

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING MINUTES**

PROJECT 01149 - VisionHRM Bedford Waterfront (Amendments to the Bedford Municipal Planning Strategy to implement the Bedford Waterfront Vision)

7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, June 16, 2010

Basinview Drive Community School-Cafeteria

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Paul Morgan, Senior Planner, HRM Regional Planning
Shannon Pictou, Planning Technician, HRM Planning Services
Susan Caldwell, Planning Controller, HRM Planning Services
Terry Drisdelle, Project Manager, Waterfront Development Corp.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Tim Outhit, District 21
MLA Kelly Regan

PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE: 295

The meeting commenced at approximately 7:00 p.m.

1. Opening Remarks/Introductions/Purpose of Meeting

Paul Morgan, Senior Planner with HRM Regional Planning introduced Councillor Tim Outhit and Colin MacLean, President and CEO of the Waterfront Development Corporation Limited. He then presented the agenda and advised of the July 7th deadline for comments. He explained that, after receiving comments, the Steering Committee will meet and to make final recommendations to Regional Council for further direction.

Mr. Morgan introduced Mr. Doug Kolmer, Chair of the Steering Committee. Mr. Kolmer explained the role and composition of the Steering Committee. He said that the process began with a visioning workshop held in March 2007. He advised that the purpose for tonight's meeting is to seek public input to assist the steering committee in making recommendations.

Mr. Kolmer introduced Terry Drisdelle, Project Manager/Planner with the Waterfront Development Corporation (the WDC). Mr. Drisdelle provided an overview of the mandate of the WDC and some of its accomplishments. He advised that the infill taking place along the Bedford Basin was the safest method for disposing of pyritic slate. He mentioned that once the slate meets the agreed maximum in accordance with the Provincial and Federal regulations it will be capped which will be paid for from the dumping fees being charged for slate disposal. He said that it is unpredictable how long the process will take but expects infilling will continue for some time."

2. Presentation of the Bedford Waterfront Design Study-Rob LeBlanc, Ekistics

Mr. Rob LeBlanc, Planner with Ekistics, introduced Peter Klynstra, a landscape architect with his company, and Ross Cantwell, a real estate consultant with Colliers International, who was a member of the team for this project. He presented an overview of it's role with HRM, WDC and the steering committee.

Mr. LeBlanc reviewed the various phases of the design process and explained how public feedback was utilized in creating the final draft plan. He said that development would take place over a long period of time and good access to the waterfront and maintaining important public views were important design considerations.

The proposed design includes a building near the Bedford Highway which could be used for a ferry terminal and could consist of ground floor commercial space with street parking, walkways and central bus access. He then provided an overview of the main design elements in the four sub-areas of the Bedford Waterfront Plan.

3. Questions/Comments

A resident asked what is the maximum height of the tallest building?. Rob Leblanc responded that twelve stories is proposed.

A resident asked when the second over pass will be constructed and commented that it is needed for safety reasons in the Convoy Run area. Terry Drisdelle advised that the timing may depend on whether the plan is accepted and approved . In the interim, infilling would continue to allow construction to begin and that controls and monitoring are in place to protect the safety of the citizens.

Colleen Umlah asked how emergency vehicles would access this area if the road is blocked. Rob advised that three access roads are proposed in the plan.

Paul Read asked if any hotels or conference centers are proposed. Ross Cantwell said that it is difficult to say but possible. The majority of development proposed is residential with multi-use structures and economic forecasts don't support a hotel/conference center.

Mr. Read asked if a library was proposed. Paul Morgan responded that a library could be located in the ferry terminal building in similar fashion to Alderney Gate.

Don McIver inquired, since this is not a Development Plan, but a "Vision", this is not necessarily what the final development will look like. Much depends on the direction taken by the various developers of their respective sites. What steps are necessary before a final design is approved?

Staff reviewed the planning and approval stages which must be completed before actual development takes place.

Mike Ellis asked if the study deals with the overflow of water from Paper Mill Lake. Rob Leblanc responded that this was beyond the study scope.

Irvin McKay asked how likely it is that the concept will be undertaken. Paul Morgan advised the consultants report and committee recommendations will be presented to Regional Council for direction. Once given, amendments to the Bedford planning documents would be drafted for review by the steering committee and public before being forwarded to Regional Council. If adopted, implementation could begin.

John Walker commented that sight lines are fundamental to the design and asked how the wind effects (microclimate) of building masses are being dealt with. Rob responded that by varying the heights of building and stepping them back near the Basin and their positioning will help disperse downdraft issues at street level.

Barry Inglis asked how many housing units and people are proposed. Ross answered 2,500 units and between 6,000 and 6,500 people.

Wayne MacIntosh asked whether high water associated with hurricanes has been taken into account. Rob responded yes and stated that the finished floor levels of waterfront buildings will be three metres above high water level.

Mr. MacIntosh asked how much influence will there be over the private sector. Paul Morgan responded that HRM and WDC will both be involved and that we believe the private sector will find the design study beneficial to them.

Jennifer Ramsay commented that she felt nervous about the scope and scale of the proposal as there seems to be nothing in the short term for young families.

Grant Walker asked why there is not more commercial and office space to help balance the cost. Ross responded that office development requires parking. This area has been designed as a transit-friendly/oriented development and stated Bedford West business campus land is cheaper and a better location for office and commercial developments.

Grant responded that he has no problem with residential but wondered why a person could not work in Bedford as well. Ross stated that it can be accommodated through changes to municipal policies and zoning.

Blair Clark expressed concern regarding sight lines and traffic congestion and questioned whether DeWolfe Park has reached its capacity and would like to see more parkland along the waterfront.

Terry responded that a large park (Dewolf Park) was dedicated for open green space in phase 1 of the Bedford Waterfront project and was intended to serve the entire development. Phase 2 will have a major boardwalk which will offer a variety of recreation and activities while providing access to other amenities along the waterfront.

Blair commented that the community feel is what brought him to Bedford and he feels more space like DeWolf park needs to be encouraged. Rob Leblanc responded that the space plan identifies Moirs pond area as a large green space along with the plazas, pocket parks distributed throughout the development, similar to DeWolf park.

Don Tottington stated that green space is shown along the railroad right-of-way and questioned, how useable it was.

Paul advised that the boardwalk may not be a playground or green space but will be used by the community in similar fashion to the waterfront boardwalk on the Halifax waterfront.

Ian Marshall stated that he has a young family and is concerned with the infilling taking place. He asked if there is a maximum limit and how it is being controlled.

Terry Drisdelle advised that infilling is done in conjunction with Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the Federal and Provincial Departments of Fisheries. The maximum limit of infill of water lots was defined in the 1985 Sperry Plan and the Waterfront Development Corporation Limited owns the land and is abiding by those limits. Municipal policies and regulations will limit the development on the fill.

Mr. Dempsey asked if the economic analysis balanced the cost of the project against the benefits. Rob answered that it did and that the cost is estimated to be over 50 million dollars with benefits.

Patricia Farmer asked how much will this project cost taxpayers. Ross Cantwell responded that most of the cost will be incurred privately and the public amenities elements will be cost shared between the HRM and WDC. He estimated that the project will be 90% self-financing.

Grant Walker stated that the 5% parkland requirement and sight lines versus view plains were issues to him. He urged the committee to reconsider adding more green space and to limit building heights to between four and six stories.

Dennis MacDonald stated that the Bedford Highway and Hammonds Plains Roads are a mess due to traffic. He questioned, with another 6,000 more people from this development, what will the traffic impact. Paul Morgan responded that a traffic study is currently being undertaken which will be considered.

Michael Basford asked if an archaeological assessment has been undertaken. Rob Leblanc stated that an assessment was undertaken as part of the planning process by the Bedford Waterfront Development Corporation.

Mark Currie inquired about the south-eastern edge of Crosby Island exposed via the canal, and inquired whether an archeological study would be done on the area prior to development.

Michael asked if Crosby Island would be saved. Peter Klynstra responded that, as the last undisturbed piece of the waterfront, it will be left open to the Basin on its eastern edge via a canal.

Mark commented that the terrace condo and commercial financial center at the foot of Larry Uteck Boulevard is not wanted.

Bosko Loncarevic commented that, for a high-speed ferry within the harbour, the speed limit would be set at 8 knots and therefore this service may not be viable. He questioned whether this 'free land' shouldn't be made parkland and why not make an at-grade access to lower the cost.

Ross Cantwell responded that the land is not free and the costs and revenues would have to be balanced.”

A resident stated that the canal element is attractive but in 1953 in the Netherlands a storm killed more than 3,000 people. He said that with storm surge some kind of breakwater will be needed. Rob Leblanc concurred and said that his engineering consultants have advised of this requirement.

4. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:35 p.m.

Susan Caldwell
Planning Controller