations. This would include Musquodoboit Valley (agricultural designation), the interior lands (open space designation) and east of Lake Charlotte along the Eastern Shore (rural resource designation).

The second option is to reduce the parkland dedication requirements for three lots or less to 5% in those areas of open space, rural resource and agriculture.

The third option is to re-establish the previously explained exemption for three lot subdivisions on any parcel of land that was in existence prior to March 31, 1978. This would apply to a more expanded area: Musquodoboit Valley, interior lands, Eastern Shore East and to the rural commuter designation which surrounds the areas that are serviced with sewer and water.

One resident asked where in Sackville the yellow portion meets the white (shown on the slide). Ms. Ryan mentioned roughly around Lively Subdivision. Beaver Bank is within the yellow area except for the portions that are serviced with sewer and water.

The next steps are to receive feedback on these three options. There are a total of three meetings scheduled. A staff report will be brought to the Regional Planning Advisory Committee who will provide a recommendation to Regional Council on what course of action to take. Regional Council will decide whether or not to move forward with this amendment. If it does move forward, there will be a public hearing scheduled, at which time, members of the public, for and against, can present their case regarding the specific amendment tabled at that time.

3. Questions and Comments

One resident noticed that Option 3 was different than a couple of years ago when there was some land in Sackville included in the exemption. Ms. Ryan said that Option 3 wouldn't include Sackville or Cole Harbour. Any areas in the former Halifax County service were not.

The resident asked if the cash can, or will, be used for the Commonwealth Games if they go ahead. Mr. Bigelow explained that under the Municipal Government Act (MGA), the funds from cash in lieu have to go into a separate reserve account called the Parkland Reserve. These funds have to be used for recreational purposes. HRM uses it predominately for acquisition of lands for recreation purposes. The development of those lands are usually attributed to capital accounts. Council approves every expenditure from the account.

Teresa Scratch wondered if this would give the land owner of a larger piece of property the opportunity to subdivide into many smaller subdivisions to meet the exemption. Ms. Ryan said that it would be a one time exemption only.

Ms Scratch is in support of Option 1. There shouldn't be a need for parkland dedication for subdivisions of three lots or less.

One resident asked why Option 3 does not include Sackville. If there are only a few lots, why not leave it the way it was before the change. Ms. Ryan explained that this is mainly a rural issue. Particularly in areas serviced with sewer and water, the parkland is needed. Regional Council thought about an across the board exemption, but the vast majority of the funds coming for parkland acquisition is from these small three lot or less subdivisions. Therefore, this would eliminate a great portion of the funds available to the municipality to provide for community needs. Staff cannot regulate on the basis of family. Council felt it wanted to apply that regulation to those areas because that is where the vast majority of that type of subdivision activity is occurring. There had to be a cut off point. The resident mentioned that the majority occurs in Sackville and in that case funds have already been taken away. Ms. Ryan explained that staff's recommendation to Council will be based on a thorough analysis of the subdivision activity that is occurring in those areas. Staff will be in a better position when they return to Council. The resident would like to see Sackville included in the exemption.

Councillor Johns understands the increase from 5% to 10% in some of the more very rural areas in the municipality with subdivisions for family but he is concerned about some of the areas that are more directly within the area of the core of Halifax. He wondered if the green portion (shown on the slide) in Upper Sackville is Brushy Hill. If this is the case, the developer, during the Regional Plan, subdivided this property into seventy, ten-acre lots. Is this opening up a loop hole for developers to get around the exemption indirectly. How will this be addressed?

Councillor Johns is disappointed that although District 19 has been, through the Regional Plan, identified as a growth area, nothing has been shown during the presentation to show where monies have gone or proposed in District 19. Specifically around Brushy Hill, those lots have all been split off and are now for sale. He believes it would be a great benefit to the community to look at acquiring at least the lot that is directly adjacent to the Sackville River. There is fishing and trails along there. District 19 has been identified as a major growth area with major development. The monies haven't gone back into District 19 but into the general pot. District 19 should get what they are supposed to from the green area. When we've gone to the sales land account, specifically for Springfield Lake Rec Centre and another, we were unsuccessful both times in getting any money or anything for District 19 although it is a growth area with lots of development. He would like to see where some money is going back and would like some clarification on whether or not the green space (shown on slide) is Brushy Hill. Ms. Ryan said she would find out about Brushy Hill. The abuse factor can be prevented. When Council decides on what option is best, a date would be set. Councillor Johns mentioned that the set date needs to go back prior to the Regional Plan and there may even be a benefit to going back prior to amalgamation. Sharon Bond mentioned that if the option with the 1978 date is chosen then anyone who has subdivided property since that date is not eligible for that exemption. Legislatively, the effective date would be the date of the amendments to the Regional Plan. Councillor Johns has seen many developers abuse the process. He can see this happening again. He does like the fact that staff allows developers to start contributing money

directly to projects within the community. This is more beneficial than the money going into the capital land reserve that buys things for the core.

One resident believes that a parcel of land should be exempted if it is sold to a family member. Ms. Ryan explained that HRM has no legal authority to exempt someone solely on the basis of being a family member. Council sets a limit on what should be exempted, and that exemption has to be available to all land owners in a given area regardless of family relationship.

Walter Regan, on behalf of SRA, is in favour of maintaining the 10% and would prefer to get rid of the three lot exemption altogether. If the three lot exemption is allowed to expand and water and sewer is put into large acre lots, there will be no land left for parks as high density would occur. By increasing the three lot exemption, less tax is available. Keep it simple! Have 10% dedication and that's it. He sees this as a watering down of the Regional Plan. People fought hard to have the 10% dedication included in the Regional Plan. The exemption should be gone. Landlords in other provinces subdivide large areas and take money out of the province. Large developers have to pay 10% for large developments but medium developers can actually subdivide so they don't have to pay the 10% if this exemption is expanded. It should be 10% for everyone. Many areas must be protected. He would like to see Little Lake protected as a main point for the regional hot spot. He was surprised to see that the 10% dedication does not apply to roads and parkland. Again, the area for public views have been reduced. That exemption should be removed. The parkland dedication should be made bigger.

Ms. Scratch wanted to clarify that she believes in parkland dedication and is glad for the increase to 10%. She does not believe that the family who has a lot of land and wants to subdivide it into two or three lots for family members should have to suffer the penalty. In areas that are serviced with sewer and water that have the potential for higher density development would require a greater need for parkland in the community. She believes, in the rural areas that Option 1 addressed small lot developments. If you couldn't ensure protection against those that would abuse this type of amendment, then she could not support Option #1. She does support parkland dedication.

4. Adjournment

Ms. Ryan thanked everyone for coming and expressing their comments and concerns.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Attachment 4
Halifax West Public Information Minutes

Monday, March 19, 2007
Halifax West High School
7:00 p.m.

STAFF: Maureen Ryan, Senior Planner, Planning Services
Gail Harnish, Planning Services
Sharon Bond, Manager of Land Use & Compliance
Kelly Denty, Acting Supervisor, Planning Applications
Jan Skora, Coordinator, Real Property Planning
Kemp Macdonald, Parkland Planner

COUNCILLORS & PAC
PRESENT: Councillor Rankin

PUBLIC IN
ATTENDANCE: Approximately 18

The meeting commenced at approximately 7:05 p.m.

Opening remarks/Introductions/Purpose of meeting - Maureen Ryan

Ms. Maureen Ryan welcomed members of the public to our second public meeting regarding the proposed amendment to the Regional Plan with respect to parkland dedication requirements. We are here tonight to get your feedback on some possible options to exempt or reduce the parkland dedication requirements for small scale subdivisions, three lots or less, on an individual basis. This initiative arises from the direction of Regional Council in January of 2007. She reviewed the agenda for tonight's meeting.

Presentation of Proposal - Maureen Ryan

Ms. Ryan noted the first pillar of growth in the Regional Plan is to ensure that our development is environmentally sustainable by protecting the "back land" areas where we have had those large open space areas that shaped our growth and development over the past 250 years. The Regional Plan builds on this legacy of bringing in fourteen natural corridors that would provide interconnection onto green spaces. They are roughly comprised of crown lands, protected areas, a system of Provincial parks along the Eastern Shore at various locations along the Shubenacadie Canal, and a series of regional parks that came along with the regional development plan in the 1980's. We are proposing to develop and add to them so that we have a system of trails extending from the

Musquodoboit Valley to the Hubbards area. They were put together by the various regional trails associations. We are adding six new regional parks which include: the Porter's Lake Park, the Western Commons, the Birch Cove Lakes/Blue Mountain Park, Jacks Lake Park, Second Lake Park, and Feely Lake Park.

Ms. Ryan advised the second pillar of growth is to encourage the development of growth centres throughout the region to accommodate the additional 90,000 people living in the region in the next twenty years as forecasted under the Regional Plan. Generally these centres will be developed with a mix of housing types, shops, and facilities around transit facilities. They will be compact centres well designed with parks and pedestrian connections. You have a sense of place around these centres for entertainment and transportation and where their daily needs are met by having a variety of activities located in these approximately fifty centres that are located through all parts of the municipality.

Ms. Ryan indicated the third pillar of growth is to link these centres through a system of transit services of varying levels depending on the centre type.

Ms. Ryan noted the fourth pillar is to ensure this growth is fiscally sustainable and to ensure a strong economy by investing in further growth development around the harbour and business parks and centres.

Ms. Ryan advised that prior to the adoption of the Regional Plan in June of last year, landowners were required to dedicate 5% of the land being subdivided for parkland purposes. The landowners also had the option of providing cash-in-lieu or a combination of land and cash. There was a choice of options that could be explored for the parkland dedication. Generally, it is the practice of the Municipality to accept cash for small scale subdivisions consisting of five lots or less, however, we do take land in the small subdivisions where the land is strategically located to meet our park development needs. Lake or oceanfront property for example can make a great site for a community park.

Ms. Ryan indicated the former parkland dedication requirement was applied everywhere throughout the Municipality except in the Musquodoboit Valley area. The first three lots from any pre March 31, 1978 lot that existed in areas of the former County were also exempted from the parkland dedication requirements. That was the date when the former County started formally collecting parkland so a small exemption was created for any pre-existing lots. After the first three lots were created, no further exemption was allowed.

Ms. Ryan advised the parkland requirement was increased from 5 to 10% with the adoption of the Regional Plan. All previous exemptions were removed since there are designated growth centres located everywhere throughout the Municipality and these park spaces and trail systems are needed to achieve the growth strategy outlined under the Regional Plan.

Ms. Ryan indicated the parkland dedication also represents the primary source of funding to acquire lands in the strategic locations for regional parks which the Municipality wants to put in place. As

mentioned previously, we are also adding the fourteen natural corridors and regional trails to connect the green space in the interior of the Municipality. The parkland dedication program is intended primarily for land acquisition and the assembly of needed parkland that will service the centres in the outlined areas.

Ms. Ryan displayed in table format the amount of money generated from January of 2003 to the end of February, 2007. Historically we were collecting around \$500,000 a year and in 2006 that increased to \$649,000. That is in part due to the spike in subdivision activity we saw happening in the Municipality prior to the adoption of the Regional Plan.

Ms. Ryan indicated that from 2003 to 2006, approximately \$2,000,000 was generated. \$300,000 of this was collected over the seven month period after the Regional Plan was adopted. The majority of the revenue comes from small lot subdivision consisting of three lots or less. The percentage of funds generated from small lot subdivisions ranged from 35-64% annually from 2003 to 2006. Subdivisions consisting of three lots or less generated 57% of the revenue while subdivisions over three lots generated 43% of the revenue.

Ms. Ryan reviewed a list of some of the major projects funded under the park dedication program since 2003:

- \$435,000 on the regional trail system - this included sections along the Musquodoboit trail, the Beechville to Tantallon trail, the Eastern Passage trail, and the Cole Harbour Marsh trail
- \$155,000 for the purchase of lands in the Western Common
- \$300,000 for the Dartmouth artificial field construction
- \$200,000 for the construction of the ballfield on the Mainland Common
- \$190,000 for the Bill Bollong Memorial Park in Spry Harbour
- \$150,000 for the Lake Charlotte boat launch
- \$190,000 for parkland in the Lake Echo/Porter's Lake
- \$45,000 for parkland supporting our Cow Bay Moose
- \$100,000 for the acquisition of Micou's Island in St. Margarets Bay
- \$86,000 for the acquisition of lands in Prospect Head
- \$41,000 for the acquisition of lands at the Bedford Range Park

Ms. Ryan indicated there is still money in the account but that is going towards future plans for the continued acquisition and development of the regional trail system; the Birch Cove/Blue Mountain regional park; additional lands will be required in the Western Common in the next four to five years; and for the next twenty-five years, over the course of the life of the Regional Plan, we will be using it to acquire strategic lands in the growth centre.

Ms. Ryan advised Regional Council has asked us to share some options with you for feedback:

- Exempt the parkland requirement for three lots or less in the Open Space, Rural Resource, and Agricultural designations. That is basically the interior lands where we do not anticipate a great amount of subdivision occurring except along the 224 where you have frontage along the existing roads.

- Reduce the parkland dedication requirement for three lots or less to 5% in the Open Space, Rural Resource, and Agricultural designations.
- Re-establish the previous exemption for three lot subdivisions from any parcel of land that was in existence prior to March 31, 1978 within the Open Space, Rural Resource, Agricultural and Rural Commuter designations.

Questions and Comments

Mr. Phil Stewart, referencing the last slide, noted what they are suggesting in the new proposal is to not collect the 10% in the white areas on the map. He questioned if all those areas being exempted from the 10% fee would enjoy the funds being collected for parks. It was responded yes.

Mr. Stewart questioned why they would not be contributing to their own parks.

Ms. Ryan responded that's an excellent question in terms of fairness. We were asked to consider options. We chose options that would have the least amount of impact. She clarified it is an exemption for small lot subdivisions of three lots or less.

Mr. Stewart indicated he had a lot in the City. He planned on subdividing it and building a retirement home. He referenced an example where there was a subdivision twenty years ago and 10% was paid. If they are re-subdividing, they will pay another 10%. In this area, they are paying \$100,000 per lot.

Ms. Kelly Denty noted it depends on how the dedication was collected. If it was cash, we would collect it again. If it was in the form of land, it would not change.

Mr. Stewart indicated he was talking about the Clayton Park area. The land was originally subdivided and land was given for park. If he was to re-subdivide a piece of property again, he would pay that fee again.

Ms. Denty responded there should not be a dedication required in that instance.

Mr. Stewart indicated a friend of his paid when he subdivided a lot next to Shubie Park, even though Eric Whebbey gave away a lot of land to create that big subdivision.

Ms. Denty indicated that if the park came out of that original area of land, we should not have requested another dedication.

Mr. Stewart commented it seems they are exempting a large area. Many of them who already paid a fee for subdivision will have to pay again. The land values in the corridor are much higher.

An individual questioned whether the money collected every year goes into one big pool and how that pool is divided.

Ms. Ryan advised it goes into one large pool.

Mr. Jan Skora confirmed the money is collected in one account. The distribution of the account is based on several aspects. One of them could be that the land represents an opportunity to the area surrounding the development. It could be that it is so good for access to open space that it makes it a priority. They would go to Regional Council who would decide whether or not it is a good purchase.

An individual commented the people being exempted would enjoy those funds. Why would they not want to participate in parkland for their area? He had land in Crighton Park. He went to the development counter and was told he would have to pay 10% if he re-subdivided his property.

Ms. Denty indicated that once a land dedication has been given, they do not give again.

Mr. Stephen O'Laughlin said he recently went through the subdivision of a personal lot in Upper Tantallon on the water and was charged the 10%. He originally started the subdivision paperwork in August of 2004. His application sat on a desk at the Department of the Environment for four months which put him into the winter so the surveyors could not survey and because of that holdback he ended up paying 10% rather than 5%.

Ms. Denty responded it depends on the specifics of his application which we would have to go back and review. We reviewed many applications to determine whether or not they should pay 5 or 10%. We can look at his application in more specific detail and compare it to the other situations.

Mr. Alan MacAvoy questioned how this all came about. They have been at this Regional Plan for 5-6 years.

Ms. Ryan responded Regional Council had a goal and objective since 2003/04 to increase the parkland dedication from 5 to 10%. However, when the plan came into effect they had some members of the public on the Eastern Shore who came in and made an application for subdivision and found they had to pay what they felt was an exorbitant parkland dedication fee. Council requested staff to come back with some options for possible exemption in terms of the parkland dedication fee for small lot subdivision on a limited basis and to bring that out to the public for consideration. Council had not made a decision at this point. We are looking for feedback at this point.

Mr. MacAvoy indicated there is an unfairness built into that. Other people have started paying for it. It undermines the goals and principles of the Regional Plan started a few years ago.

Ms. Ryan advised one of the first things we are looking for is feedback. We will also be conducting a financial analysis of the impact of the potential exemptions.

An individual indicated he supported the previous speaker. We came through five years of principles and it is being changed already. He was a strong supporter of the 10% requirement as it is now because the ink is barely dry. Let's charge it fairly across HRM.

Mr. MacAvoy stated that was his point as well. They have not had a chance to see how it will work yet.

Richard... said he really liked parks and used them a lot. He had a property being subdivided for personal family use. He felt they should be left alone.

Ms. Ryan indicated we defer the collection of the funds until the final phase of the subdivision. His point is not to apply the parkland fee for subdivision within the family.

Ms. Ryan advised we would not have the ability to regulate on the basis of family relationship. If we exempted a family, we would have to exempt everybody else.

Richard indicated Ms. Ryan was saying we should collect the fee or the parkland when the development takes place when the permits are issued. He referenced Option 3.

Ms. Ryan noted the question being asked is "if his parcel has not been subdivided since 1978, was he eligible for this exemption"? If Council was to adopt Option 3 and if he was in one of the Rural Commuter designations, yes, he would be exempt.

It was questioned whether the figures represented a total capital collection or just the amount of cash collected. It was responded just the cash funds that were collected.

It was commented that some of the major developments would have dedicated land. Ms. Ryan concurred. The individual commented it appears the small owner is paying the bulk.

Ms. Ryan responded that was her point. Cash dedication comes from the small subdivisions. In the small subdivision there is no land to provide so we collect cash in those cases so we can amass funds to strategically acquire lands that benefit everybody.

It was commented the large developers are dedicating lands in their developments but are not contributing to the Regional Plan.

It was noted that in some cases we accept a combination of cash and land which is used to develop lands that are given to the Municipality. The developers are providing parkland to make their subdivisions more attractive but they are not contributing to the Regional Plan. Their underlying philosophy is that this is the only way the Municipality can acquire funds short of going out and

creating area rates. It is a direct way for people subdividing to provide infrastructure needed down the road to benefit the people living there. Everybody pays into it. The idea is that if you are subdividing, regardless of whether the subdivision is small or large, you are providing the parkland infrastructure needed to serve the people that are going to live there.

Ms. Alison McDonald, Nova Scotia Rehab, indicated the Regional Plan when it was presented in the past had a lot of vision and it was set up to provide a healthy Canada and quality access. It also provided access whether you are in urban or rural cities which she thought was very important. The point made about equality amongst the financial aspect of subdivision is important. It should not just rest on a small group of people. One of the questions she had is what assurance does HRM residents have that the Council will not seek to make further substantial changes to the Regional Plan every time somebody makes an application for change.

Ms. McDonald asked whether this amendment, if accepted, would adversely impact how much parkland and open space HRM can buy. If you look at how to attract people to come and work in Nova Scotia, one of the big reasons they come is for quality of life and the ability to go out and enjoy a healthy lifestyle and walk and enjoy nature.

Mr. Don Odegard questioned when the three lot rule got dropped. It was responded when the first notice of intention to adopt was placed in the newspaper on April 29, 2006.

Mr. Odegard asked why the three lot rule was not talked about at any of those meetings that were happening prior to the adoption of the plan. There were discussions about increasing the fee from 5 to 10% but never the three lot rule.

Ms. Ryan responded what we have done is consistently advise the public at the counter and in public meetings about the proposal for the Regional Plan. There were some 200 proposed changes being brought forward for adoption. She was sure the impact of this exemption would have been discussed by our staff. Council adopted a goal that was endorsed by the public to increase the parkland dedication requirement from 5 to 10%.

An individual stated she fully endorsed the lady at the back. Sometimes Halifax misses the boat. It should be producing revenue. In terms of the Birch Cove Lakes area, the City should look at developing that into an area that could enhance the tourism business. Halifax is a direct flight to the UK and Europe and people are looking for places. If you get good facilities for things such as kayaking, etc., they could produce revenue instead of taxes and development. In Corner Brook they developed that and have people coming over from the UK. They have direct flights going there on Friday and coming back on Tuesday. If they see it and come for a holiday, it might encourage them to stay. She would like to see somebody move to do something like that rather than taxing everybody to the hilt.

Mr. Stewart questioned whether the 148 lots created from March onwards were rural lots. Ms. Ryan responded yes, noting they were from the Eastern Shore East and Musquodoboit Valley areas.

Mr. Stewart commented that's a fairly substantial cash flow they could be foregoing. The only area left with major expansion is the rural areas. With the adoption of the plan, Council was to charge everybody. What are the merits?

Ms. Ryan responded we were under a significant amount of pressure to bring back a report to Council in quick order. It was an early analysis of data that it had merit to explore the options. There were 148 lots created between 2003 and 2006. When they were looking at the records for cash collection, they found that district is also one of the areas where they were collecting a substantial amount of cash for parkland dedication and seeing the expenditure of it in the way of boat launches, etc.

Mr. Stewart questioned whether any of this money goes towards the facilities.

Mr. Skora responded it might, subject to the decision of Regional Council.

Ms. Ryan noted the parkland fund is mainly required for the acquisition of watershed lands. There are other methods to use for the development of parkland.

Mr. Stewart asked what merits they looked at in terms of recommending Option 2.

Ms. Ryan responded they were asked to bring forward options. We brought forward what we thought would have the least amount of impact on the Municipality. Our analysis to-date is telling us it will have a great impact, so we will be advising Council accordingly.

Ms. Ryan indicated we are hoping the majority of the subdivision in the next twenty-five years will be in the fifty designated sites. Subdivision development will take a different form in years to come. Any exemptions will have an impact on the long-term growth of the Municipality to meet its intentions towards parkland.

An individual stated he would support Option 3 as this affects him personally. He had forty-three acres on Lawrencetown Lake. He can only subdivide that property once in half. There is a moratorium on development. He thought there should be some exemptions for the little guy.

Another individual said he also supported Option 3. He would like to see the dollars attached to the rest of the options and the amount of land from developers. He asked if their land is staying in their own developments? Also, who makes the choice whether it stays in their own development or if it's cash.

Ms. Denty responded the choice is between the developer, the development officer, and the parkland planner.

Mr. Kemp Macdonald advised the choice now rests with the Municipality. Prior to this by-law coming into effect, the choice was with the developer. In cases where the developer gave money, subdivisions have gone without parkland and they stay that way.

Councillor Rankin commented staff has been very diplomatic in responding to inquires about where the issue came from. Staff did not initiate this process; it was councillors, including himself and several other rural councillors. He represented an urban area as well as a suburban area so he had to try and find a balance. What he was hearing tonight was very useful to him. Councillors were thinking about the undue burden being placed on some people. That is not exclusive to rural areas. That also applies to urban areas. There were concerns about inequity in terms of the date.

Councillor Rankin indicated the other option is the status quo. Council has the option of saying not to proceed based on what they hear at public sessions and the financial analysis. There is a fair amount of money being captured from three lots and under. It takes a fair bit of money for acquisition in terms of trails. That would be part of the impact. If Council did proceed, they may be exposed to criticism at the public hearing.

Ms. Ryan commented she was hearing the two sides tonight which will be captured in our report to Council. Council will have to balance all points of view.

Mr. Stewart noted a tremendous amount of land was created.

Ms. Wendy Peters indicated she was trying to subdivide a lot in Cole Harbour. She asked how she could find out if there was a parkland subdivision in her community.

Mr. Stewart suggested reducing the amount of the fee to 5% as a one time deal for a subdivision under three lots. In terms of adopting the Regional Plan, there were so many changes that he did not think people were aware of a lot of the details. He referenced the individual for the Sheppards Island development in Dartmouth who had to go through a bunch of hoops.

Ms. Ryan indicated the Regional Plan is meant to be a flexible changing document and it is that way so that it can be relevant, but it is also a democratic process.

An individual commented he had no vested interest. The price of property has increased substantially. Prices of land are increasing and he did not feel too bad for developers.

An individual asked if there are any restrictions about what can be used in a subdivision.

Ms. Ryan noted we do have criteria as to what constitutes useable land under the regional subdivision by-law. If you have areas designated as wilderness, she felt it was important to pay a lot of attention to what it consists of.

Mr. Macdonald advised the new plan gives us a better opportunity to get water access.

Ms. Ryan indicated there is a whole program of acquiring lands within subdivisions to serve the neighbourhood and the district but there are some cases when adequate parkland is in existence and we try to acquire cash. There are requirements established under the new Subdivision By-law that clearly define what constitutes good parkland. Under the Regional Plan under the open space subdivision concept we have the ability to say a maximum of 60% of the parcel is to be set aside for open space.

Mr. McAvoy stated from the health perspective, that is very important. Almost 50% of our budget goes to health care. Having parks across HRM benefits everybody in the long run.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m.

Attachment 5
Eastern Shore Public Information Minutes

March 26, 2007
Eastern Shore Community Centre
7:00 p.m.

STAFF IN

ATTENDANCE: Maureen Ryan, Hilary Campbell, Cathy Spencer, Kelly Denty, Sharon Bond and Raylene MacLellan.

COUNCILLOR

PRESENT: David Hendsbee, Councillor

MEMBERS OF

THE PUBLIC: Approximately 40 People

PRESENTATION/OVERVIEW

Maureen Ryan thanked and welcomed everyone for joining the meeting, then introduced Councillor Hendsbee. She explained the reason why the meeting took place. The HRM Parkland Dedication requirements last June when it went into affect, and council decided to bring forth then realized The Regional Plan adopted dedication requirements

Ms. Ryan gave a brief overview of the overall growth strategy for HRM as contained in the Regional Plan. She then discussed the purpose of the parkland dedication program and how it has been used.

Ms. Ryan then explained the three options for consideration to recommend that HRM amend the plan to allow an exemption for small lot subdivisions. The first option is to exempt parkland dedicaiton requirements for three lots or less in the open space rural resource and agricultural designations. Which includes lands along the eastern shore east area, extending from Lake Charolette, the Musquodoboit Valley and the interior lands which I talked about which is the open space and natural resource area. The second option is to reduce the parkland dedication requirement from 5 to 10 percent in those areas, the rural resource, open space, and agricultural designations. The third option is to re-establish the previous exemption for three lots subdivisions from any parcel of land that was in existence prior to March 31, 1978 within the open space, rural resource and agricultural designations and adding also the rural commuter designations which extend along the Eastern Shore ,Porter's Lake, Lake Echo area, West, Hammonds Plains, St. Margaret's Bay, and the Prospect Penninsula, Chebucto Penninsula area and Carol's Corner, Enfield, Fall River.

Ms. Ryan explain what the next steps are: To get feedback from everyone who attended the meeting on the options that I presented through the meeting. Then a report will be brought to Regional Council Planning Advisory Committee who will then inform Regional Council on matters pertaining to the Regional Plan. Then to ultimately bring a report back to Regional Council and then Regional Council then will decide to move forward with an amendment to the Regional Plan based on the feedback it receives from the public and the analysis it receives from staff on the implications of the options, and if Council does decide to move forward with an amendment, a public hearing would be held at which time the public would have a say whether they were for or against any specific proposed amendments at that time. Councillor Hendsbee would like to address ...

Councillor Hendsbee, welcomed everyone to the public to discuss the Regional Plan and the Parkland Dedication. Councillor asked everyone how effective our communication was to get the public to attend the meeting. Councillor asked for a show of hands to how many people have received the public advertisement from the newspaper...how many people my article in the newsletter, and how many people got a phone call or email. It is important that we hear from people at the meeting.

Ms. Ryan thanked Councillor Hendsbee, and concluded by saying other public meeting have not been well attended. However, we did receive valuable insight and great feedback. We had one in Sackville High on March 5, 2007, we received great feedback from the few who did attend that meeting. This is opportunity for people to have dialogue. We heard difference of opinions, some said that Parkland Dedication is important from all areas of the municipality and no one should be exempted it is needed, it is limited and we need more parks. We also heard people say that there should be some form of exemption for family owners, we also heard that the municipality has no ability to regulate on the basis of family, and can only regulated on the basis of who walks in the door, it discriminatory to regulate in the favor of families. What applies to families, applies to everyone, every land owner the same. At the end of these meeting we started to hear comments from the public that there may be opportunities, and to look at options for some sort of exemption. To summarize, attendance has been slow but dialogue has been good. We anticipate going back to Council in May

Ms. Ryan asked if anyone has anything that they would like to share. What are your thoughts on the options.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Mr. Hubert Roy, ... I am in protest of how soon this can be turned around.

Some mechanical equipment starts up.

Our daughter owns 18 acres of land ... We have been trying to get a piece of itwe have been protesting to take that down. ...I am not for it, not in the rural areas. It doesn't make any sense. When I look at your maps, I see what is going on the 80% of your money is going back to Halifax/Dartmouth, Bedford and Sackville. How where are we at in this picture? We have a trail.

I see no more. Our area always seems to keep getting shafted. Our Hall and Community Centre have playgrounds which they raised money themselves. Where is the rhyme or reason? It is not a debate.

Ms. Ryan stated that these are excellent points and comments. We are obligated under the law. If the property is subdivided there is a period in whichwe don't have the ability to reimburse. But we do have for individual subdivision applications questions that you have...I have Sharon Bond, Kelly Denty, and a few development officers to whom will individual discussions on your properties specific application.

Mr. Terry Cassivechia, Lawrencetown, I am not sure if we qualify, I cordially invite you to come to our community centre. I have taken an interest in the local community and my question is ...I am against this. I think that it is a terrible heavy tax and it is a burden on the individual land owners and indications are that the population is not growing it is declining, this information was released in the Mail Star last week. I went to the Regional Plan meetings, I had my say, and people were very polite about it but it didn't really effect anything that I wanted to see in there. I think that a private road is another issue. It is the only way for some of the odd shaped properties to be accommodated with building permits and so on. It is stumbling from 5% to 10% with no exemption is a tremendous tax burden on my family. I jointly own property with my mother and my question is her home is on it and technically I own half of it. In order to separate the property out this would be a heavy tax hit for my mother as a senior citizen at 10% of the value of her home. My take is that there should be a 5 % on subdivisions of five lots or more is livable and there should be some sort of creative thought given to HRM parkland foundation (Like the QEII foundation). My concern is the heavy tax burden on the land, and owners, and property taxes have gone up for my father for him to pay those taxes on all of those properties that have been there for since the 1800's and they are wood lots, they may not have proper road access. My question is my family inherit this land and they want to keep the family farm which they do, technically this is subdivision, and it is on water...and this is going to be a tremendous hit, and the same with my mother and I. So my concern is if I don't have the exemptions in there, this plan doesn't do a lot to address affordable land. I think that the Plan should really try to accommodate the common person, and that starts with affordable land. This 10% tax increase doesn't seem fair balanced, there should be exemptions in there for family farms. My hope is that there will be one Lawrencetown. I understand that we have to fund these parks. I would welcome a parkland, I think that there is a need there, and try to reduce the tax back to a 5% with exemptions in it. The resident asked are you going to be polite and listen to me and tell me if I am going to be exempt? He felt there should be an exemption for 5 lots or less and a reduction to 5% for larger subdivisions over 5 lots.

Ms. Ryan , I would like to give you all the answers that you need tonight. Your questions should be directed to Sharon at the end of the meeting. Thank you very much for your feedback. We have heard and we are recording, and this information will be brought back to Council. I have a question of clarification to you. You said that you would like to see an exemption for 5 lot subdivisions for 5% or did you mean, anything over 5 lots?

Mr. Cassivechia, Lawrencetown, For clarification, if a person has a subdivision of 5 lots or more, 5%. This 5% would go a long way. (hard to hear the speaker).

Ms. Ryan, thanked Mr. Cassivechia for his concerns.

Mr. Bob McFarlane, In 1959 I built several hundred houses in Dartmouth and in 1969-1970 I moved to Porter's Lake and purchased a bunch of land which I thought at the time that I purchased this land that it would be able to support me in my old age, which is happening to me now. In two years I will be 70 years old. Anyway the older I get, I become more concerned about the younger people. I have have 8 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild and I have just completed in the last couple of years a subdivision in Porter's Lake and running into the cost that I have incurred, engineering etc., for me to provide a lot to each grandchild is going to cost me somewhere between \$60-75, 000.00 at the way the requirements are for HRM. I don't want to get off the track here, I think the park thing is very important but I would like to through more question on the floor, What about all of the Crown Land. Why can't some of the Crown Land be used for parkland?

Ms. Ryan, asked John Charles to answer this question.

Mr. John Charles, stated that the Crown has what we know as Integrated Resource Management. They have three classifications of land C-1, C-2, and C-3. C-3 is probably the most equivalent to our types of parkland. You have Lawrencetown, beach, Porter's Lake areas such as that are parks that have developed over the years by the Province. Now in terms of C-1 land which is forestry land, the Province is not interested especially around Porter's Lake, there are people that are still involved in forestry, and the Crown's reaction to that would say no that land is reserved for forestry it is not reserved for public use for recreation. So that is the reaction at this point. Maybe in the future they will look at it differently, but right now the forestry values are at its highest values, and certainly the people that are in forestry each have their lively hoods supported.

Mr. MacFarlane, so basically, what you are saying is that you don't want the Crown Land, you want our land?

Mr. Charles, No I didn't say that. I said that the Crown which is public land all Crown Land is public land. The Crown Land Administrators from the Department of Natural Resources looked at the land, talked with the people and said that there are some areas that have the highest values for the ongoing production for forest product, and certainly in your area which is the Porter's Lake I assume, their values have been forestry related, and I can certainly respect that. In the future that may change, but right now the highest value is forestry related.

Ms. Ryan, just to clarify, yes there is a vast area of open space but not all of it park. There are other new groups of values for that area, and some is for resource development, and some is designated for protected areas, but not all.

Mr. McFarlane, Something else has come to my mind, I was involved with the Dilman family from Middle Musquodoboit. They got me to fly equipment into Falls Lake. Falls Lake is about 25-30 miles north/east of here. I flew (tenting) gear in for them each year, and I asked them why they

didn't build a camp, and their reply was it is Crown Land. We did have a camp on the land and they came in burned it down on us. If Crown Land is for public use, why can't a person use Crown Land?

Who would I get an answer to that question to?

A gentleman answers, first of all, I think that your situation may have changed since the last time that you flew in there - it has improved now the Crown does provide leases.

Mr. McFarlane, What?

A gentleman answers, They will provide leases for the various camps that you are talking about.

Mr. McFarlane, How do you get a lease?

A gentleman answers, Well I would suggest that you contact the Crown Lands Administration.

Mr. McFarlane, Yeah, but don't they pick so many out of a hat?

A gentleman answers, Probably, yup, because...(interrupted)

Mr. McFarlane, its pretty hard to get a camp lease. I have a camp lease in Porters Lake, but its very, very hard to get them. And I understood the last time that I was talking to some of the lease people, that they were not doing that anymore. I'm sorry, People, I do not want to get off of this Park thing - but, I'm so mixed up here, I don't know where I was....

Ms. Ryan, No - you're doing great sir. Just great.

Mr. McFarlane, I just, I'm concerned that our young people can not afford a lot with what the HRM, whoever, I would like to put names on it but, I can never get a name. I just call it HRM. HRM has created a monster here, our young people can not afford to buy lots here in the county - thanks to HRM. Can somebody answer, answer me why this was brought about?

Ms. Ryan, markets being markets, there are all sorts of factors there is no way of telling you. I mean with building supplies and materials...(interrupted)

Mr. McFarlane, I'm talking about just the lots - if they can afford to buy a lot right now, the only way a young person can buy a lot is if an old public road went by it and, and they were able to get access off of that road - then they can probably buy it for 20 or 40 thousand dollars. But if you have to build a road over a piece land and consider to try and sell a lot off of it - you have to have 75 thousand dollars for the lot in order to keep the county happy. Its not county anymore, wish it was, in order to keep HRM happy with their engineers and there parkland and everything else. You got to have 75 thousand dollars for your lot. How can a young couple, come up with - no wonder they are going to Alberta.

Crowd applauds. I guess that I have taken my time.

Ms. Ryan, thank you very much sir. Very good points. Councillor Hendsbee - do you have anything that you would like to add?

Counsellor Hendsbee, Just a comment about the parkland and crown land. I believe that in the Regional Plan with Porter's Lake Regional District Park is on crown land across from, you Darrell, right, across the lake that's the site that they are looking at.

Ms. Ryan, you sir, you seemed to have had your hand up for quite some time. Nope., my mistake. Ok, you ma'am.

My name is Martina Noielle - I am from Head of Jeddore and I am concerned about how the HRM comes up with assessment figures, how do you assess land? We sold one third of our lot and it was assessed to almost the same value as the whole lot, so we called and we asked - well, how is this possible? And we talked to the lady and she said, well, you know there is waterfront and blah, blah, , blah. There was no waterfront, so no one ever looked at the plan. And while we were talking and all of a sudden she said, oh you only sold the lot for half of the assessment amount. And she said, Oh you sold it to Lopez and all of a sudden the assessment amount dropped by half. So now we pay, and I'm glad about that, but it still makes me - you know, wonder - how is that possible, I mean - is this the criteria that to know this and that is not know this, and what is the Lopez anyways and what is the not Lopez.

Ms. Ryan, well actually I can tell you that Halifax Regional Municipality, HRM does not assess properties, that's done by Service NS and Municipal Relations, the province. There is an appeal process, that is if you disagree with the value that they placed on your land - there is a formula, they look around the surrounding market - most recent sales and there are a number of factors brought into it. But, I'm not the person to answer those questions - that's beyond my area of expertise - its with the provincial assessors with the department of NS and Municipal affairs. Do you have any further questions, ma'am?

My name is Monique Porter, and I have a question - why is it only people that are sub-dividing land that are paying for parkland? Why is that, that people who are selling homes, why are they not paying a portion of this parkland. Like why is it not divided between everybody?

Ms. Ryan, the reason for that is because the person reselling their home has already paid for the parkland dedication - through that previous subdivision that has happened. The premise under the Municipal Government Act, I mean, the Municipality can look at a taxation system - where everybody across the board pays for parkland, but the idea is that under the Municipal Government Act - if you're sub-dividing and you're adding new people to the area, you are adding more pressure for requirements for service and the idea is that the sub-divider would pay for the services that are required to service the people that you are building for. (constant interruption) If we could keep just one question at a time please to the floor. The idea is that yes, the whole of the municipality does pay for parkland improvement and development but, the

parkland dedication program is designed to enable people who sub-divide lands to pay for the services that are required to service the people that are going to be added to the area. So, people who already own a home have paid indirectly for that parkland dedication process historically. So we don't double tax or double count, we can't go back after we collected parkland and recollect again. Sir, you have a question in the back?

My name is Bob Reche from East Chezzetcook and I found that in our community we had parkland set aside, just for that purpose and we keep mainly stacking this thing that we are getting – they're even shutting down parks. There are playgrounds in my area, that there is no funding for – we can't keep them up. The pea gravel is gone, the equipment is gone and yet you're still looking for this 5% tax, every time someone subdivides a little piece of property. (someone shouts out 10%) Well, then 10%, as far as the natural resources, we looked at buying some land back from the Dept. of Natural Resources, along the rail bed – property that there was no way that they would ever use it. Not possible. They took 150 feet of it away. We only wanted 10 feet and it was like they were doing us a favor, they wouldn't even, think about selling us that little bit of 10 feet. And here we were going to put four lots right on the road – sell them. And he said look, my hands are tied, we can not do it. We can't start something like that. And just getting back to what I was saying, when I started out my first home – I paid 18 hundred dollars for my lot and that was only about 20 years ago. On a piece of land that my uncle was able to sell me. Now, my kids have to pay 40 to 70 thousand dollars for the same type of piece of property. Something went desperately wrong. And if it keeps going the way it is – we might as well all send our kids to the city. Thank you.

Ms. Ryan, thank you for your comments. Are there any other comments, questions?

Hi, my name is Darrell Wilson – and we're making a final approval on a lot of land there, my wife's mother gave us and we postponed making the dedication fee – till we came to this meeting. Is there any point of us postponing that any further? Or should we make the payment now? Is there any chance of an exemption? It's a single lot and we just not sure what we should be doing.

Ms. Ryan, I'm wondering if you wanted to contact (the rest not clear) What stage are you in?

Mr. Wilson, we are at the final approval stage.

Ms. Ryan, you are at the final approval stage, for one lot and you're wondering when or if you should make the payment or not.

Kelly Denty, I have an answer for that – we are going back to council in June to have a question, so providing that you don't have a sale for that property that is pending. You can hold off and wait for this process to finish, this is the final part before we can go back to council and make our recommendations. So, I would wait if I were you. When we take it back to council, they will make the decision.

Mr. Wilson, one more question – you said that when it goes back to council, then there will be a Public Hearing? Then what are these?

Ms. Denty, these are just for input – to get your feedback on the options that we are going to council with. This is just a consultation – to get your ideas.

Ms. Ryan, actually, maybe I should clarify- there is a process, a statutory process – this is law under the Municipal Government Act, we have to follow the letter of the law, cause there are rights and wrongs and there is Public Hearing that council requires. We are just agents of council – to get feedback but it is council that makes the decision and it is council that requires a hearing.

Audience member, are you a councillor?

Ms. Ryan, no I'm not a councillor.

A lot of mumbled talking – not able to understand what is being said.

Ms. Sharon Bond was talking about council. (but not able to understand what she is saying about the process of being a counselor).

Mumbled talking for about 5 mins.

Ms. Ryan, if I might, it's not for me to say, how council will decide or what council will do, there are a lot, there are a lot of , please, if I might finish sir (man says no) just a second, (more interruption from same man) there are 24 councillors (man interrupts again – mumbled) absolutely. Well we are providing you with the proper information about the process.

(There is a man and a woman talking and some laughing – unable to hear)

Ms. Ryan, there is a public hearing process and you will have access and the ability to influence council and I encourage you to come out to the public hearing. If you could sir, you have a question or a comment ma'am?

The woman, again it goes back to percentages. As I saw on your map earlier – all the heavy development and more like from Dartmouth and the South Shore, so, there is not a whole lot going on, on the Eastern Shore, but, yet we are all still paying the 10%.

Ms. Ryan, which map are you referring to?

The woman, it is the one with all the parks, etc. Right there. Like, I mean all the development is from Dartmouth down. And that is what you claim a high percentage and none is on the Eastern Shore. I can understand, yes they, paid the percentage but to me the percentage and where you look where all the development is – its not right this way.

Ms. Ryan, do you have any comments on that John?

Mr. Charles, what's the other slide there Maureen of? That's referring to a map showing a cluster of lots representing areas where parkland expenditures have been made in areas outside the eastern shore. That's around 350 thousand (Ms. Ryan corrects, 600 thousand) That's 600 thousand right there. So, that's not too bad. (crowd interruption) So, I can see where that lady would get the misconception that no money is being used in the Eastern Shore area.

The woman, I'm not saying that there is no money being spent – but, what I am saying is that we should not be paying the same percent each – as the areas that are getting the bulk of it.

Mr. Charles, I guess that would qualify as all of it for one year. And, you know, some years, some communities really benefit. For example, Maureen has mentioned, McCou's Island (pointing to an island in St. Margaret's Bay). This is the only 23 acre island in St. Margaret's Bay – in all of St. Margaret's Bay right now – there is 2.5 acres of public land, that's it in St. Margaret's Bay. Sorry but it was developed years ago. Now a community group down there has raised 170 thousand dollars from the community, the Crown is putting in 500 thousand and they've asked HRM from the parkland reserve for 100 thousand. Now that's a big chunk of money, but, they haven't benefited in St. Margaret's Bay, in the long term with any public land. So, this is, this is our chance to make it even. If it's an island, it's accessible by boat and it's also accessible at low tide. You can't drive your car to the island, but you can walk there. What I am saying is that this is an 23 acre island – right now in St. Margaret's Bay and there is only 2.5 acres of public land. It's very close to the mainland. I don't think the people there want a causeway there right now. But, they have been going there and boating out there for years now, and again, they are in our region and they will benefit this year and other people have benefitted in other years. That's the way that it works.

Man in audience, what about the poor guy that can't afford a boat?

Mr. Charles, well as long as he's got a watch and knows when it is low tide – he can walk there and back. Laughing from audience.

Man in audience, so is this a done deal? More mumbled chatter....

Ms. Ryan, Now this is what's happened in the past, in Porter's Lake and the boat launch – funds have been reserved for negotiating acquisitions and the money has been allocated to those areas, those have been the only two pending ones, oh, and this one here – that is pending as well. But its pending negotiations – not pending application of public funds. When council says yes, we move forward.

Man in audience, with regards to the family estates being subdivided – I agree with Mr. Cassivechia – there must be some exception to family lands – maybe a lesser percentage, there has to be some exception. You can't have a piece of land that I am going to give to my children

and I want to subdivide it – and then just give it to them and be taxed on it at 10%. And the process that was made here doesn't seem to be fair. We are past that stage now, we are having meetings now after the horse is out of the barn. Why weren't the meetings held prior to the increase in the tax percentage? We are paying enough taxes now and we are upset. The communication was not made very clearly. Very few people knew about this meeting – if they did, we should have been able to pack a stadium, maybe this is an opportunity for you people to have your ideas heard. To put it in the paper and put it in an email – this is just not enough. The council needs to be more vocal in this issue.

Ms. Ryan, thank you – we have another question over here sir and then I will get back to you.

Man in audience, when was the 10% approved?

Ms. Ryan, the 10% was approved with the adoption of the Regional Plan last June 27. It was adopted with some 200 other changes in the municipality. The proposal to increase the park dedication requirements to 10% was presented to the public early on in the process and throughout the consultation.

Man in audience, you know that tax paper we get every year, this type of issue should also be mentioned in there.

Ms. Ryan, there is a question in the back and then I will come back to this person in the front that has been waiting awhile.

An individual in the audience, Like the gentleman over there, I went through this whole process and paid the parkland dedication fee. I am just tired that council speaks for us – without us having the opportunity to tell them how we feel. I know that this went through council. (Mumbled talking. Unable to understand). I have been to a few different meetings and I always leave my phone number – there should be something set up so that I am contacted when new issues arise.

Ms. Ryan, thank you. I want to give this gentleman a chance – he has been waiting patiently a while. Your name please?

Corey White, I called transport this morning to see the ins and outs of this parkland dedication....(mumbled talking, unable to make out). My tax assessment has gone up by almost 40 thousand dollars in the past few years. (Mumbled talking, unable to understand).

Ms. Ryan, thank you very much.

Two women in audience talking back and forth, the conversation is too low to hear.

Ms. Ryan, that's a good point.

(About 10 minutes of mumbled – inaudible talking).

Ms. Ryan, any further comments or questions? Then, I will thank you for your input – there was very good feedback from this session and I will adjourn this meeting. Have a good night.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:50 p.m.

Attachment 6
Cole Harbour Place Public Information Minutes

April 26, 2007
Cole Harbour Place
7:00 p.m.

Staff: Maureen Ryan,
Sophia Arbeau
Hilary Campbell
Kelly Denty
Sharon Bond
Rob Jahncke

Councillor Present: Becky Kent

Public in Attendance: 2

The meeting commenced at approximately 7:10 p.m.

Opening remarks / Introductions / Purpose of meeting:

Maureen Ryan thanked everyone for attending. Ms. Ryan gave a brief overview of Council's direction for public feedback. As well as explained the growth strategy for HRM parkland dedication. Ms. Ryan outlined the options that Council has asked us to consider.

Overview of planning process:

These are demonstrated in four pillars of growth:

1st Pillar: To ensure that our development is environmentally sustainable by protecting the natural environment. That includes those large blocks of Crown land that you see in the green area here and that have sustained and shaped our communities over the past 250 years. And the plan purposes to build on that by adding 14 natural corridors by maintaining connectivity by connecting those green spaces. And they are also purposing to add a regionally significant trail that has been identified by the various trails associations through the Halifax Regional Developmental Agency that would maintain connectivity to the back land areas for those who walk, fly kites and enjoy the natural features of Halifax Regional Municipality.

We are also purposing to add 6 new Regional Parks, the first of which, in order of no priority, just in order of geography – order of no priority in terms of implementation.

The 6 new Regional Parks are: The Porter' Lake Regional Park, The Western Commons, The Birch Cove Lakes / Blue Mountain Park, Jacks Lake Park, Second Lake Park and Feely Lake Park (in Middle Sackville).

2nd Pillar: This is to encourage the development of future growth in a series of 50 growth centers located in HRM for the anticipated 90 thousand additional people that will be living in HRM by the year 2026. In these centers, we are hoping to see them developed with a mix of housing types, shops, facilities, things that will help sustain vibrant communities and complete communities that people can access service within, and live within simultaneously. And to accomplish this these centers will have to be well designed with things like parks and pedestrian facilities that provide good gathering spaces for people and keeps the communities interconnected, so people can walk with ease from facility to facility; and home to place of employment.

3rd Pillar: This is to link those centers with a Regional Transit and Transportation system that would maintain connectivity throughout the region.

4th Pillar: This is to ensure that this growth is both fiscally sustainable, well, that is fiscally sustainable, so that we can ensure that we maintain a strong and vibrant economy.

Presentation of Proposal

So moving to the Parkland Dedication Program, prior to the adoption of the Regional Plan, land owners were required to dedicate 5% of their land that they were purposing to subdivide for parkland purposes. The land owner also had the also had the option to provide a cash to the municipality, where there was already sufficient parkland or if there was no suitable parkland in the area, that was available. HRM would also accept cash, where the subdivision development was too small to acquire enough parkland. Generally, it was, it has been the practice of the municipality to accept cash or small scale subdivision, those subdivisions that consist of 5 lots or less, in lieu of parkland – that's where the Parkland Dedication funding has been coming for the development of new parks throughout the region. But we do take land in smaller subdivisions, where there is an opportunity to acquire land in a very strategic location that benefits the community, like water front access, access on the ocean or on a lake – that's very strategic and needed for the benefit of all.

So the former Parkland Dedication Requirement applied everywhere throughout the HRM except that it did not apply in the Musquodoboit Valley. We also had an exemption for the first three lots from any parcel of land that had not been subdivided since March 31, 1978. Let me explain this, those pre-1978 parcels; that were created before the former Halifax County Municipality formalized a Parkland Acquisition Program, we grand fathered those. We said that if you come in, you know, with a lot in the future that had not been subdivided since March 31, 1978 we would grant you an exemption for the first 3 lots you are purposing to subdivide. Anything after that, we would require, you know, a dedication of 5% of the area of land being subdivided for lots. And, after you got your first exemption of 3 lots – there would be no further exemption

allowed. Once the parcel was altered – it was no longer considered – pre- 1978. And there was no further exemption permitted.

Moving forward, the Parkland Dedication Program was increased from 5 to 10% last spring with the adoption of the Regional Plan. All of those exemptions were removed. And the reason being is that we had all of these designated growth center; in which we want to see the development of these facilities – so additional parkland was thought to be needed to offset the needs and affects of the increasing densities of these centers. And we also need the Parkland Dedication Program, since it represents the primary source of funding to acquire those big Regional Parks and natural corridors and trails that are purposed for the development of the benefit of the region.

So let's take a look now at the revenue side of the program, historically, where we'd be. So this table here shows the amount of revenue that was collected each year from 2003 – 2006. Historically, we have been collecting around 500 thousand a year for Parkland acquisition. In 2006, this rose to 629 thousand dollars, this is partly to the increase in Parkland Dedication requirements in 2006 – but it is also due to a spike in subdivision activity that had occurred before the Regional Plan was adopted. From 2003 – 2006, the Parkland Dedication Program generated approximately 2 million dollars, 300 thousand dollars of this was collected over a 7 month period, after the Regional Plan was adopted. So the majority of the revenue generated comes from the small lot subdivisions, consisting of 3 lots or less. This line shows the percentage of funds generated from small lot subdivisions ranged from 34% - 63% from 2003 – 2006. Overall, subdivisions consisting of 3 lots or less, generated 57% of that revenue, while the remainder of the lots over 3 lots, constituted 43% of the revenue collected.

So turning now to the other side of the equation, where have we been expending this Parkland Dedication revenue?

Regional Trail System	\$435,000.00
Purchase of Land in the Western Commons	\$155,000.00
Artificial field in Dartmouth	\$300,000.00
Construction of ball field on the Mainland Commons	\$200,000.00
Bill Bolob Memorial Park in Spry Bay	\$190,000.00
Land for a boat launch in Lake Charlotte	\$150,000.00
Parkland in Lake Echo / Porter's Lake (not Regional Park)	\$190,000.00
Land supporting the Cow Bay moose	\$ 45,000.00
Acquisition of Land on McCou Island in St. Margarets Bay	\$100,000.00
Acquisition of Land on Prospect High Head	\$ 86,000.00
Acquisition of Land in the Bedford Range Park	\$ 41,000.00

So, we have seen acquisition of lands throughout the municipality - it is not in any one district, in any one place - its regional benefit, its region wide from Eastern Shore to St. Margaret's Bay. As I mentioned previously, future plans are for the continued acquisition and development of a regional trail system. One very key priority also, is the Birch Cove Lakes / Blue Mountain Regional Park which is costing somewhere in the order of 2 - 3 million dollars for land

acquisition. The Western Commons land acquisition is also a key priority, as is the parkland acquisitions in the growth centers that I mentioned previously.

So, council has directed us in light of the impact that parkland acquisition in small lot subdivisions are having on small land developers. They have directed us to come out to these public meetings and share with the public, three possible options for your consideration and feedback.

The first of which is to exempt parkland dedication requirements for 3 lots or less in the open space, rural resource and agricultural designations, that you see up here.

The second option is to reduce the parkland dedication requirements for 3 lots or less to 5% in these areas that I have shown you previously that includes the open space / natural resource, agricultural and rural resource areas.

And the third option is to re-establish that previous exemption for 3 lots subdivisions from any parcel of land that was in existence prior to March 31, 1978, that had not been subdivided. But the area of application has become a little broader in this case - in addition to the rural resource, the open space / natural resource, the Agricultural designations, we've added the rural commuter shed, which encompasses areas like Eastern Passage / Cow Bay, Lawrencetown, Porter's Lake - goes up to the Sackville's, Upper Sackville area and beyond down into St. Margaret's Bay and Chebucto Peninsula areas.

So, the next steps - is obviously that we are here tonight to gain your feedback on these options and other ideas that you may have regarding Parkland exemptions. We are also going to take your feedback that we have received from tonight's meeting and the previous meetings back to our Regional Planning Advisory Committee, that has been recently formed to guide the implementation of the Regional Plan and to report / advice Council. Following that, we will be bringing a report forward to Regional Council, and if Regional Council decides to move forward with this amendment - they will set a date for a Public Hearing and our plan, our aim is to bring this forward to Council for a Public Hearing before its summer recess, sometime in June.

Questions / Comments

With that, I would like to ask you for any thoughts, any questions - anything that you would like to say. You sir?

Mike Cleary, I want to subdivide a lot in Cole Harbour, just dividing one lot into two. I don't feel it's necessary - it shouldn't be necessary - to have to pay the 10% fee to subdivide the lot. Once I subdivide the lot then the city picks up two fees for their revenue. And then if it ever sold, or changed hands - on that transfer the city would gain more funds. That's my beef on it. Why should I fund for all of HRM? Why shouldn't all of the tax payers be responsibility?

Maureen Ryan, that's a good point. We had a bit of a discussion before the meeting and thank you for clarifying that. Yeah, its been increased to 10% now. When we were talking earlier before the meeting, you were indicating that if you were creating another lot - you're generating more taxes and questioned if that shouldn't pay for the parkland development for the new people. But, it doesn't unfortunately because we don't collect taxes for parkland development. The idea under the Municipal Government Act is that the developer would pay for the additional need for park development services through this Parkland Dedication program. So, you know, the idea is that if you are adding more people to the community and thus, more need for services in that community. The idea is that you would pay for that through the Parkland Dedication program. But, I hear your point.

Mr. Cleary, Parkland is already developed in my area, I would doubt that would benefit me in the other areas that you are referring to? I don't see why I have to fund for other areas to have parkland - no more than they should fund for areas in my area.

Ms. Ryan, I hear your point, you are basically saying that if you are going to spend this park dedication program on the acquisition of land in other areas that it is not all going to benefit you - why should I have to pay? You sir, you have a comment?

Alan Gosley, I was wanting to say that there is going to be a lot more people living in HRM?

Ms. Ryan, we anticipate 90 thousand, yes.

Mr. Gosley, ok, aren't those people going to require some place to live, aren't they going to be paying taxes. They should contribute, if they want the added parkland. The more people we have - obviously, if there are only 2 people in HRM - they don't need a lot of parkland. If you have more people coming in, I feel that they should contribute - if they want it.

Ms. Ryan, actually as I was explaining to Mr. Cleary the way it works in terms of residential taxation is usually subsidized in the municipality by the commercial tax base. There are taxes collected for the maintenance and operation of the parks - but not for the development of the parks. That comes from the park dedication funds that is collected through the subdivision process, we collect the land - we also can collect some cash in lieu that can be used towards the development of these parks in the future. I have a gentleman here, Rob Jahncke who can better explain the process for new turn-key developments in the park dedication program.

Rob Jahncke, Well, the trend in the past was that through Park Dedication Process things were acquired. What we have been trying to do lately - for the past couple of years, is that we are being more efficient with the land that we acquire and that if there is any balance from the 5% - is that we would ask the developers to use that for site preparation, to create the piece of land, this reduces the capital strain on us and also there are times that we have flexibility and less stress - so this becomes a turn-key park. Then we know exactly what we are getting into and there is little strain. We do have a methodology that we apply when it comes to park dedication - when there

is a certain size subdivision, even the larger ones. We first figure out what lands we already own in the area and if we determine that we own sufficient land for use as a park, then our recommendation is to the subdivision that we have cash as apposed to more land.

Mr. Gosley, This was grand fathered for pre - 1978, obviously there was a reason for 3 lots or less? Why was it grand fathered?

Ms. Ryan, It was a different culture of government, Halifax County. I need to clarify a point for you because I am feeling that I have told you that Council doesn't collect any tax revenue for park development and I believe that I am completely wrong in that particular case. It does collect some money for capital works. But the vast majority of the park dedication funds goes towards acquisition of the land in very strategic places for the region and for the community. In terms of the large development, well, we expect developers to dedicate land because in a large subdivision you are going to be requiring parks to service that development. So, they are paying with land and maybe a combination of cash. Does that answer your question?

Mr. Gosley, There really wasn't a question. What I was basically saying that as far as grand fathering - you know, obviously there is a reason why they said 3 lots or less. You know, my idea behind this is that you have the average person, who has some land and they are paying taxes on it and possibly they bought it as a long term investment. I feel that they should have a right to subdivide that land without being penalized. Obviously, if you are going to be holding the land for a long time, possibly having people use that land during that time - all the time you are paying taxes on it anyway - I'm not sure where those taxes are going, if not towards the possible parkland development. Obviously, you know, the barrels of money that I have paid on land taxes over the last 10 years - I have never seen anything. So, I figure that the money has to go towards something, you know, maybe not towards that directly - so I can't wonder why its gone from a small subdivision being entitled for some money to have to all of a sudden 10%. You know, was it somebody that just decided it - or was it a whole slew of meetings or what exactly happened for somebody to go from having 3 available lots - no paying any percentage on 2, you know, having to now pay 10% when the large contractors - who were making money for this and now they are paying twice as much - so this is now going to generate more tax for HRM.

Ms. Ryan, I can tell you that from a Regional perspective, that this question has been in the public for about 4.5 years, when we commenced the Regional Planning process - we established goals and objectives, park development and community development were key priorities in that regime. Throughout the Regional Planning process the goal of increasing the Parkland dedication from 5 - 10% was front and center. So throughout numerous public engagements, large engagements with you know, thousands of people involved - that was discussed and debated. But probably not to the level of detail that we have here today. But Sharon Bond, has a comment.

Sharon Bond, I just want to clarify - the requirement percent - when the former county introduced that requirement in 1978. The legislation would only allow 5%, the Provincial Legislation would only allow the Municipality to collect 5%. The Provincial Legislation changed

in 1999 to 10%. So it wasn't that in 1978 the municipality we can take 10 but we're only going to take 5. The Provincial Legislation said that we could only take 5. And then the municipality introduced this into a by-law - so it was only in 1999, when the legislation changed that HRM looked at the fact that now, the legislation has changed because the province had decided that the 5 % was enough in 1978 but in today's age, 10% is a more realistic number, so that's where that number came from. It didn't come out of the air.

Mr. Gosley, well I figured that it didn't come from nowhere.

Ms. Bond, I know - it wasn't that we just kind of chose 10% and the county chose 5%. It was connected to the Planning App. So they made the change after the province made the change.

Mr. Gosley, so basically the province decided that it was time for a change and chose to raise it to 10%?

Ms. Bond, Yes, they did ,yes, yes.

Mr. Gosley, so HRM decided to go with the 10% because they now could, they were now allowed to raise the percentage?

Ms. Bond, They chose to go with the Province, different Municipalities over the Province have different amounts, depending on their needs in their own Municipalities.

Ms. Ryan, Well, I am just wondering, if perhaps, Rob has any comment on that in terms of need - from the needs perspective in terms of per capita of parkland development in larger communities where you have more compact urban form.

Mr. Jahneke, Well, it comes back to our methodology again, our classification of parks, etc.. Smaller neighbourhood parks serve less people and larger areas serve a greater number of people. So typically within suburban areas, like Forest Hills or Colby Village - the neighbourhood park is bigger, usually around 1000 sq m., with play structures and fields - walking areas, recreation area. When you get into the urban areas - higher density, this is where you will find ball fields. When we talk of Regional Parks, a great example would be Point Pleasant Park.

Ms. Ryan, in terms of planning, there are constant demands to add new parks.

Mr. Gosley, I realize that, I guess what I am looking at is the small developer as apposed to the larger one, then suddenly it took a change from 5 - 10% - you are obviously generating a double amount of revenue right there. Obviously, those are the areas that are going to be needing parkland. You know my situation is that I live in Cow Bay because of the development requirements in Cow Bay lots have to be a minimum of 50,000 sq ft. So, if I have a parcel of land, I can't develop it into postage square lots. So, at the moment, I have my area of land surveyed into 6 lots. I have subdivided 4 - those are each 4 acres plus of land. So you are not

looking at postage size lots, you are talking about land that in addition to that I have been paying taxes to in the last 10 years on, thousands of people use my land on a yearly basis. At the end of my driveway, I may have, on any given day - I may have 50 - 60 cars that are parked at the end of my driveway, using my land. And, so it is already used as a park. Yes, I have subdivided 4 lots, I don't intend to subdivide possibly more than one additional lot in the near future, so I am still going to have thousands and thousands and thousands of people using my land. It's not that. Yet, meanwhile, if I do subdivide further these 4 lots at the present time, I don't even know how much that I am going to be charged as far as this 10% goes. And I feel that I have paid taxes on this land, I'm not allowed to subdivide into postage size lots anyway, whereby I could maximize my retirement, if I wanted to, but I don't particularly want to do that, but you know, I'm not a developer. This is not my business, you know, this is partially my retirement - and I bought the land 10 years ago with it being partially my retirement. In the time that I have had it, I have been paying taxes on it all along, and I feel that, that is what you are supposed to do - but now I am being penalized because I have a little bit of land that I may divide to 2 lots, 3 lots whatever. I just don't think that this is right.

Ms. Ryan, thank you. Is that everything?

Mr. Gosley, Well, actually I would like to see everything back to the way it was.

Ms. Ryan, Back to the pre-1978 laws?

Mr. Gosley, Yes. If you have a parcel of land and you are able to divide into 2 or 3 lots - you divide it into 2 lots and basically of that you will make a little bit of money, which may cover the taxes that you have spent on the land over the years. Then making the rest of the land for your children. If you subdivide it into 3, you make a little bit more money - which goes towards your retirement, it goes towards what you paid initially for the land. But anything over that then suddenly it doesn't make sense.

Ms. Ryan, I have to ask Sharon a question about the application in this part. Did it apply in the service areas of Cole Harbour?

Ms. Bond, Yes.

Ms. Ryan, Ok, so it was all of former Halifax County - which included Timberlea, Eastern Passage, Cole Harbour, Sackville - the areas that were serviced with sewer and water and everything beyond from Ecum Secum to Hubbards.

Councillor Becky Kent, And if for instance, in Mr. Gosley's case, as a case example - he has a parcel - one full parcel right now that is pre-1978. He would subdivide it once and then the exemption would be from that point on the two parcels that were then created - cause it goes from one to actually two separate. Does it then include all three.

Ms. Bond, Yes, it would kick in when he hit his fourth.

Councillor Kent, Oh, ok - I understand it now.

Mr. Gosley, So my parcel pre-1978 is exempt?

Ms. Bond, Yes, we can check records to make sure that you are exempt.

Ms. Ryan, Councillor Kent you had a comment?

Councillor Kent, What Mr. Gosley is bringing forward is concerning family lots for deeding for legacy purposes, not developing purposes to his kids and using other lots for retirement. Our concern is that the bigger developers would own some of these lots and have the ability to buy them and therefore fall into loop holes and fall into the exemption.

Ms. Ryan, Well, just let me clarify, yes, the council was concerned with the implication of this parkland dedication with kinship connected lots. A family created a lot for another family member - why should they have to pay. But staff were very clear to Council and will be clear to this meeting that we have no ability to regulate on the basis - constitutionally it would be again against the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, we can't regulate on the basis of family, we can only regulate on the basis of the land owner. So if you applied this exemption to a parcel - it applies to anybody that owns a parcel of land. So big, small, large but the point is that it is limited to three lots or less on pre-1978 parcels.

Councillor Kent, Right, Ok - just trying to make sense of it all.

Mr. Gosley, The issue that I have is that I have 20 acres of land in Cow Bay and I have the alternative to selling to a developer - who could put a road down the center of my land and create 16 lots instead of 6 lots. This would take 3 years maximum. You know, it is a possibility - so I feel that by having homestead lots instead of postage size lots - it is a much better benefit. In addition, obviously if you were buying land for investment - 10 or however many years ago, you expect to have a greater return, which is great. Whether it is a investment or whether its land, you are going to have to pay taxes in the end, as far as what you gain. The difference with land is that you can subdivide land now is extremely expensive. In addition, the cost for surveying - has gone up grossly in the last month or so. Due to HRM in their infinite knowledge and wisdom decided to go from the imperial system to the metric system. So that all has to be redone. So the surveying that I thought was going to cost me \$400, now cost me over \$800. So you are incurring expenses all the way down the line. In addition, I thing that I have to do because there is a little brook that runs through my land, I have to provide a 100 year flood scenario for this little brook going through my land. That has to be done on the whole land even though the brook only runs about a thousand feet of it - so here is an additional cost of about 3 thousand dollars. All these things add up for a small land owner and these become substantial. I don't agree with this.

Ms. Ryan, Well, as I have always said that you can have a large meeting and have a diversity of opinions, but you can have a really small meeting such as this, and have a lot of insight from a few people, I think that is what we are getting here tonight. Any other comments?

Mr. Gosley, On the other side of the coin, basically it is me that has to go through it, if it was your land you wouldn't be very happy about it either. But you work for HRM and so I guess, your opinion would stay to yourself. This is personal, a land is personal to begin with. You know, I don't particularly want to subdivide it. Certainly, I have aspirations of some money at the end of tunnel for retirement, but ultimately I have no plans to fully develop this land. If I had there would have been a subdivision on it 10 years ago. And, so it is personal.

Ms. Ryan, Mr. Cleary do you have any further thoughts that you would like to give us? Your parcel is in Cole Harbour in the service area.

Mr. Cleary, I am just subdividing my land to put another house on it. I will be paying \$4500.00 dollars in park dedication fees. This is just a ridiculous price!

Ms. Ryan, A 45 hundred park fee?

Mr. Cleary, Yes, that's correct.

Ms. Ryan, Sharon and Kelly will have a look at that if you want. Do you have any comments, any suggestions for Council on these options.

Mr. Cleary, As I said earlier, I just look at it that to be fair to all - Park Dedication funds should be everyone's responsibility - all tax payers of HRM, not just property owners. I would give HRM a piece of my property but they don't want that they want the money. I would prefer to give them the land. But, you can't get around the fees. This should be a shared fee by everyone in HRM.

Ms. Ryan, Well, thank you, thank you very much. Are there any other comments, concerns, questions for us.

Mr. Gosley, I was just thinking about the amount of money generated here. Do you require 4 times the amount of what was previously generated as far as parkland goes? Obviously, if you are looking at the small developer doing 57%, that's over half, and the larger developer went from 5% to 10% there is double there. So you are basically looking at 4 times the revenue.

Ms. Ryan, Well, it... (interrupted)

Mr. Gosley, Don't you think that this is a big hike? Obviously, there were parks being built before this.

Ms. Ryan, I can tell you that Parkland Dedication fund, we don't have anyone here from Real Property Debt Management here tonight, but roughly speaking the Parkland Dedication fund each year runs around 700 thousand, between 500 to 700 thousand dollars. There is always more demand for parks and land acquisition for parkland than we ever have funds for. We have huge parcels that come to the Municipalities doorstep, that are at the threshold for development, places like Prospect High Head / Long Hill View Plains, emergency parkland acquisition demands costing millions of dollars, that the community does not wish to see subdivided in parcels. But there is insufficient funds and the Parkland Dedication Fund always cover the demands, so the demands are great.

Mr. Cleary, Yes, I realize that but that's not the point.

Ms. Ryan, But the 10% dedication, I should tell you is considered by the Service NS and Municipal Relations amended the Municipal Government Act in 1999 to increase the Parkland Dedication requirements from enabling legislation from 5 to 10% to be consistent with what is happening in other provinces, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia - all use a 10% dedication requirement as a parameter for the acquisition of needed community space. So, this is in line with what we have seen across the country.

Mr. Cleary, Yes, I agree with you again. But, then to offset Nova Scotian's working in Alberta - you know, because the money isn't here. You take it from the average person, so there is less to spend here. Which means that, you know, the economy doesn't grow.

Ms. Ryan, Good Point. Any further thing that you would like to tell us for relaying back to Council?

Mr. Cleary, I think I have had enough to say tonight.

Councillor Kent, Can they email you any ideas or if he thinks of something that he has forgotten to bring up tonight?

Ms. Ryan, Absolutely! I will leave you with my card, afterwards. Which you can give me - you can submit in writing your concerns that you can forward to me and this would show as part of the record that we are bringing before Council. What you said here tonight is being duly noted by Sophia for that same report. And we have a Public Hearing and there you would have an opportunity to come forward with your concerns there to Council directly.

Mr. Gosley, May I ask how the meeting in Musquodoboit Harbour went? I wasn't able to attend.

Ms. Ryan, That went really well, we had about 40 people in attendance. The overall riding sentiment is that they wanted to see a reduction to 5%. But they questioned, like you, the equity of the Parkland Dedication fund, they questioned why it should apply to the small land owners,

they thought that, their thinking was that the vast majority of the funds, collected for the dedication fund were being expended elsewhere, but the meeting revealed. That no, the Parkland Dedication fund is being equally distributed throughout the whole of the Municipality and the Eastern Shore being the exception. So, in the end of the day - after about a 2 hour meeting, a very, very involved bright meeting - they seemed to come to some sort of - I don't know that if everybody in that room were consenting to this, but they were thinking a reduction...what was it again Kelly, the 5?

Ms. Denty, 5 for 5.

Ms. Ryan, Yes, the 5 for 5. 5% reduction for 5 lots. Reduce the Parkland Dedication fund requirements to 5% for 5 lots. For the first 5 lots - instead of the first 3 lots.

Councillor Kent, So instead of the 3 lots - they want to see a reduction of the percentage to 5% for 5 lots?

Ms. Ryan, Yes. That's right. Well in Halifax West - the sentiment that we heard was, why are you amending the Regional Plan when the ink has quite dried on the page - its only been a year, Parkland Dedication funding is needed to carry out the plan. And you know, we heard a bit of at. Although, at the Halifax West meeting towards the end had really good dialogue - and towards the end a gentleman from Lawrencetown was able to convince a gentleman from St. Margaret's Bay of the wisdom of potentially considering some possible exemption. Introducing some sort of flexibility.

Councillor Kent, Can we go to the dots on the maps that are showing the parks? How many of those are completed? How many yet to be done with the generation of funds?

Ms. Ryan, The Lake Charolette Boat Launch, Lake Echo Park is tentative and the McCou one and St. Margarets Bay.

Councillor Kent, So there are 3 there, that are yet to be done? That have the potential to be the future beneficiary of the funds.

Ms. Ryan, Yes, that's correct.

Ms. Bond, The funds are ear marked for those parks.

Ms. Ryan, Yes, the money is set aside.

Ms. Ryan, It was pointed out to us as well, that McCou Island is very interesting. Somebody was questioning the 81 thousand dollar expended on a island in St. Margaret's Bay, but the park planner pointed out in that meeting that this is critical because in the whole of St. Margaret's Bay there is only 2 acres of water front that we have as public accessible land. So this is a big opportunity.

Councillor Kent, Is that Island accessible?

Ms. Ryan, By boat and then by foot at low tide.

Councillor Kent, So at low tide you could walk right out there, Ok. Good.

Mr Gosley, Is there a percentage of land taxes that is dedicated to this island? I am actually kind of wondering where my land taxes go?

Ms. Ryan, There is a tax reform session coming out this fall, and the fiscal services people will be out to explain what is spent where and under what conditions. Anything further? No. With that I think that we can call this meeting adjourned. If you have any further questions we will be around, so please come see us.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15 pm.

Attachment 7
Written Submissions

APR-19-2007 12:40

P.02/02

Re: Regional Municipal Planning Strategy Parkland Dedication

I am disappointed to read of the proposal to allow an exemption of small scale subdivisions (3 lots or less) from the parkland dedication requirements under the Subdivision By-Law.

I read that the proposed exemptions apply mainly to areas outside of the urban area of HRM.

As development of "rural" HRM continues rapidly , I believe that we particularly have to protect our greenspaces in these areas. Often these areas are the natural habitat of many species and include small water areas and access' to shorelines . Residents in these "rural" areas often use the land around them to hike and enjoy nature and to have access to beach and swimming places often used by a community that otherwise has little in the way of manmade recreational spaces.

The mention of 3 lots does not say anything about lot size. Lots in these areas are often large and I see no reason why a development of any size should not be required to provide greenspace to be enjoyed by all in return for the probable financial gain of the developer.

Also, I believe that any subdivision nearby a lake or ocean should include in the subdivision a public access over land leading to the water.

Phyllis Orlik
HRM

From: Dimitri Procos <Dimitri.Procos
To: <dentyk@halifax.ca>
Date: 23/03/2007 11:54:20 am
Subject: Park Dedication Hearings

Dear Ms. Denty

Thank you for sending me the 9 January 2007 Report on Park Dedication for Small Lot Subdivisions. I have the following comments for consideration at next Monday's Hearing on the matter:

1. While recreational requirements are arguably higher in higher density areas, it is the highest residential densities within those areas and not the occasional new single family lot in them that cause them overall. This is certainly the case in the Halifax Peninsula, especially in its South End.
2. There can be as much as an order of magnitude in the price -hence assessment- difference between an urban and a rural lot. Surely the public cost difference of satisfying the recreational requirements of their respective occupants is not tenfold, even taking into account the higher cost of parkland acquisition.
3. The tenor of the 9 January Report seems to be not so much about fairness issues as on how little HRM revenue will be "lost" by allowing a return to the 5% Dedication figure for the areas of HRM where so little subdivision activity takes place anyway.
4. There is a hint in the report (I attribute it to Councilor Hendsbee's question on which lots the increase from 5% to 10% is applicable to) that a mixed Dedication fee could be entertained.

I would therefore propose that throughout HRM subdivisions where there is only one dwelling unit per lot, have a 5% Parkland Dedication for the first three lots and a 10% Parkland Dedication for the remaining lots (successive three-lot subdividing would be precluded because of repeated Dedication fees). Also, I want to emphasize that this does not represent a loss to HRM, but simply a small retrenchment from the huge benefit that would accrue from the doubling of the Parkland Dedication.

Dimitri Procos, B.Arch MIT '66, M.Arch Pratt '67, NSAA, CIP
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CC: <utecks@halifax.ca>

Attachment 8

Areas Affected by Options 1 & 2

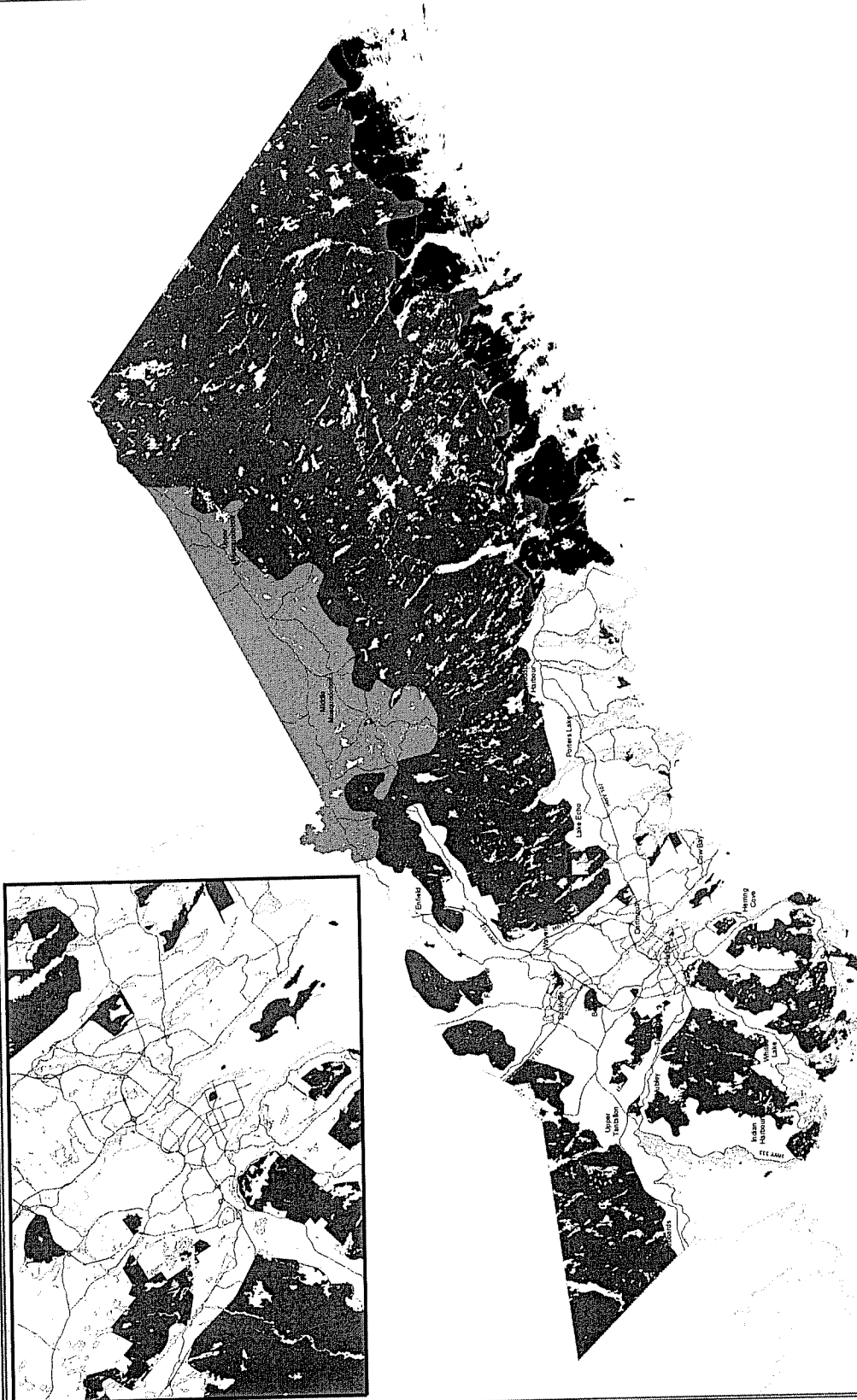
Legend

-  Rural Resource
-  Open Space and
Natural Resources
-  Agricultural



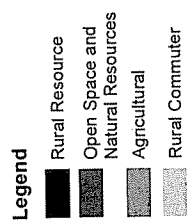
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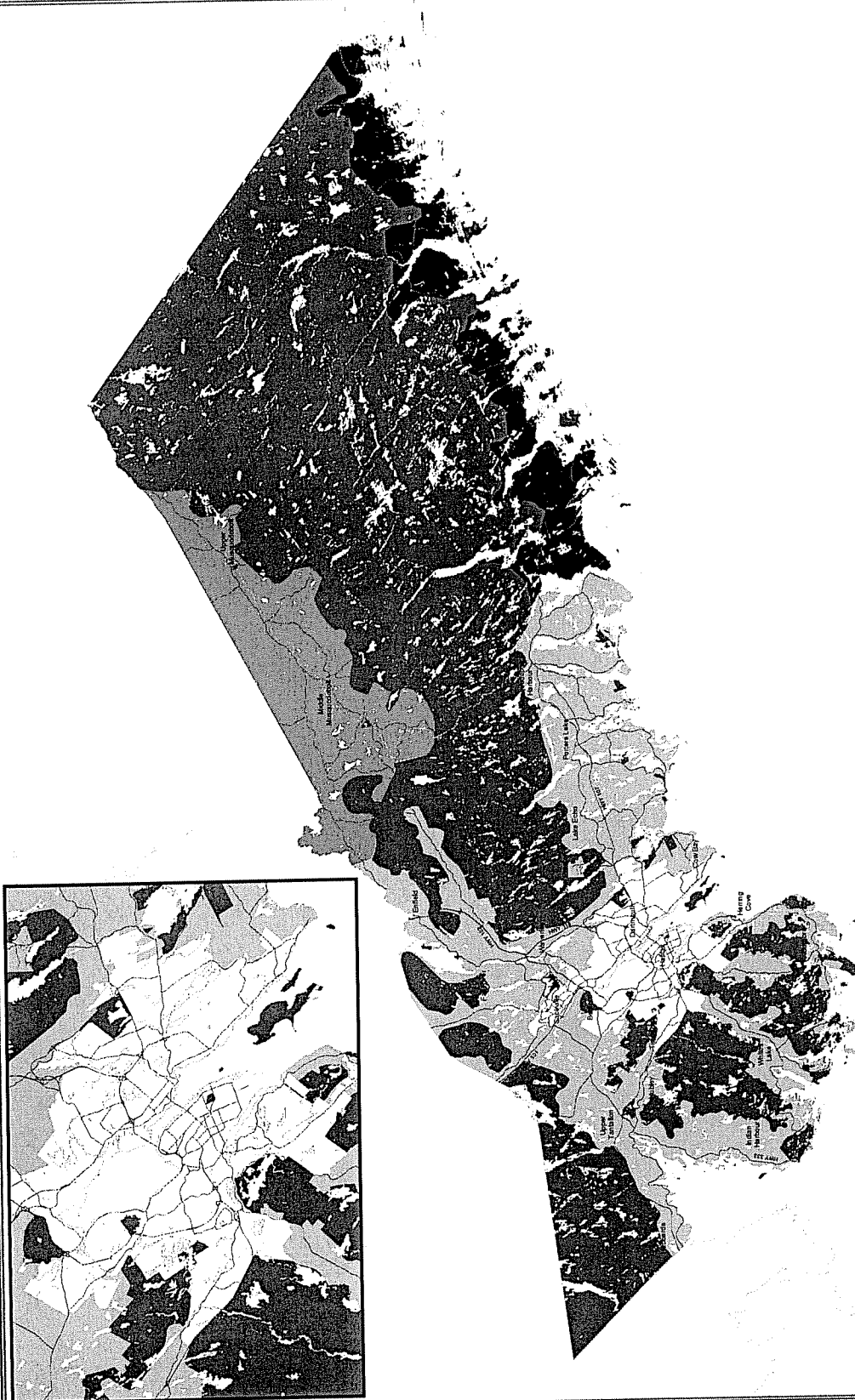
Attachment 9

Areas Affected by Option 3



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Attachment 10

**Parkland Dedication Options
Method of Calculating Revenue Loss**

Options	Annual Revenue Loss \$2007	10 Year Cumulative Revenue Loss \$2007	20 Year Cumulative Revenue Loss \$2007
Option 1 Exempt 3 lots from dedication requirements in Agricultural & Rural Resource designation	\$56, 151	\$561, 510	\$1,123,020
Option 2 Reduce requirements from 10% to 5% for 3 lots or less in Agricultural, Rural Resource & OSNR designations	\$28,075	\$280,755	\$561,510
Option 3 Exempt 3 lots from requirements on Pre- 1978 parcels in Rural Commuter, Agricultural, Rural Resource & OSNR designations	\$179,700	\$1,797,000	\$3,594,000

Option 1: The annual park revenue loss was estimated by taking 57% of the revenue collected for a full 12 month period (April 29, 2006 - April 29, 2007) while the 10% land dedication was in effect. Only a portion of this revenue was used as revenue loss since past information reveals that 57% of park revenue collected is derived from subdivisions consisting of 3 lots or less.

Option 2: The annual park revenue loss was estimated by taking 57% of the revenue collected for a full 12 month period (April 29, 2006 - April 29, 2007) while the 10% land dedication was in effect and dividing that by 2 to

reduce the amount of collection to a 5% rate. Only a portion of this revenue was used as revenue loss since past information reveals that 57% of the park revenue collected is derived from subdivisions consisting of 3 lots or less.

Option 3:

The annual parkland revenue loss was calculated by taking the average annual number of parcels affected by subdivision development for the years 2004 - 2006 in the Rural Commuter, Agricultural, Rural Resource and Open Space and Natural Resource designations (155, 13, 14 and 20, respectively) and multiplying that number by the percentage of parcels in those designations that are pre-1978 parcels (9%, 26%, 25% and 12%, respectively) to equal the estimated number of pre-1978 parcels that will be subdivided per year. This value was then multiplied by 3 to determine the annual estimated number of lots that will be affected from pre-1978 parcels. This value was then multiplied by the average value of a lot within the Rural Commuter (\$34,000), Agricultural (\$12,000), Rural Resource (\$23,000) and Open Space and Natural Resource designations (\$1500) to come up with a total value for all lots to be exempted. These values were derived from assessed values of all lots for which park cash contributions were collected in 2006. The total value of all exempted lots was then multiplied by 10% to come up with the estimated annual park revenue loss for Option 3.