



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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Item No. 10.1.6
Halifax Regional Council
April 24, 2012

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original signed by

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "R. Butts", written over a horizontal line.

SUBMITTED BY:

Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer

Original Signed by

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "M. Labrecque", written over a horizontal line.

Mike Labrecque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: April 4, 2012

SUBJECT: Eastern Passage Common – Request to Initiate Site Development Plan Process

ORIGIN

At its meeting held on February 28, 2012, Councillor Barkhouse moved a motion (Item 11.1) asking Regional Council:

“To direct staff to consider existing uses, constraints, and future opportunities for facilities on lands referred to as the Eastern Passage Common, including consideration of undeveloped lands and other parcels that abut and work in conjunction with the Common lands, and that such review be in the form of a master planning study for the lands. The master plan process will also incorporate community consultation, and the proposed master plan will be brought before Regional Council for adoption.”

Halifax Regional Council passed a Motion to defer Item 11.1 pending a staff report.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council direct staff to undertake a site development planning process for the Eastern Passage Common, formerly known as the lands at Elkins Barracks (A23).

BACKGROUND

The Eastern Passage Common, formerly known as the lands at Elkins Barracks (A23), is centrally-located in the community in the south quadrant of the crossroads at Cow Bay and Caldwell Roads. This 29 ha (71.5 Ac.) of land is classified as a District Park and zoned P2 with three schools, a community centre, a community garden, a skate park, and various sports fields located within its boundaries. Approximately 9 ha (29 Ac.) of the remaining Common land that is vacant could be available for park development, although there are some associated design challenges.

The 1992 Municipal Planning Strategy for Eastern Passage/Cow Bay (amendments to 25 July 2009) states:

Policy REC-1:

“... Specifically, the lands at Elkins Barracks (A23) shall be considered as an institutional and recreational focus within the Plan Area...”

Policy REC-3:

“It shall be the intention of Council to prepare a recreational master plan for the plan area which includes consideration of:

- (a) Future acquisition and use of parks and open spaces;
- (b) Priorities for land and program development;
- (c) Approaches to the resolution of social issues including vandalism;
- (d) Funding strategies based on a five year capital program; and
- (e) Public participation in policy development.”

This recreational master plan for the plan area remains to be carried out.

Policy ED-4:

“It shall be the intention of Council to encourage the provincial government and the Halifax County-Bedford District School Board to consider the lands at Elkins Barracks (A23) as the priority area for the siting of a high school at such time when (*sic*) this facility is warranted.”

The 2006 Regional Municipal Planning Strategy identifies Eastern Passage as one of a number of growth centres in which a Community Visioning exercise will be undertaken, however, the visioning for Eastern Passage may not be initiated for a number of years and the priority will be determined by the RP+5 process.

DISCUSSION

On April 2, 2012, the Province announced that in the fall of 2014, a new \$15M high school will open in Eastern Passage. The site has yet to be determined. Other development opportunities that are under consideration for and adjacent to the Eastern Passage Common that could benefit from a coordinated facility planning approach, include a proposed BMX Racetrack, the expansion of

the Dennis Naugle Ball Field into the Community Garden to accommodate Midget League play, and an Assisted Living development adjacent to the Oceanview Manor seniors complex just outside the south boundary of the Common. At the same time the Halifax Regional School Board and the Nova Scotia Department of Education are assessing their own facility requirements, since the Eastern Passage Common lands provide the campus setting and many of the sport field requirements for school programs. Issues of access, drainage, safety, vandalism/nuisance activity, and complementary/support facilities for all of these activities need to be addressed; and some of the impacts of what appears to be past ad-hoc planning efforts, as well as an incremental approach to implementation, need to be redressed.

The preparation of an Eastern Passage Common Site Development Plan will provide a coordinating document for the upcoming development of the site. Staff time is available for undertaking the necessary work as there is an allocation for these types of projects in the operating plan for the staff group. The research data generated and information obtained through the community consultation component will be available to inform the planned future Community Visioning exercise, as well as the Open Space Functional Plan.

Site Master Plan' refers to a comprehensive site plan process intended to determine the arrangement of facilities on a particular property and direct municipal investment (capital and programming) on its lands. It is not an Area Master Plan, which is a secondary planning process that identifies where residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional development should occur in a large area, and that informs policies found in the Municipal Planning Strategy.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Necessary funding is available in the 2012/13 Operating Budget for Facilities Development - Cost Centre W943. Budget availability has been confirmed by Finance.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

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

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A community engagement process will be developed and undertaken as a first step in the site planning process.

ALTERNATIVES

Staff can continue to work on individual projects as they arise without a master plan, however, this could further negatively impact efficient public use of the land.

ATTACHMENTS

Location Map

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.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: Barry Yanchyshyn, Landscape Architect 490-3967

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Halifax
Harbour

Fishermans
Cove

Eastern Passage

To Shearwater

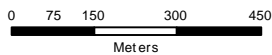
To Cole Harbour

To Cow Bay

Eastern Passage Common Master Plan Context



Eastern Passage Common



Atlantic
Ocean

