



**Draft Regional Plan
Enfield Workshop - May 16, 2005
Oldfield Consolidated Elementary
~ Notes ~**

Discussion Table: Governance & Implementation / Economy

Burning Questions

1. Will the regional plan allow flexibility and reasonable exceptions to generally reasonable requirements?
2. Why is there a lack of choice (in where people live and the size of lots)?
3. How will planning for Enfield be accomplished in concert with East Hants to avoid duplicating certain services and to create a corridor of communities which compliment one another (in terms of the services each provides)?
4. Will threshold volumes be used in determining suitable capacity for road networks in allowing additional development to occur, and will the basics be addressed for all new development – the “basics” being suitable water for drinking and suitable soils for septic disposal?

Discussion of the Burning Questions

- Based on HRM actions regarding green carts and rural streetlights, there is reason to fear such flexibility will be lacking, with foolish actions being obligatory.
- Flexibility should be considered in the services rural areas receive – e.g. flexibility in road standards. Perhaps “trade-offs” should be considered. Rural residents could decide the services their tax dollars pay for, e.g. high speed Internet over sidewalks or streetlights.
- The imposition of urban standards in rural areas can create public health and safety issues. (E.g. the placement of bright street lights in certain areas can present a hazard as you drive from areas of very bright light to darkness / darkness to very bright light. In areas where an entire corridor is light, such as an urban street, this hazard is avoided. A corridor of bright street lights, however, may not be what is desired in the rural area)

- (Some) people want to live outside the city limits on 2-acre lots with their own services. The Regional Plan appears to be herding people into congested areas very close to the city. The plan needs to address those people who do not work in the city and who want to live on big lots outside metro.
- Enfield is a “corridor community”, the larger part of which comprises Enfield, Elmsdale, Lantz, Milford, etc., in East Hants. We rely on Enfield/Elmsdale for fire and police services, for shopping, church and a lot of other services such as the library. It makes no sense to duplicate these services within the (Enfield portion) of HRM.
- Any development of a “district centre” will have to be done in concert with the planning staff from East Hants.
- Pressure must be brought to bear on the Province to approve the necessary amendments to require hydro-geological testing for water.
- Providing piped water with on-site septic may create an “unbalanced” situation. Piped water should not be provided without piped sewer.

Other Comments

1. To the question, “What did you come here to accomplish?”, participants responded:
 - To obtain information on how the regional plan is going to impact Enfield in HRM.
 - To learn more about the plan and the planning process, and to join a friendly, constructive discussion about them.
 - To voice my concern about lack of choice.
2. To the question, “What will make you happy you came here?”, participants responded:
 - Detailed information and an opportunity to comment.
 - If I can leave with a sense I have learned something useful and have offered constructive support and/or alternative suggestions, I will leave happy.
 - To have planners be aware not everybody works in metro, wants to live in metro, or wants to live on postage stamp lots or in vertical high rises.
3. To the question, “What can you do to ensure this workshop is a success?”, participants responded:
 - Try and develop some idea of where we are headed.
 - Try to listen well, to understand others’ positions, and, if so moved, to present an argument or two – argument meaning a side of an issue; a point made in a respectful, reasonable, and friendly manner.
 - Listen, cooperate.

What's your burning question about the Regional Plan policies?

We live in Mid. Musq. - a rural area. How can one policy work for such a diverse region? Our needs & concerns are so different from in the city.

How does the HRM Regional Development Plan address the need for personal recreational properties, cottage properties? Growth = more families: more recreation/cottage properties.

What did you come here to accomplish?

To find out what is being planned for our future in Musq. Valley. 4 lots allowed is not enough. If the lots are large enough to have their own wells & well planned sewer systems there are not any extra costs to HRM. All the roads are plowed already so if there are new driveways off it - so what?

Ensure the HRM Development Plan ensures cottage lot development.

What will make you happy you came here?

A plan that is flexible to individual needs. Each person that has a concern will be considered & heard. Our rural way of life is so different than in town. Don't want plan to be too restrictive, lack of choice. So I would be happy if the plan was not rigid.

If the HRM Regional Plan will permit cottage lot development.

What can you do [to] ensure that this workshop is a success?

Attend any follow-up meetings & see if the concerns that we had were addressed.

DISCUSSION (FLIP CHART PAPER)

Burning Questions:

- a) How can one policy work for the whole region? We are so diverse.
- b) Money is tied up in lots on private roads. Why not let them sell more lots?
- c) Is there enough provision for the growing senior population in the urban areas close to services?
- d) How will the Regional Plan affect small developers, such as in Fall River?
- e) How does the Regional Plan affect cottage lot growth? Seasonal residents don't need winter road maintenance.

- f) Will the development allowed by the Regional Plan hinder the existing lifestyle and impact taxes and lot prices?
- g) How will the Regional Plan affect my community? I want to develop seniors' apartments in Middle Musquodoboit.
- h) What housing development opportunities will there be beyond the serviced area of Middle Musquodoboit? (wants to develop a cluster neighbourhood with condominium ownership and a private lane/shared driveway focused on a sort of village green)
- i) Will cluster subdivision benefit the builders? How will the buyers be protected? Enforcement and inspection staff are spread too thinly.

Discussion of the Burning Questions

Coun. Streach:

1. We should partner with Hants County for water for Dutch Settlement. There should be a corridor of development to reflect this.
2. Restricting the number of lots could increase sprawl. We should not limit subdivision to the cluster concept. "Private roads" includes the concept of gated communities, which should be allowed.

Other participants:

1. Why not be allowed to create more lots on an existing private road? Private roads don't cost HRM a cent. Put restrictive covenants in deeds for lots on private roads, so purchasers don't have misconceptions that the road is public. HRM is allowing new lot sales on private roads at Monarch Estates. Private roads still have standards. HRM should keep saying "No" to taking over private roads.
2. Clusters could be on shared driveways rather than a public road. A cluster neighbourhood could function as a ground-based condominium. Will HRM fund improvements to shared open spaces in cluster subdivisions?
3. Would seniors' triplexes be allowed in Middle Musquodoboit? The 60-foot frontage is limiting the opportunity - I can only do two buildings, but want to do three. Agreed that minimum lot frontage in the centres of communities needs revisiting.
4. People require fewer services when they can stay in their own rural neighbourhoods, where there is already a strong tradition of caring for each other. People don't interact much in urban condominium towers, do they?
5. We should be more creative to provide diversity. Is there a "second-wave" market for condos? In other words, will they have a viable resale value for the next generation? Housing co-op residents, unlike condominium residents, tend to be transient in that they don't stay for long. You

don't build equity in a co-op. You get more ghetto-ized in town.

6. Chemical and composting toilets may alleviate concerns about development around lakes. Has HRM considered innovative or ecological (e.g., Jack Tot) sewage treatment? Solar aquatics is an example.
7. Development agreements involve a long waiting list and a large, non-refundable fee.
8. Cottages are important. Is this the trend of cottage development? Will we still be able to develop cottages along lakefronts?
9. How will people be able to buy a conventional large rural lot in 20 years' time? I don't believe we have 5000 vacant lots, and anyway they won't last forever.
10. Taxes should reflect services received. Will landowners on private roads pay for services they don't receive? Some people do not want streetlights, others do. Why are urban residents subsidized by rural residents? But I'm happy to pay what I pay.
11. I don't want an influx of people in the country. This isn't just undeveloped land - it has value even if it's not developed - it's where we get our food from.

One-on-one comments:

Why don't we have a Regional Park on Grand Lake? Enfield is left out of the regional parks.

Isn't the municipality encouraging people to live in the urban centre? Why are they doing this? They're doing it in Toronto and elsewhere, and now it's coming to HRM.

It was important to raise the issue of enforcement.

Discussion Table: Settlement & Housing
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Burning Questions/Concerns

1. What is the Rural Commuter District Centre?
2. What is the proposed settlement concept for the area?
3. Concerns about limitations for large lot development.
4. Need for services such as snow clearing, fire services, maintaining the opening of the Oldfield Consolidated School, water and sewer and/or water.

Main Points of Discussion

- The facilitator explained the proposal for settlement in the Rural Commuter District Centre in Enfield, Rural Commuter Centre in Fall River, and the proposal for settlement in between centres in Open Space Design Subdivisions and the limitations for conventional large lot development (4 lots per area of land on existing roads and one lot per year on new roads).
- Several participants had concerns with the limitations for large lot development.
- One participant was concerned that the plan will limit the sale of land in this area and that the limited amount of lot inventory in this area would be used up quickly as a large number of people desire large lot subdivisions.
- This participant noted that there is no large inventory of lots in this area as in Hammonds Plains and suggested that this area should not, therefore, be under the same regulations.
- Several of the participants noted that many people are attracted to the Enfield, Oldham, Oakfield and Goffs area for large estate lots that offer a high degree of privacy and peace and quite.
- One participant suggested that the Municipality should allow lot development along existing roads since it is already maintaining these roads and allowing development along them would enable the Municipality to recoup the cost of servicing through taxation.
- His family has owned for more than 100 years on mile of frontage on the paved Highway # 2 in Oakfield and feels that the proposed “four lot rule” would be financially ruinous.
- This participant also noted that a land developer cannot afford to build new roads if only allowed to develop new lots along them at a rate of one lot per year.
- Some participants expressed concerns over the limited services available in the area.
- One participant wanted to know why the parkland dedicated to the Rockcliff Subdivision was still not developed for parkland purposes.
- Another noted that there is a sever lag time in snow ploughing on some roads that are serviced by Halifax Regional Municipality and the Nova Scotia Department of Public Works and Transportation.
- This participant noted that residents have to wait longer periods to receive ploughing after the Municipality ploughs its portion of the road.
- Another resident noted that she has limitations in accessing “good” water and questioned why they could not be serviced by nearby Grand Lake.
- One resident expressed concerns over the development of private roads and noted the difficulty that abutting residents have to service them.
- One participant suggested that the average lot sizes should be bigger in this area, given its distance

from the more densely populated areas in and around the Urban Core.

- This participant suggested that if the Municipality did fair cost taxation, then large lot development would pay for the full services it receives.
- Several participants expressed concern over any requirement to share responsibility for the maintenance of a cluster septic system with abutting property owners.
- One participant suggested that the past problems associated with the cost of extending municipal water and sewer services should not occur in areas with large lots if hydrogeological assessments determine that there is sufficient and adequate water to service the development before approvals are granted.
- One participant commended the Municipality for undertaking the Regional Plan since unchecked development should not be allowed to occur.
- This participant, however, said that the specific proposal for settlement is not workable in this area.

There was a general consensus among the participants in this discussion that:

1. the proposed lot sizes for the open space design subdivisions (15,000 - 20,000 square feet) were inappropriate for the conventional rural estate lot sizes (2.5 acres per lot) in the areas (Enfield to Fall River) that are north of the more densely populated areas of Fall River and Waverley;
2. the proposed limitations on conventional large lot subdivisions (4 lots per area of land with frontage on an existing road and one lot per year on a new road) were too restrictive and should be revisited;
3. HRM should consider allowing development along existing roads without any restriction on the number of lots that could be developed; and
4. HRM should consider allowing between 10 - 20 conventional lots on new roads under the proposed Regional Plan.

Discussion Table: Servicing

Burning Questions

- a) The provision of services (both sewer and water) to the Dutch Settlement area and the extension of water services around Enfield.

Discussion of the Burning Questions

Central Sewer

1. In the Dutch Settlement area, the provision of sewer services was identified as an important concern as sewer is flowing into culverts and watercourses (ponds & rivers).
2. Group understood that the extension of HRM's Service Boundary to their area was not going to be possible in the near future. Due to their location to East Hants (which has central sewer and water), what is the possibility of central sewer being extended to Dutch Settlement area? The group wants HRM to work with the municipality of East Hants to investigate the option of extending central sewer to the Dutch Settlement area. However, the group was aware that East Hants sewer system has limited capacity.
3. HRM also needs to investigate alternative options to the provisions of central sewer such as permitting new septic system technologies that allow sewer to flow into the ground (such as sand filter systems). The group indicated the concept of communal septic systems (open space subdivisions) for development would be a positive option in some areas and situations.

Central Water

4. The group was clear that the provision of central water was more important than central sewer. In the Dutch Settlement area, the provision of central water was raised as an important concern due to the gypsum in the area (poor water quality), wells are expensive to drill, and the wells don't last.
5. In one corner of Dutch Settlement, residents are already on a central water system which is privately owned but managed (ie water quality) by the Halifax Regional Water Commission. However, the cost of operating and maintaining a private water system has become to expensive in recent years as water bills have increased significantly. The group is recommending that the central water system in East Hants be extend to Dutch Settlement area (water lines stop at the County line).
6. The group is also recommending that the central water system be extend beyond Enfield (ie. Irving Big Stop) to the surrounding subdivisions which are experiencing water concerns.
7. HRM, Halifax Regional Water Commission, and East Hants need to work together if central water is going to be provided.
8. The draft Regional Plan should be amended (ie. extending water service districts) to establish new policy in order to addresses this unique situation (revise policy SW-11)
9. Before central water and/or sewer is provided, HRM needs to clearly indicate what the cost of the service(s) would be to each affected land owner.

Other Discussion

Enfield Centre

- The boundary of the Enfield centre should not be limited to the area surrounding the Irving Big

Stop.

- The group is suggesting the centre should not take the form of a circle but rather a linear corridor that extends from Enfield to Dutch Settlement.
- Under the Regional Plan, the proposed centres identify areas where HRM should investment in the future. Therefore, it is important that Dutch Settlement be included within a centre in order to support the provision of services.

Discussion Table: Transportation

Burning Questions

- a) What type of transportation service will be provided in the Enfield area?
- b) Will there be other types of transportation modes utilized, other than the car?
- c) Will it be possible to extend transportation services beyond HRM and into East Hants for example?
- d) What about the Airport? Will there be transit service out there?

Discussion of the Burning Questions

- Where will park and ride facilities be located? Some areas don't have room near the interchanges.
- Bus to the airport - would like to see designated Metro Transit routes out to the airport. However, the express bus should not go into the terminal, but only to a park and ride facility.
- HRM should look at how subdivisions are connected to the main roads. More collector/arterial roads should be built with no houses fronting on them and limited access. Hard to turn left on many roads, especially where houses are located and traffic is affected.
- Parking enforcement needs to be improved for better flow of traffic, especially during rush hour.
- Metro transit needs to have a feeder bus system to take residents to the express bus. Bus service needs to meet the needs of the rural residents, not the other way around.
- Shuttle bus service to main lines - whether in rural, suburban or urban areas. For example, a bus service along Highway 2 would be a good idea and would connect to the Express Service.
- Service to meet needs - when residents want to go - work around a convenient schedule for residents.
- Staying on schedule is important - why aren't buses on time. In other cities buses manage to stay

on time in the winter.

- Why aren't more employers looking at flex time - this would help to reduce traffic congestion.
- There are two levels of government building and maintaining roads in HRM. Would it not make more sense to have them under 1 jurisdiction?
- Asked how we can build a plan without considering provincial or federal subsidization.
- CCC for building collector/arterial roads.
- More money for road building - didn't think that \$80 million over 25 years would be enough and disappointed by the low figure.

Other Discussion

A. General Comments

1. How does settlement fit in with transportation?
2. Will there be an area rate for Express Bus service?
3. More money from other areas - levels of government for transportation. What about investment from other levels of government?
4. Need another access or connection to the peninsula - over Northwest Arm?

B. Specific Comments

1. No transportation - what types of transportation will be established - in particular what other modes? For example - ferries and trains.
2. No overall view of plan.
Expected a presentation of the plan
With set up - feels like the people have been divided
Everything ties in together
What will happen with development?
3. Transportation corridors for cars and transit?
Lives in a rural area, but works in the city.
What will be done about congestion along Portland Street?
No handle in plan on how the transportation network will be expanded.
Would like to see designated connector roads for subdivisions to feed onto (collector roads).
Allowing building onto main roads - not a good thing.
Use smaller buses on local streets.
4. C-train in Calgary - great idea

Wants a plan that truly echoes the community's requirements, particularly in the rural areas
how people travel is important

5. Centralization of services

C. Train:

1. All had asked about the train - will it work here? Calgary's C-Train was used as an example of a train system that works.
2. Asked if it is a feasible/viable alternative in HRM?
3. Thought it would be good alternative - to reduce traffic/pollution.
4. After some discussion - thought that it may not be feasible given our population.

Discussion Table: Culture, Heritage & Natural Environment

Burning Questions

1. Will the Regional Plan ensure that culture and heritage concerns are integral to the overall Plan and not just add ons?
2. Are culture and heritage policies included in the Plan?
3. Are there definitions in the Plan for "Culture" "Heritage", "Living Heritage", and "Built Heritage"?
4. What is being done to recognize the Shubenacadie Canal along its entire route from Dartmouth to Maitland?
5. Does the Plan recognize the old Truro Heritage Road?
6. How does the Plan deal with natural areas and working private woodlots? I want to learn more about how these concerns are dealt with.
7. I want to learn more about natural corridors and how they were created.
8. In 1993 there was a study of the Shubenacadie Watershed. How has this Plan incorporated the recommendations of that study?
9. Many people and institutions draw their drinking water from Lake Thomas. Does this Plan take that situation into consideration?
10. How will the Plan ensure that you do things right the first time for culture, heritage and the natural environment?

Discussion of the Burning Questions

1. The group reviewed the culture and heritage policies in the Plan. Comments were made that culture and heritage needed to be integrated into the overall Plan. The Plan approach was “old fashioned” in that it looked at culture and heritage as a separate area of interest. More effort should be made to integrate culture and heritage concerns into the Plan.
2. Culture and heritage policies in the Plan were reviewed. Comments were made about the weaknesses of provincial legislation and the need for amendments to the Nova Scotia Heritage Property Act to protect heritage properties. Other comments were made about the need to provide tax and financial incentives for owners of heritage properties. One participant noted that registering a heritage property can be a disincentive to heritage preservation as it sometimes leads to additional costs to the property owner for historically accurate renovations to a building.
3. The group reviewed the definitions contained in the Plan and were generally pleased with the definitions.
4. The group discussed the methodology used for the creation of the Cultural Landscape Map. Comments were made about the need to recognize the significance of the Shubenacadie Canal in Plan policies and to cooperate with neighbouring Counties concerning the preservation of the historic waterway.
5. The Cultural Landscape Map does not show the old Truro Heritage Road. More attention should be paid to heritage roadways and their preservation. The Areas of Archaeological Significance Map was also discussed. Questions were raised about the lack of information in the map concerning 19th Century settlements. Participants felt that the Plan should be more proactive in protecting heritage buildings and that provincial tax records could be used to find out the age of significant heritage buildings in the Region.
6. Discussion centred on the protection of woodlots through the Open Space and Natural Resource designation in the Generalized Future Land Use Map. Questions were raised about opportunities for subdividing woodlots for residential purposes. The Plan requirements for the preservation of forest connectivity were discussed. Some saw the Plan’s requirements as being too restrictive while others saw that they could preserve forest lands. With regard to the subdivision of working forests, comments were made that it should be revisited to somehow make it more flexible. A statement such that " working forests can only be subdivided if the integrity of the natural space is not adversely affected". This may allow lots along roads to be subdivided while leaving the "working forest" in back, largely unaffected. More flexibility in how the overall goal is achieved is always a useful thing.
7. Corridors proposed in the Parks and Natural Corridors Map were discussed. Comments concerning the loss of use of private property in watercourse setback areas were raised. Some asked whether HRM should compensate landowners for the loss of economic value of setback areas to be retained for the protection of watercourses. Discussion centred on the authorities that had been delegated to HRM by the Province for the protection of watercourses through the

Municipal Government Act. The Act states that municipalities can protect watercourses through setback provisions in municipal plans and by-laws.

8. Comments were made that the recommendations of the 1993 Shubenacadie Planning and Pollution Control Study should have been incorporated in the Plan. The 1993 study was very expensive for taxpayers and should not go to waste. The 1993 study made specific recommendations regarding the harmful effects of flooding, sedimentation and former mining areas that should be incorporated into Plan policies and allowable land uses for land in the District 2 area. The Plan should include the known areas of Pyritic slates and mine tailings. The pyritic slates were the main concern raised. It was suggested that development on them be restricted unless a land owner could demonstrate they were not present. Other comments were made about the need for a strengthened municipal Topsoil By-law to prevent erosion and sedimentation arising from development activities.
9. Comments concerning the need to protect water quality in Lake Thomas and Grand Lake were made. The Plan should include policies to recognize the need to protect the potable water that these lakes supply to area residents and schools.
10. Comments were made that the Plan should get its policies right the first time to protect culture, heritage and the natural environment.

Other Discussion

A. General Comments

- Participants were interested in learning more about the Plan. Many of the questions raised by the group concerned details of the Plan and how they would be applied.

B. Specific Comments

- One participant offered that the Plan was lacking a clear statement of vision. For example, the Plan should say that we want a healthy community where our children can stay and not have to leave for job opportunities in other parts of Canada.
- Concerns were raised that Oakfield Consolidated School could be closed and children would have to travel long distances by school bus.
- Other concerns were voiced about the lack of public transit opportunities and the need for the Plan to consider the transit needs of senior citizens and people with disabilities.