



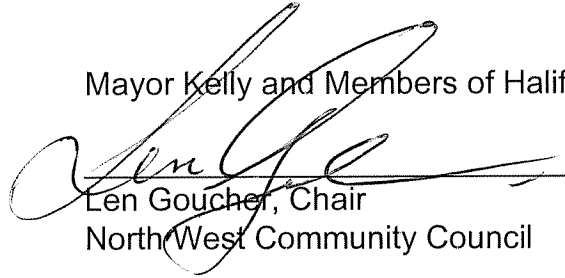
P.O. Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

9.1.1

HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL  
February 25, 2003

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

FROM:



Len Goucher, Chair  
North West Community Council

DATE: February 17, 2003

SUBJECT: New Area Rate: Redevelopment of Former Sackville Heights  
Elementary School, 45 Connolly Road, Sackville

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**ORIGIN:**

North West Community Council meeting held on December 5, 2002.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**It is recommended that:**

**Regional Council approve an area rate in the amount of \$0.01 per \$100.00 of assessed value to be applied against the properties within the mapped area depicted in Appendix A, B, C, D and E of the Staff Report dated December 3, 2002 effective with the 2003/04 fiscal year for the purpose of redeveloping the former Sackville Heights Elementary School, 45 Connolly Road, Sackville into a community centre.**

**DISCUSSION:**

With regard to the second and third parts of North West Community Council's motion of December 5, 2002, the level II environmental assessment has now been completed as per the attached letter from Department of Environment and Labour.

Additionally, North West Community Council, at its meeting held on February 13, 2003, approved a withdrawal in the amount of \$75,000 from the Sackville Landfill Trust Fund in 2003/04 for capital upgrades. This approval was also contingent upon the formal written approval from the Nova Scotia Department of the Environment which, as mentioned previously, has now been received.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Staff Report dated December 3, 2002.
2. Excerpt from approved Minutes, North West Community Council December 5, 2002
3. Letter dated February 11, 2003 from Department of Environment and Labour



North West Community Council  
December 5, 2002

TO: Chairman and Members of North West Community Council

SUBMITTED BY: Dale MacLennan  
Dale MacLennan, Director, Financial Services

Mike Labrecque  
Mike Labrecque, Director, Real Property Services

DATE: December 3, 2002

SUBJECT: **New Area Rate: Redevelopment of former Sackville Heights Elementary School, 45 Connolly Road, Sackville**

**ORIGIN**

September 24, 2002 Council unanimously passed a motion for the retention of the former Sackville Heights Elementary School site by HRM for redevelopment as a community centre, conditional upon approval of an area rate in accordance with HRM's Interim Area Rate Guidelines.

The purpose of this report is to determine if the Interim Area Rate Guidelines have been satisfied thus far with regard this proposed new area rate.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**It is recommended that :**

**An area rate in the amount of \$0.01 per \$100.00 of assessed value be approved to be applied against the properties within the mapped area depicted in Appendix A, B, C, D and E (attached) effective with the 2003/04 fiscal year for the purpose of redeveloping the former Sackville Heights Elementary School, 45 Connolly Road, Sackville.**

**A level II environmental assessment be undertaken to determine the condition of the in-ground oil tank and any potential soil contamination. If soil remediation is required the project be abandoned and the property be sold eliminating the requirement for the area rate.**

## BACKGROUND

An internal review by staff of HRM identified this property for potential redevelopment as a community centre. Staff proposed this facility for utilization as part of a rationalization and consolidation of HRM owned property leased to local non-profit groups in the Sackville area. The recommendation to retain the former Sackville Heights Elementary School site conditional upon approval of an area rate and a new capital project in the amount of \$264,000 funding up to a maximum of \$200,000 to be secured through a 10 year debenture repaid through the area rate was approved by Regional Council September 14, 2002.

## DISCUSSION

The current status of this proposed new area rate in terms of the Interim Area Rate Guidelines is as follows:

- 1. Area rates can only be used for the provision of services within the municipal mandate; services traditionally provided by the municipality.***

Section 65 (ag) of the Municipal Government Act states that "Council may expend money required by the municipality for playgrounds, trails, bicycle paths, swimming pools, ice arenas and other recreational facilities." The Halifax Regional Municipality and its predecessor municipal units have traditionally funded, either entirely or partially through partnerships, the construction and on-going operating costs of recreation facilities.

- 2. Area rates are not to be used to provide different levels of a municipal service within urban and suburban areas where said service is covered by the general tax rate.***

The proposed Community Centre would provide:

enhanced access to HRM recreation programming and expanded programming opportunities in cooperation with local community groups and school groups;

enhanced accommodations for local senior citizens through access to affordable facilities and kitchen amenities for a hot lunch program;

low cost rental of meeting rooms, a multi-purpose room, workshop and classrooms for local community groups;

complementary programming with local organizations;

a stable, affordable and appropriate site for the relocation of the Sackville area Boys and Girls Club;

retention of a small playground and enhanced development of the site with a community garden and waling trail through the wooded buffer area. Cost of the enhancements to be funded through the Councillors District Capital Fund and non-profit community groups.

The redevelopment of the facility would provide additional facilities, not the duplication of any service currently provided by the Municipality.

- 3. In order for a proposed new area rate to move to the process as outlined in #4 below, it must have the support of the area's Councillor(s).**

The catchment area for the proposed area rate covers a portion of District 19 and all of District 20 as shown in Appendix A, B, C, D and E. The Councillors for the Districts, Brad Johns and Bob Harvey, conducted a vote of all property owners within the catchment area in December 2002 to determine if there was support from a majority of the community for the area rate. The results of the vote are indicated below. Having determined that sufficient support existed, they have requested staff prepare a report in compliance with Step 5 of the Interim Area Rate Guidelines for consideration at the next meeting of the North West Community Council.

- 4. Proposals for new area rates must be advertised publicly, clearly identifying affected areas, the purpose for the rate, rate information and the duration the rate is expected to be charged. A public meeting will be held and those attending the meeting will be informed of the rationale for the rate and consulted on its appropriateness.**

The area rate was addressed at the North West Community Council meeting of November 14, 2002 and a motion put and passed to vote on the proposed area rate. A ballot, Appendix G, and letter, Appendix H, signed by Councillors Johns and Harvey, explaining the purpose of the area rate and giving the locations available for residents to cast their vote was mailed to all property owners within the captured areas. The details of the vote are as follows:

		Percentage of Total
<b>Property Owners Advised</b>	<b>10549</b>	
<b>Ballots Returned</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>9% of Total Property Owners</b>
<b>Votes in Favour</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>Votes Against</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>39.5%</b>
<b>Spoiled Ballots</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>6.5%</b>

In addition there were 26 ballots received after the closing date of December 1, 2002. Of those 26 there were 20 in favour, 3 against and 3 spoiled ballots.

5. *With the concurrence of the Councillor, the request is forwarded to the Community Council for review and a recommendation to Halifax Regional Council. Where a Community Council does not exist, the request will go directly to Halifax Regional Council.*

The purpose of this report submitted by the Director, Financial Services is to provide the North West Community Council with the necessary information required to consider making a recommendation to Halifax Regional Council for the new area rate. The results of the public meeting and vote were outlined previously in this report, and the implications to the Municipality are identified under the Budget Implications section which follows.

6. *Any proposed new area rates recommended by a Community Council (or, in the absence of a Community Council, the Councillor for the area) will be submitted to Halifax Regional Council through a staff report with a recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer. The staff report will identify the implications to the Municipality along with the results of any public meeting.*
7. *Halifax Regional Council is responsible for approving all area rates.*

Completion of steps 6 and 7 are contingent of the North West Community Council approving the Recommendation contained in this report.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

As per the report to Council of September 24, 2002 a new capital project in the amount of \$264,000, funded up to a maximum of \$200,000 to be secured through a 10 year debenture repaid through the area rate. Pending Council approval, the net proceeds from the sale of two HRM owned properties identified as surplus assets shall be allocated towards repayment of the principal to accelerate a reduction in the area rate. Also proposed in the September 24, 2002 report is a withdrawal from the Sackville Landfill Fund in the amount of \$75,000, subject to approval by the Community Council.

Attached as Appendix I is Table 1. Proposed Project Financing 2002-2004 which was included in the Council Report of September 24, 2002. Any operating deficit will be recovered through the area rate.

The property has been vandalized and the initial amount of \$18,000 budgeted for vandalism could possibly increase to \$150,000. depending on the amount that may be covered through insurance claims. The impact could possibly increase the amount of the area rate from \$0.01 to \$0.02 for the first year.

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

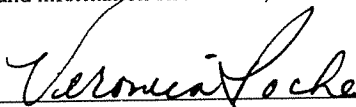
North West Community Council may decide not to make a recommendation to Regional Council for this new area rate, in which case the asset will be sold to repay the debenture.

ATTACHMENTS

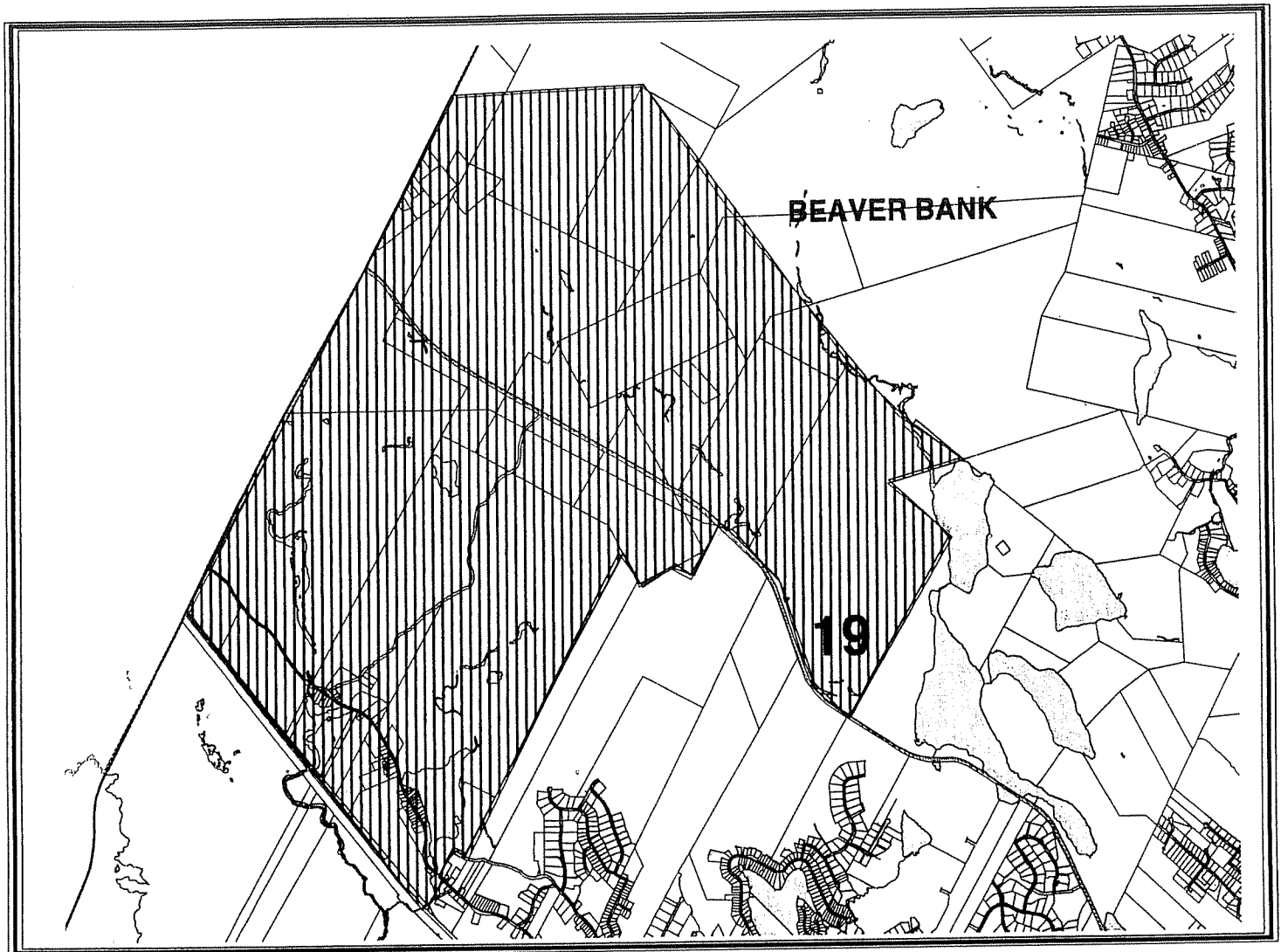
- Appendix A: Map Upper Sackville - Rural
- Appendix B: Map Middle Sackville - Suburban
- Appendix C: Map Middle Sackville - Urban
- Appendix D: Map Lower Sackville - Urban
- Appendix E: Map District 20 - Urban
- Appendix F: Map District 20 - Urban (1)
- Appendix G: Letter from Councillors Bob Harvey & Brad Johns
- Appendix H: Ballot
- Appendix I: Table 1. Proposed Project Financing 2002-2004

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

Report Prepared by:

  
Veronica Roche, Administrative Support Assistance, Financial Planning 490-6498

# Halifax Regional Municipality



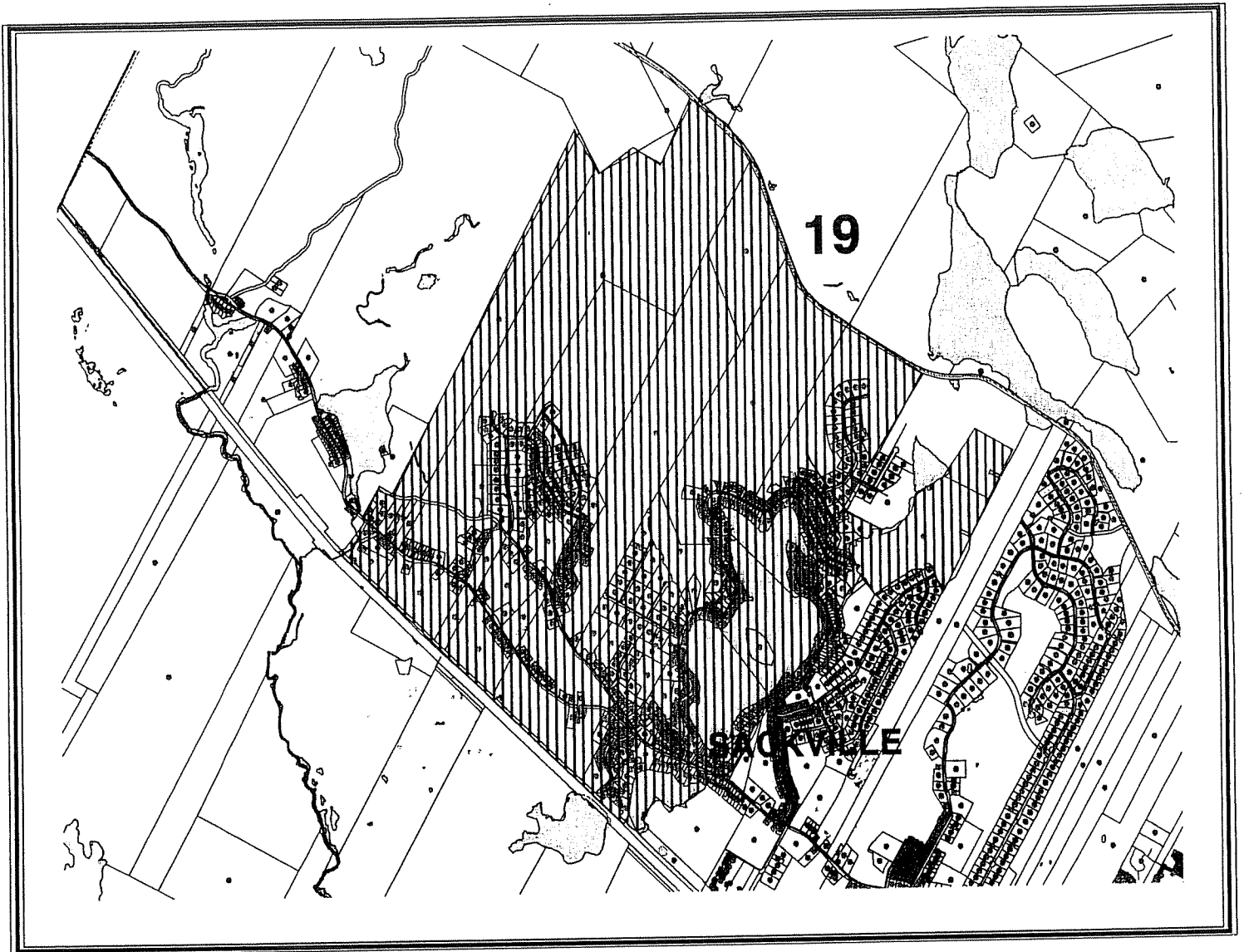
## APPENDIX A UPPER SACKVILLE - RURAL

## SACKVILLE HEIGHTS RE-DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

-  Upper sackville rural.shp
-  GSA Boundary
-  Districts
-  Street








# Halifax Regional Municipality



## APPENDIX B MIDDLE SACKVILLE - SUBURBAN

## SACKVILLE HEIGHTS RE-DEVELOPMENT PROJECT


-  Mid sackville suburban.shp
-  GSA Boundary
-  Ritchee Information points
-  Districts
-  Street

# Halifax Regional Municipality

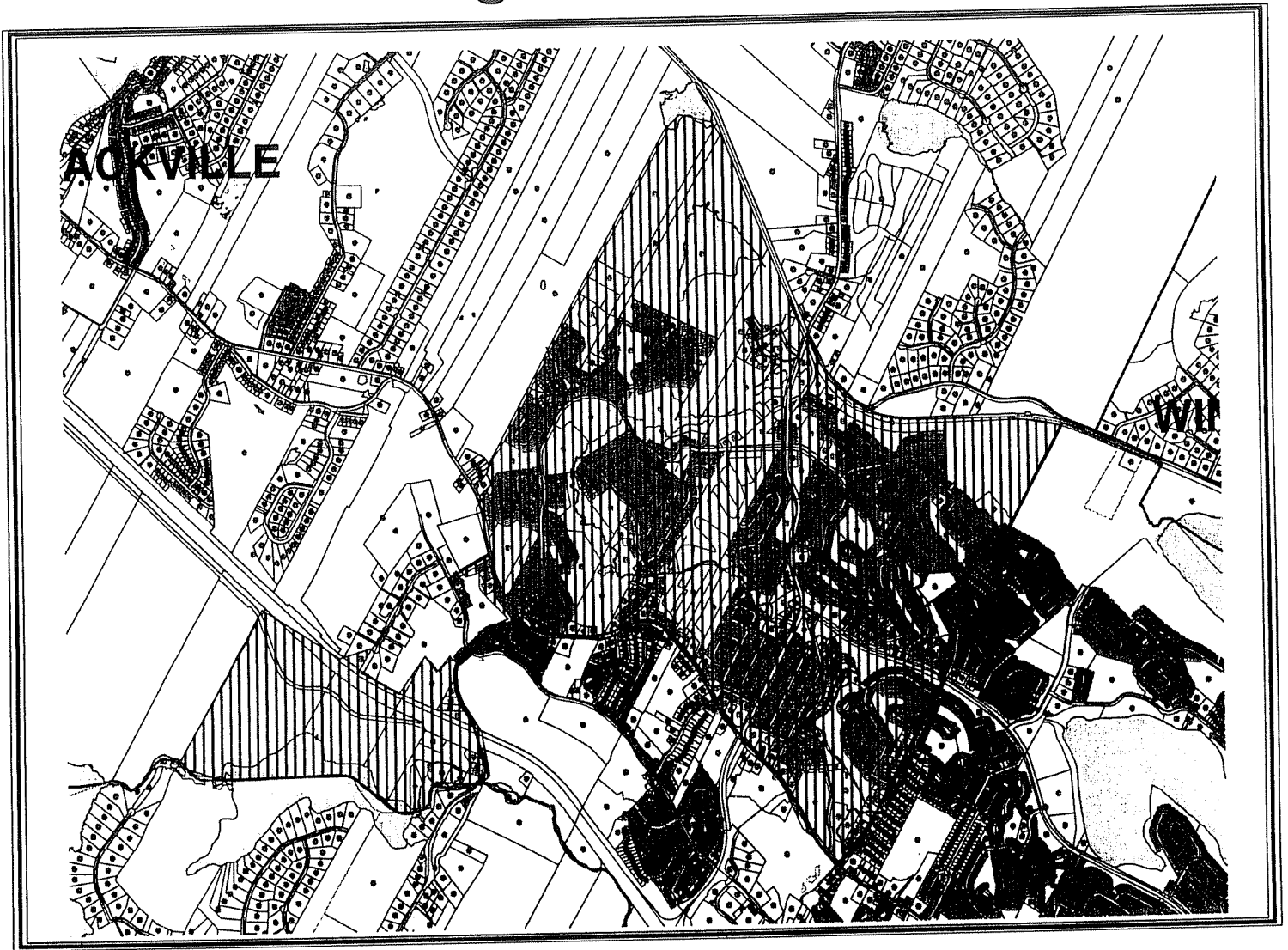


## APPENDIX C MIDDLE SACKVILLE - URBAN

### SACKVILLE HEIGHTS RE-DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

-  Mid sackville urban.shp
-  GSA Boundary
-  Ritcher Information points
-  Districts
-  Street

# Halifax Regional Municipality

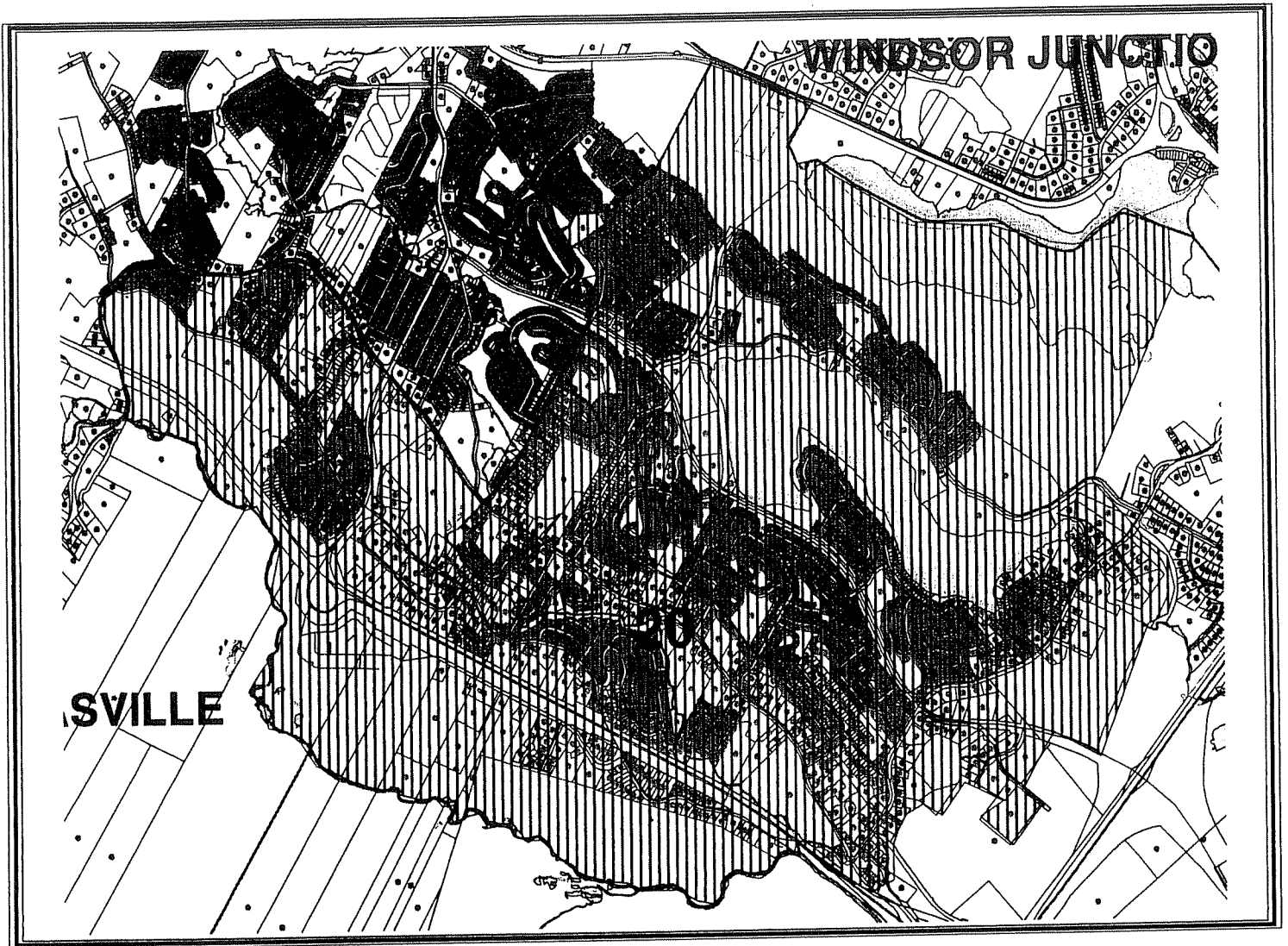


## APPENDIX D LOWER SACKVILLE - URBAN

### SACKVILLE HEIGHTS RE-DEVELOPMENT PROJECT






-  Lower sackville urban.shp
-  GSA Boundary
-  Ritcher Information points
-  Districts
-  Street

# Halifax Regional Municipality



## APPENDIX E DISTRICT 20 - URBAN

### SACKVILLE HEIGHTS RE-DEVELOPMENT PROJECT






-  Dist 20 - urban.shp
-  GSA Boundary
-  Ritchee Information points
-  Districts
-  Street

# Halifax Regional Municipality



## APPENDIX F DISTRICT 20 - URBAN (1)

## SACKVILLE HEIGHTS RE-DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

-  Dist 20 urban 1.shp
-  GSA Boundary
-  Ritcher Information points
-  Districts
-  Street

November 15, 2002

Dear Residents:

**RE Proposed Community Centre, site of former Sackville Heights School**

The closure of the former Sackville Heights School site presents a rare opportunity to develop a community centre on a site that already has a building alongside a sports field and a local school, with parking and transit service. The hope is that the centre's location will create opportunities for more programs for young children in the evening, on weekends, and during school holidays. The community centre would house a number of local non-profit groups who provide recreation programs for children, youth, and seniors. Their programs include After School activities, summer camps, access to computers, a Seniors Hot Lunch Program, craft classes, and a range of recreational classes at nominal cost to participants. Space would also be made available for other non-profit community groups, community meetings, and residents with the provision of a meeting room, a workshop/studio space, a multi-purpose room and kitchen, and a CAP site. HRM would develop and operate a youth centre at this site if the project proceeds.

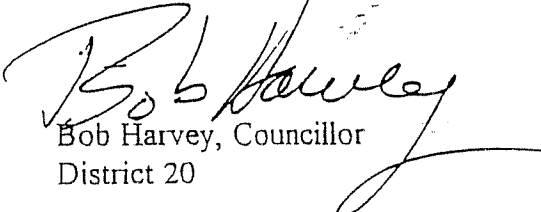
The first 2 - 3 years would focus on the building itself and recreation programs, but the hope is that the grounds would also be developed to include a walking trail through the woods, a community garden and a playground.

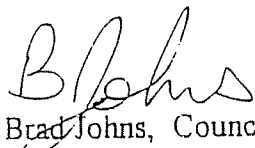
The funds raised by an area rate will only be used for the capital debt payment and the on-going operation of this facility. If at some future date, the facility ceases to operate as a community centre, the area rate would be discontinued.

In accordance with the recommendations of the North West Community Council meeting of November 14, 2002, I am asking you to complete the ballot on the other side of this letter, and return it either to the Councillors Office at the address below, or the ballot boxes located at the Sackville Library and HRM Customer Service Centre, 636 Sackville Drive by December 1, 2002. The ballot results will be used to determine if an area rate of \$0.01 per \$100.00 of assessed value, will be applied to the tax billings of all residents in District 20, and those in District 19 in the Sackville Area. (This does not affect Beaver Bank, north of the tracks.)

A copy of the Halifax Regional Council report is available for viewing at the Sackville Library, and at the Sackville Customer Service Centre, 636 Sackville Drive.

We hope you will give this project your consideration and will participate in the ballot. It is important that residents of Sackville have an opportunity to decide what is important to the community. We are excited by this project's potential, but we need your support to make it a success.

  
Bob Harvey, Councillor  
District 20

  
Brad Johns, Councillor  
District 19

**SUBMIT ONLY ONE BALLOT PER PROPERTY.**

**BALLOT RE:**

**Proposed Community Centre - Sackville**

- YES**, I am in favour of paying an area rate in the amount of \$0.01 per \$100.00 of assessed value in support of the redevelopment of the former Sackville Heights Elementary School, 45 Connolly Road, Sackville.
  
- NO**, I am not in favour of paying an area rate in the amount of \$0.01 per \$100.00 of assessed value in support of the redevelopment of the former Sackville Heights Elementary School, 45 Connolly Road, Sackville.

The area rate of \$0.01 per \$100.00 of assessed value will have an impact of \$10.00 per year on a property with an assessed value of \$100,000.00.

Date	Name - Please PRINT
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Property Address or Assessment Number (on address label)	Signature
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**DEADLINE FOR RETURN: DECEMBER 1, 2002**

Results of this consultation process will be made public at the North West Community Council Meeting, to be held at the Sackville Library on December 5, 2002.

Attachment 2.

<b>Table 1. Proposed Project Financing 2002-2004</b>			
<b>1. Initial Operational Capital Requirements</b>			
<b>Cost</b>		<b>Funding Source</b>	
Start-up operations	\$83,600	Debenture 2003-04	Area rate 2003-04
Vandalism	\$18,000	Debenture	Area rate
Code Compliance	\$33,000	Debenture	Area rate
Elevator, washrooms, and ramp for accessibility	\$90,000	Debenture and Sackville Landfill Compensation Fund	2002-2003
Commercial grade kitchen	\$20,000	Sackville Landfill Compensation Fund	2002-2003
Workshop, meeting room, garden, trail	\$20,000	Councillors District Capital Fund and Community Groups	2003-2004
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$264,600</b>		
<b>2. Annual Operating Budget</b>			
<b>Cost</b>		<b>Funding Source</b>	
Operating	\$79,200	Area Rate and Rentals	2003-2004
Re-Payment of Debenture	\$20,000	Area Rate and Net Proceeds from Sale of Surplus Assets	2003-2004 x 10 year term
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$99,200</b>		



## EXCERPT FROM APPROVED MINUTES OF NORTH WEST COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON DECEMBER 5, 2002

### 10. REPORTS

#### 10.1 New Area Rate: Redevelopment of Former Sackville Heights Elementary School, 45 Connolly Road, Sackville

A Staff Report dated December 3, 2002 was before Community Council. Ms. Veronica Roche, Admin Support, Financial Planning provided an overview of the report. During the course of her presentation, she covered the results of the area rate vote and further results received since the closing date. Of the 10,549 property owners advised, 9% or 953 ballots were returned before the closing date. Of those, 54% were in favour, 39.5% were against and 6.5% were spoiled ballots.

Ms. Roche went on to recommend that should Community Council adopt the recommendation contained in the report, that a recommendation not go to Regional Council right away but await the results of the Level II environmental assessment to determine the condition of the in-ground oil tank and any potential soil contamination. She also expressed concern regarding the possibility of having to cover off vandalism costs which could have an effect on the amount of the debenture. How much will be covered under insurance is still not known.

On a question from Councillor Harvey regarding the results of other area rate balloting, Ms. Roche advised that the sidewalk snowplowing for District 15 was a 1% return and Councillor Johns advised that there was a 4% return for the Beaver Bank Community Centre. Councillor Johns then stated that he understood 10% was on the high end.

It was agreed to hold Public Participation at this time on the proposal.

Mr. Walter Regan, Sackville Rivers Association spoke in favour of the proposal. There were many community groups in Sackville/Beaver Bank that needed a permanent home.

Ms. Jean Reid, Connolly Road advised that residents of the condominium where she lived were experiencing problems with noise from people who hang out there because the building is vacant.

In response, Councillor Johns advised that these problems should cease once the building is occupied. He acknowledged that the Boys and Girls Club would be one of the groups to use the building if the proposal is approved but it would not be a hangout. Other groups would tentatively be Sackville Rivers Association, Sackville Trails and Seniors groups. Increased lighting in the parking lot and installation of video cameras were being considered as well as the extension of the current fence.

Mr. Bill Backewich, 52 Pinehill Drive expressed disappointment with the number of ballots returned and pointed out that the proposal meant \$1,500,000 for ten years at \$150,000 per year.

In response, Ms. Roche explained that most of the operating costs would be covered by the tenants. All that would come out of the area rate after the first year would be the debenture which could reduce the area rate. She outlined what she expected the tenants would pay.

Councillor Johns explained the Area Rate Policy Guidelines adopted by the Municipality. He explained that the proposal was based on a reducing rate. If there was ever a need to add more to the area rate, the same process as was being carried out now would have to go forward again to approve any increase. He added that if the school ceased to exist, the area rate would cease to exist; if the project does not go forward, the area rate will not go forward.

Mr. Backewich expressed concern that there had not been enough public consultation. He indicated he had actually voted yes to the proposal but was still concerned there had not been enough advertising for the proposal. As well, he felt he had not been provided with enough information on the proposal.

Mr. Backewich also expressed concern with the amount of money required to get the proposed community centre up and running which would be in excess of \$350,000.

Councillor Johns indicated that two HRM-owned buildings were going to be sold to help fund the proposal. Community groups housed in these two buildings would be relocated to the proposed community centre. There were some community groups who did not have a location at this time and others who are paying rent to others.

In response to a question from Mr. Backewich, Councillor Johns advised that, in his opinion, the project would benefit people in Lower Sackville most. There were people in Middle and Upper Sackville who were upset that some groups were being relocated closer to Lower Sackville than Middle and Upper Sackville.

Ms. Ruth Douglas stated that she felt the public was well informed by the letter that was sent out. She was disappointed that more people did not attend this meeting. She supported the project.

Ms. Annie Murray spoke in support of the project as long as there was good bus service to the centre. She advised that she was a representative of the French community in Lower Sackville and asked if it would be possible to include space for a French CAP centre and the ability to improve French-speaking skills in the area. She asked how long it would be before the community centre was up and running, should the proposal be approved.

In response, Councillor Harvey advised that the French aspect was something that has not been brought up before and he was pleased that it had been. The setup of the building and the various groups was not settled yet and this was a good time to bring it forward. As far as time frame was concerned, it was expected that it would be some time in 2003, assuming there was no contamination.

**Moved by Councillor Johns, seconded by Councillor Harvey to recommend to Regional Council that:**

- 1. An area rate in the amount of \$0.01 per \$100.00 of assessed value be approved to be applied against the properties within the mapped area depicted in Appendix A, B, C, D and E of the Staff Report dated December 3, 2002 effective with the 2003/04 fiscal year for the purpose of redeveloping the former Sackville Heights Elementary School, 45 Connolly Road, Sackville into a community centre.**
  
- 2. A level II environmental assessment be undertaken to determine the condition of the in-ground oil tank and any potential soil contamination. If substantial soil remediation is required, the project may be abandoned and the property sold, eliminating the requirement for the area rate.**
  
- 3. The recommendation not to be forwarded to Regional Council until the results of the environmental assessment have been provided.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**



Department of Environment & Labour  
Environmental Monitoring and Compliance

Suite 224, Sunnyside Mall Tel: (902) 424-7002  
1595 Bedford Highway Fax: (902) 424-0597  
Bedford NS B4A 3Y4

Scott Morash  
NSDEL Bedford  
internet: morashsr@gov.ns.ca

February 11, 2003

**File Number:**

Halifax Regional Municipality  
Real Property Services  
3790 MacKintosh Street  
PO Box 1749, Halifax, N. S. B3J 3A5  
Attn: Kevin Rideout

Dear Mr. Ridcout:

**Re: Furnace Oil Contamination - 45 Connolly Street, Lower Sackville**

The department has reviewed the report titled Environmental Report # One, dated January 7, 2003 by Cunningham Lindsey. Based on this report, it would appear that further remedial activity in the vicinity of the former underground storage tank is not required.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 424-7002.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Scott Morash".

Scott Morash  
Inspector Specialist

cc.