

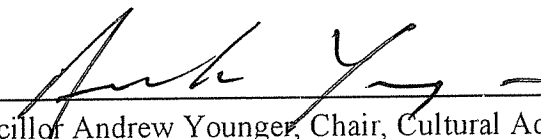
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PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Halifax Regional Council
July 31, 2007

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
Councillor Andrew Younger, Chair, Cultural Advisory Committee

DATE: July 24, 2007

SUBJECT: Khyber Arts & Culture Cluster

ORIGIN

The June 6, 2007, HRM Cultural Advisory Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Regional Council:

1. Authorize a process, as outlined in the May 31, 2007 staff report attached as Attachment 1 to this report, to enable an HRM-owned/community operated Arts & Culture Cluster Facility at the Khyber building, 1588 Barrington Street; and
2. Authorize the initiation of a detailed Feasibility Study and Business Plan for the Khyber Arts & Culture Cluster.

BACKGROUND

The May 31, 2007 staff report, attached as Attachment 1 to this report, presented to the Cultural Advisory Committee at their June 6, 2007 meeting.

DISCUSSION

The Cultural Advisory Committee approved the staff recommendations as presented.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

See attached staff report dated May 31, 2007.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

See attached staff report dated May 31, 2007.

ALTERNATIVES

See attached staff report dated May 31, 2007.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Staff Report dated May 31, 2007.
2. Extract of the June 6, 2007 Cultural Advisory Committee minutes.

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.

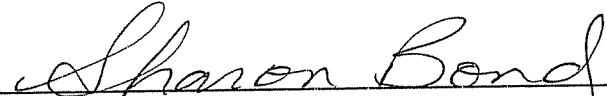
Report Prepared by: Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant



PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Cultural Advisory Committee
June 6, 2007

TO: Chair and Members of the Cultural Advisory Committee

SUBMITTED BY: 
Sharon Bond, Acting Director of Community Development

DATE: May 31, 2007

SUBJECT: Khyber Arts & Culture Cluster

ORIGIN

November 1, 2005 Regional Council authorizes staff to explore future programming of the Khyber Facility, 1588 Barrington Street

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Cultural Advisory Committee recommend that Regional Council:

1. Authorize a process, as outlined in this report, to enable an HRM-owned/community operated Arts & Culture Cluster Facility at the Khyber building, 1588 Barrington Street; and
2. Authorize the initiation of a detailed Feasibility Study and Business Plan for the Khyber Arts & Culture Cluster

BACKGROUND

The Khyber building, located at 1588 Barrington Street, is an HRM-owned community facility that falls under the programming mandate of the Culture & Heritage Division. The facility is a municipally registered heritage building that dates back to 1888 as the original Church of England Institute. The Khyber also sits within the proposed Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District and is located next to Neptune Theatre School. There are two tenants currently leasing space in the Khyber building including Khyber Arts Society and Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia.

In 1997 HRM entered into a five-year lease agreement with Khyber Arts Society for the operation of the building. In 2005 the Society was faced with some financial difficulties and operational challenges which resulted in the closure of key programming space in the building. Over the past year, the facility has been operating at about a 70% vacancy rate and has, therefore, not effectively met the programming needs of the community. In addition, the facility has been undercapitalized and is now in need of short and longer-term investment to continue its role as a key asset within HRM's community facility portfolio.

In November 2005, Regional Council approved staff's recommendations to address specific operational and programming issues with the Khyber Building. This included the termination of a lease agreement with the Khyber Arts Society and subsequent approval of an adjusted tenancy agreement for that organization to continue to carry out their arts programming mandate. Council also endorsed staff's recommendations to develop a strategy for the programming of the balance of the building, to be led by Culture & Heritage staff. In addition Community Development staff were authorized to provide assistance to the Khyber Arts Society to build organizational and operational capacity through board development and enhanced program delivery assistance. A separate In-Camera Council Report has been submitted to address this aspect of the facilities ongoing operations.

DISCUSSION

Policy Support:

The HRM Cultural Plan sets policy direction for planning and investment in cultural facilities and infrastructure to support a healthy arts and culture sector and to enhance communities access to arts and culture. Of particular emphasis under the Cultural Plan is support for creative cluster or "hub" development which is a rethinking of cultural and community facility development to foster and enhance collaboration and connectivity among cultural organizations and to enhance community access through a critical mass of cultural and mixed-use activities. Creative cluster development is recognized across the country as a central driver for creative community and economic development. Clustering facilitates collaborative and dynamic facilities and spaces that enhance capacity-building and program delivery for arts and cultural organizations. Creative facility clusters have also been proven to nurture the incubation of creativity which supports the work of artists and helps to attract and retain valuable talent to HRM.

The Khyber building has a long history of arts and cultural uses including the Khyber Café dating back to the 70's, the Khyber Club, a performance venue which closed in February 2006, Wormwoods Theatre, the existing “Ballroom Gallery” for the exhibition of the works of contemporary emerging artists, artist studios, and advocacy and programming for heritage conservation. The building has also hosted numerous community arts events and programs over the years including Khyber Kids, Highschool Studio program, Neptune Theatre March Break Programs, the Atlantic Fringe and Film Festivals, Atlantic Jazz Festival, Paradise Sisters Cinema, Halifax Pop Explosion and Pride week events. Numerous community meetings and other gatherings have also been hosted at the Khyber building.

The proposed Khyber facility cluster also supports Council’s policy direction with respect to youth programming and engagement using an arts-based approach to program delivery. The proposed facility cluster will have a focus on programming for youth and emerging artists. Staff are also liaising with the Khyber Arts Society to enhance their existing arts program delivery for children and youth through a one-year Facility Lease and Program agreement. In addition, discussions are underway to have HRM’s Culture staff and Khyber Arts Society work in partnership to address Graffiti Management by nurturing and encouraging creative expression through art. This will build on the existing Youth Mural Program which is being delivered across the HRM including youth-created murals at Acadia School in Sackville, Bedford Highway at MSVU, Lakeside Community Centre and the Skate-Park and Pavilion building on the Halifax Commons.

The Khyber building is also strategic to HRM’s Heritage conservation efforts and sits within the proposed Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District. Investment in the Khyber facility presents a unique opportunity to showcase one of HRM’s heritage assets as an incubator for arts and culture development. The Khyber’s central urban location is also ideal in that visitors will have the opportunity to experience a key piece of HRM’s arts and culture which **supports policy direction under both the Cultural Plan and Economic Development Strategy in terms of developing and presenting HRM as a “Creative City”**. The Khyber sits within a larger concentration of cultural attractions including Neptune Theatre, Grand Parade Square and Province House, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, and several private galleries and places of entertainment and gathering. The facility is an important piece of this district.

Capital & Operating Investment:

Over the past year staff have been reviewing a number of aspects related to the development of the Khyber building as a community-cultural facility. This has included a review of current programming and tenancy of the building, options for the longer-term management of the facility and capital investment requirements. This review is aligned with a broader HRM review of community management models for HRM-owned facilities and is one of several cultural facilities that are currently being evaluated.

Consultation has taken place with the public and arts and culture community regarding the future vision for the facility. Two meetings conducted in March of this year indicate substantial support for

re-investing in the Khyber facility as an arts & culture cluster. This direction aligns with a major trend taking place across North America whereby “creative cluster” developments are being recognized as a key driver for community and economic development viability.

Staff’s initial assessment has determined that short and longer-term investment in the Khyber building is a sustainable use of existing community infrastructure. This recommendation is based on a number of influencing factors including policy priorities under the HRM Cultural Plan, the history and strategic potential of the Khyber as a centre for arts and culture development, the building’s status as one of HRM’s built heritage assets, and the opportunity for HRM to leverage federal dollars for capital cost-sharing through the Cultural Spaces Program.

In order to leverage HRM’s investment in the Khyber facility a **funding application to the Federal Department of Canadian Heritage, Cultural Spaces Program for up to 40% capital cost-sharing will be submitted as part of the project.** Staff are working toward a strong operating model and business plan to ensure the best possible chance to access this funding source. To this end, initial meetings with Canadian Heritage have taken place showing interest in the project.

Financial challenges to maintain HRM’s inventory of facilities will require new partnerships and relationships. Furthermore, HRM’s heritage buildings require enhanced investment to ensure that the historical integrity and sustainability of the structure, and its ongoing use, is maintained. Cultural facilities too, often require specialized infrastructure and features to support arts and culture uses. HRM’s investment in the facility will be sustained through partner investment like Federal Canadian Heritage and future community partners operating the facility. **Staff are also exploring additional funding opportunities to incorporate “green” building features into the development.**

It is recognized that there have been past operating issues with the facility and a lack of HRM programming focus over the past several years. The proposed arts and culture cluster will be developed to achieve optimal programming space use and reduced operating costs for HRM and the future tenant(s). To this end, the facility cluster will incorporate shared-use spaces, multiple tenants with operational and program synergies, and the opportunity for more effective program delivery partnerships between HRM and community. The facility model will also explore uses within the building that encourage public and visitor interaction by carefully considering uses of the building at the ground-floor. Some ideas that have been raised through community consultation are an artist-run coffee-shop and gallery, performance venue, and multi-use community space. The opportunity to use the facility to showcase arts, culture and design projects like HRM-by-design, awards and recognitions, and other Cultural Plan initiatives will also be explored.

In terms of building investment a five-year, phased capital budget has been identified through the 2007-08 business planning process. Year one (2007-2008) capital funds have been allocated for immediate improvements to the facility including skylight replacement and some initial cosmetic improvement to the interior of the building. Budgets from HRM’s Facility Services Division and from the Culture & Heritage Division are being pooled to undertake the necessary improvements to the facility.

An independent study to be conducted during the summer of 2007 will determine the business feasibility of the project through a building development analysis, an operational and programming analysis to determine best-use of space, effective governance models and development of a business plan and budget. Staff will return to Council with the results of this work which will determine final development process. The Cultural Advisory Committee and staff will also report back to Council at key points throughout the process.

Project Phasing:

Review of existing operating conditions:

- existing tenancy reviewed. Recommendations for immediate operations are before Council under separate cover, In-Camera Report.

Review of existing Capital conditions:

- building condition assessment completed in 2003
- update detailed building assessment to be completed June 2007
- fire inspection completed to be completed June 2007

Consultation & Communications:

Inter-departmental HRM liaison team initiated fall 2005 and ongoing between Community Development, Financial Services, and Facility Services

- two public meeting visioning sessions held March 2007
- Project Steering Committee established June 2007*

* to include key business units, Cultural Advisory Committee representative, Downtown Halifax Business Commission, and Khyber Arts Society

- second stage focussed community & stakeholder consultation to be conducted as part of feasibility study deliverables

Facility Feasibility Study & Business Plan:

- consultant to be retained July 2007
- evaluate study results and determine governance approach (November)
- develop phased action plan (capital & operational), and budget (November - December)

Cultural Spaces Funding Proposal:

Phase I: submission of application for cost-sharing for Feasibility Study and Business Plan

Phase II: submissions of application for 33 - 40% cost-sharing for feasibility study and capital improvements (fall 2007)

Capital Work:

Phase I Capital: immediate capital improvements and building maintenance

Phase II Capital: stage one of cluster facility improvements (January-February)

Phase III Capital: stage two of cluster facility improvements (following confirmation of federal \$\$'s)

Community Management/Governance Model:

- call for expressions of interest for tenants (January - March 2008)
- development of community management agreement/model (April - May 2008)

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The budget to undertake a feasibility study and business plan for this project falls under the Heritage & Culture Reserve account # CDG 00992 - Arts Cluster Program at an amount of \$50,000. The capital budget for building maintenance and improvements has been allocated under Capital budget account # CDG 00509 - Heritage & Cultural Facilities (Heritage Reserve) and under capital account # CBU 00946 - Heritage Buildings Upgrades. Additional capital cost-sharing up to 40% will be sought from the Federal Department of Canadian Heritage, Cultural Spaces 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

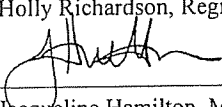
- i. Council could choose to direct changes to the process and feasibility study scope.
- ii Council could choose to not approve the recommended approach. This is not recommended as the policy direction under the HRM Cultural Plan supports creative cluster development and enhanced access to arts programming and development of the arts. Facility and infrastructure investment is key to achieving this and to leveraging and developing strong financial and operating partnerships.

ATTACHMENTS

None

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: Holly Richardson, Regional Coordinator Culture & Heritage, 490-6889

Report Approved by: 
Jacqueline Hamilton, Manager Capital District 490-5685

4.2 Khyber Arts Cluster - Report

A staff report dated May 31, 2007 was submitted.

Ms. Richardson advised that last month the Committee discussed the concept of a Cluster facility at the Khyber building and the Committee endorsed the concept in principle. Referring to the submitted report, Ms. Richardson explained that it requires Regional Council approval before there is any strategic investment in the facility.

Ms. Richardson advised that she drafted the report on behalf of the Committee, and if the Committee approves this, it will then go forward to Regional Council. She pointed out that there will actually be two reports going to Regional Council, one dealing with the building itself--which this Committee will forward-- and the other report, which the Committee will not be involved with, will outline the role of the Khyber Arts Society.

Ms. Richardson reviewed the report and responded to questions.

At 3:36 p.m. Councillor Uteck entered the meeting.

MOVED by Mr. Mandaville, seconded by Ms. Lui that the Cultural Advisory Committee recommend Regional Council:

- a. **Authorize a process, as outlined in the May 31, 2007 staff report, to enable an HRM-owned/community operated Arts & Culture Cluster Facility at the Khyber building, 1588 Barrington Street; and**
- b. **Authorize the initiation of a detailed Feasibility Study and Business Plan for the Khyber Arts & Culture Cluster.**

Ms. Williams indicated that she would abstain from voting on the motion (Ms. Williams advised at the May 2, 2007 meeting that she was working on a project with the Khyber building.)

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.