

## HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

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### HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES July 13, 2004

**PRESENT:**

Mayor Peter J. Kelly  
Councillors: Krista Snow  
David Hendsbee  
Ron Cooper  
Harry McInroy (10:39 am)  
Brian Warshick (9:50 am)  
Condo Sarto  
Bruce Hetherington  
Jim Smith (10:10 am)  
John Cunningham  
Jerry Blumenthal  
Dawn Sloane (9:52 am)  
Sue Uteck  
Sheila Fougere (11:01 am)  
Russell Walker  
Debbie Hum  
Brad Johns (9:51 am)  
Robert Harvey (9:51 am)  
Len Goucher  
Reg Rankin  
Gary Meade

**REGRETS:**

Councillor: Steve Adams

**ABSENT:**

Deputy Mayor Stephen Streach  
Linda Mosher

**STAFF:**

Mr. Dan English, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. Wayne Anstey, Municipal Solicitor  
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant  
Ms. Jan Gibson, Municipal Clerk

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Kelly called the meeting to order at 9:35 am.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES - June 29, 2004**

**MOVED by Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Blumenthal that the minutes of June 29, 2004 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. **APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

**MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor Hetherington that the Order of Business and Additions and Deletions be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. **REGIONAL PLANNING OVERVIEW**

- A copy of the presentation dated July 12, 2004 was before Council.

Mr. Hugh Millwood, Vice-chairman, Regional Planning Committee, presented the report.

The following points were raised during the ensuing discussion:

- Density bonuses could be considered during discussions with planning and public consultation regarding *compact development being more cost effective* as outlined under the Where We Are: Settlement slide of staff's presentation (page 3.)
- Good to hear of marine development and glad to see members from port are here as HRM needs a ship building industry in order for our community to develop.
- A rating procedure is being developed for rural areas in regards to current services and potential for future services. The staff lead for this project is Mr. Marcus Garnet.
- Councillor Hendsbee requested clarification on the definition of "marine industry" be included in the report as Secunda Marine for example may have some interest in ship building.
- Periodic reports to council is critical.
- Certain areas of HRM had low attendance at the public meetings therefore more interaction through internet, website and workshops is requested to ensure all members of the public have access to the information and opportunities to comment.
- There should be CN (Canadian National) representation on the Steering Committee.
- Council should be aware that the alternative for future growth in HRM could be a hybrid of the three (3) alternatives outlined.

- A study of brown fields/green fields has been done and vacant land areas were reviewed. The green field study was done on both sides of the harbour.
- The question of projected population growth in the urban/suburban and rural areas is a decision to be made by Council in regards to how Council would like to see HRM grow through this consultation process with the public.
- Concern expressed that the impression of those residents outside the urban core are wondering what they can expect in regards to development as it appears development is being concentrated more toward the core. Is Regional Planning providing enough opportunity for those outside the urban core to understand what the future holds for them? Are there initiatives to inform the rural areas of what is going on? We have to address the concerns of those who are not in the developing areas.
- Concern expressed with proposed community centres outside the core being able to afford/support basic internal infrastructure services such as water and sewer as not every area has potable water. Are the Hydro-geological studies showing the areas will be able to afford the water?
- Authority has been requested to do hydro-geological testing before land is subdivided. Further, amendments to the MPS and LUB will be brought forward in those areas where good ground water is not available including consideration of making a “deal” with adjacent areas for service. Areas are being reviewed to determine which are more suitable to an onsite system. Rural service areas in rural communities are being considered.
- HRM should identify a watershed in potential development areas and protect them now for our boundary areas if we will need them for future development.
- Concern expressed that development in some areas, suburban/rural, have created “new” needs such as sidewalks that did not exist before. Service levels differ in areas that are close together due to the way development is occurring. For example, weekly green bin pickup - support for higher density areas but almost a waste of money in some areas as the population density is not there. Expectations of public are high when they move to a rural area and want the same services. The public should be aware of the service level when they move to the area. Clearly defined service levels is important. Tax structure review will give opportunity to look at setting service levels (ie: one tax rate).
- Councillor Hendsbee requested a copy of the Greenfield study including all green areas that were studied. Further, he requested information on what plans there are for the Nova Scotia Home for Coloured Children property.
- The Greenfield study is available and includes all master plan districts in or adjacent to currently serviced areas. Decisions to be made regarding which areas are to grow and which should be maintained.
- The rural study is being done by HRM's Mr. Austin French and is 95% ready. There were two rural studies: a land capacity analysis which staff will forward to Councillor Hendsbee and an Environmental study - sent out to external source and will be ready in two (2) weeks.

**5. PLANNING STRATEGY FOR HALIFAX HARBOUR - PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- A report dated July 5, 2004 was before Council.

Mr. Roger Wells, Senior Policy Advisor, Harbour Plan Regional Planning presented the report.

**MOVED BY Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor Warshick that Committee of the Whole recommend that Halifax Regional Council:**

- 1. Endorse the package of preliminary recommendations contained in this report, as the basis to conduct further public stakeholder consultation and formulate detailed policy statements regarding a Planning Strategy for Halifax Harbour.**

The following points were raised during the ensuing discussion:

- It is critical to have CN (Canadian National) participate on Steering Committee.
- Important to have input/discussion with the Native Communities as they have land claims/interests as well.
- There is a need to collapse bureaucracy and streamline relationship/policies between the three levels of government (Federal, Provincial, Municipal). All levels seem to overlap and no one level has jurisdiction to answer the questions when there is a problem. A plan would make it easier as the Harbour is our lifeline.
- No mention of residential needs on harbour such as houseboats on the water. Also, view plans, historical view plans from the Dartmouth side.
- HRM should consider the major property holders on lower side of MacDonald bridge in regards to future aspirations. There is significant possibility for major development (Residential). Discussion of changing land use in that area.
- The aboriginal community participated in focus groups in February and their main interest was Archeological.
- Dartmouth does have view plans and view plan legislation for other areas such as the North West Arm will be considered.
- Harbour has to be our greatest natural resource and it is good to see focus on **all** areas of the harbour.
- CN marshalling yards in downtown Dartmouth - a report was done by the former City of Dartmouth in the 1980's which could be of benefit to staff when considering relocation of those yards.
- Public accessibility from the water is needed. Complaints from public that there is no public access from the water - the wharves/docks are not currently in place at Purdy

's Wharf.

- Accessible boat lift is also not in place.
- Desperate need for a helicopter landing area in case of an offshore emergency as currently there are only two places that could accommodate an emergency landing: Point Pleasant Park parking lot or St. Francis field.
- Glad to see Recommendation 24 regarding infilling on the North West Arm as those lots are pre-confederation lots. Concern expressed that currently the lots could be filled without HRM's involvement.
- Transportation/infrastructure, page 11 - the idea is to have a short run port railway from the port to inland distribution terminal - perhaps in Ragged Lake. It would be a short haul railway to transport containers/material back and forth from the port. This issue should be brought forward to Council as soon as possible as New York is working on this and HRM should move forward.
- Suggest that the Shubenacadie Canal system be considered a part of the recommendation (20) regarding Environmentally Sensitive Areas to preserve and better the existing infrastructure. Staff advised the actual lock system will not be part of the system but the link to the trails will be retained and maintained.
- **Councillor Warshick requested a copy of the extended report, working report and colour maps be sent to all MLA's in HRM and the four (4) MP's as all levels of government should have the executive summary, maps and report.**
- Marine industrial, if we do not get Federal Government to give HRM a ship building policy we will not grow. The harbour will not grow without a shipbuilding industry.
- Commuter rail is too expensive and we have spent a lot of time and effort on Commuter Rail. The high speed ferries are a better option.
- Public access - waterfront access and land side access is a huge issue for District 16 and these issues will be coming forward. Map 3 - Container Pier - there will be opposition from District 16 due to noise impact - cultural historical impact.
- Important that the trails groups be involved with decision making on waterfront development as well.
- There is a great opportunity for docking facilities on the Dartmouth side once the access road is built to the sewage treatment plant (near the Coast Guard Base) as the access road would go out to Pleasant Street.
- Between Imperial Oil and CFB Shearwater on the Dartmouth side there are only two residential streets separating two major industries. HRM should have right of first refusal on those properties and consider having industrial and no residential in that area. Protect community and HRM for potential growth. Put it on our radar now to purchase those properties in the next 20-30 years.
- Wright's Cove area, Regional Planning is preparing a Terms of Reference which will be completed in the next few weeks as that area is a prime 200 acre opportunity that begs for a comprehensive plan.
- Waterfront development has benefited the Bedford community - currently have focus groups discussing Phase II and advise staff stay in contact with this group. **Maps**

**relative to this area should be updated to show new land that is available and to show where total infill area will be.** Staff noted that these should be completed in the near future.

- CN is the single greatest impediment to completion of the Regional Plan as there are constant roadblocks when trying to deal with CN. Commuter rail is a vital and needed part to complete transportation link. Tracks are being removed on mainlink along Bedford highway and commuter rail becomes more difficult to achieve. We need to get CN on board as they have to start thinking of the port and Halifax.
- Commuter Rail: we do not have the population to make this economically viable - the high speed ferry would cover this transportation means. Council has never had any indication that commuter rail would be viable .
- Access - regarding development along the Bedford Basin - public launches etc. We have limited space in Halifax Harbour - tourism is a strong attraction to the harbour and HRM has to maximize the waterfront. The Dartmouth side shows tremendous industrial uses. There should be more tourism development along the Dartmouth waterfront as there is currently nothing from the Coast Guard to Fisherman's Cove in Eastern Passage and that is a huge strip of waterfront land. We need a strong public presence in that area - we do not want just residential development as the waterfront belongs to the people and you do not want to feel you are walking/talking in someone's front yard.
- Many good recommendations but the challenge is now to implement the recommendations. There are too many Harbour Masters in Halifax - too many government levels for us to say to them this is our citizens' vision for our great Harbour - will they buy into this plan/vision? We have to control our harbour to make this happen and it is a major challenge.
- What happens in watersheds (development and affects of development) is as important as what happens in the harbour as the tributaries flow into the Harbour.
- Location of multi-unit residential area and Harbour/Bedford Basin view plans is an issue being dealt with in District 16 due to development along the Bedford Highway. There is waterfront development that is blocking the view and most are as-of-right developments. The view plan issue has to be looked at.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

Adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

Jan Gibson  
Municipal Clerk