

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING
PROJECT NO. 01149 - Bedford Waterfront Plan Options Report**

**7:00 p.m.
Wednesday, June 10, 2009
Basinview Community School (Cafeteria)**

STAFF IN

ATTENDANCE: Paul Morgan, Senior Planner, HRM Planning Services
Alana Hines, Planning Controller, HRM Planning Services

ALSO IN

ATTENDANCE: Councillor Tim Outhit, District 21
Consultants: Rob LeBlanc, Ekistics
Peter Klynstra, Ekistics
Ross Cantwell, Colliers International

MLA - Kelly Regan

PUBLIC IN

ATTENDANCE: Approx. 150 +/- people

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

1. Opening Remarks/Introductions/Purpose of Meeting

Harvey Doane introduced himself from the Bedford Waterfront Vision & Implementation Group and welcomed everyone for coming. Mr. Doane indicated the meeting this evening will show three different proposals on what could be done with the Waterfront lands. The plans have been prepared by Ekistics and Mr. Doane reminded everyone that the proposals shown tonight are proposals.

Mr. Doane introduced Councillor Tim Outhit and Kelly Regan, the local MLA, who were in attendance.

Paul Morgan, Senior Planner, HRM, advised that the study is being co-sponsored by the Halifax Regional Municipality and Waterfront Development Corporation. Mr. Morgan introduced Terry Drisdelle, Co-Manager on this project. Mr. Morgan advised that background information on this study can be found on the HRM website: www.halifax.ca (go to the drop down menu to Regional Planning). Going forward, after this meeting, the Steering Committee members will meet and review the options and provide direction to the consultant with the option (or combination of options) to proceed with for final design. Once this is completed there will be another presentation in the Fall for the public to see more detailed final design. This will also go to Council to have these policies incorporated in the regulations for Bedford.

2. Presentation by Ekistics - Three Options

Rob LeBlanc introduced himself from Ekistics. Mr. LeBlanc reviewed the presentation outline, vision objectives and plan goals. He further reviewed the Bedford Waterfront vision and strategic action plan, followed by the public workshop outcomes. The following three options were shown and described in detail:

Concept 1 - Traditional Waterfront

Concept 2 - Canals Option

Concept 3 - Island Option

Mr. LeBlanc reviewed the upcoming project schedule and then opened the floor for questions/comments.

3. Questions/Comments

Cesar Saleh asked about the two access points from the Bedford Highway to the waterfront. He wanted to confirm the access is the same in all three options. He also wanted the location of the first access clarified. Mr. LeBlanc said that the access points are similar in all three options and showed visually the location of the first access point (access is on the edge of the hotel lands). The whole plan anticipates re-development.

Amiro Arab asked what the anticipated heights of the buildings would be around the waterfront in all the concepts. Mr. LeBlanc said in all options they showed primary mid-rises. The plan could show anything from 5 to 10 story buildings. Mr. Arab asked what the time frame was for development starting. Ross Cantwell indicated that the time frame is going to take some time and the build out could possibly take 15 to 20 years to complete the overall development.

Andy Anderson indicated that he noticed in the presentation that the Hammonds Plains Road shows a view plane looking out over the water, he has traveled this road since 1972 and thinks that they would have to move the Sobeys store or move Hammonds Plains Road to get this view plane. Rob LeBlanc said where Sobeys sits now, it intrudes into the view plane, but they want to maintain the view out towards the bridges as you come down the road. In one of the options, Sobeys is re-oriented and the building is re-located for sometime in the future. Mr. Anderson asked what the green pad shown in one of the options was, he thought it was Boutilier's. Mr. LeBlanc, indicated that in Option 1, there were 7 high end waterfront residential; Option 2 had townhouses with 4 story low rise block and Option 3 actually connects Shore Drive thru to Waterfront Drive at some point in the future.

Steve Warburton asked what the heights of the mid-rises around the Sobeys would be. Mr. LeBlanc said about 6 to 8 stories. There would be a block of parking underground and the rest would be at grade parking. He asked if Sobeys is on board with having a Village Centre where outlined on the plans shown. Mr. LeBlanc indicated that they had discussions with all the property owners regarding

the out comes of the public workshop, one of which is a Village Centre as shown. Ross Cantwell indicated that discussions have taken place with Sobeys and indicated that all the plans are possible development ideas. The intent is to come up with a Planning frame work that individual lands owners can use in the future when developing their property. Just in the same way we are all wearing different clothes tonight, with different colours, different developers will look at things in different ways and want to do different things, so this is one possible interpretation of how a development scenario could unfold. Once the rules are in place, even though different developers would come in and want to do different things they would have to fit in the same mold of the regulations. With respect to the Sobeys site, with Bedford South and Bedford West, with the two communities coming on line currently and building out over the next couple of decades, the master plans have included additional community centers that have grocery stores, pharmacies, dry cleaners, and other services that people tend to use on a daily basis and want close by. So the opportunity for this site in the long-term, is that as the waterfront gets developed and Bedford grows, the site will become unique. Mr. Woodwarden said he was at another meeting and understood that the infilling was going to take 6 to 7 years to do. Mr. Cantwell, said to fill up all that land, but that would not preclude starting to development on other parts of the land. The in filing does not have to be all complete before development can take place.

Paul Morgan indicated that the three main property owners are represented on the Steering Committee - Sobeys, Waterfront Development Corporation, and United Gulf.

Water Regan, Sackville Rivers Association, indicated that he loves concept 3 and asked the following questions:

- (1) Did you think about closing the sewer plant and pumping the sewer into Halifax to have A class water in the basin as we've been promised from the Harbour Clean up. Mr. LeBlanc said it was not part of the terms of reference to look at this.
- (2) Mr. Regan indicated that he loves the idea of having fish ways above the dams, he believes it is long over due, and hopes that for compensations for the in fill of the basin that this will be incorporated
- (3) Mr. Regan indicated that a small island was destroyed and wanted to know if there were any plans in any of the options to re-build the island. Mr. LeBlanc said there is in the Canals Option, one of the canals extends out and they could terminate the townhouse and keep the area as green space. Mr. LeBlanc thinks there are a number of ways to preserve it or commemorate it in some fashion.
- (4) Mr. Regan asked if there would be an oil/sewer pump out to the yacht club. Ross Cantwell said that it is a detail that will get addressed later on, but it is certainly a reasonable approach.
- (5) Mr. Regan said he feels there has to be a way to get to Sobeys to the waterfront under the track, a tunnel of some sort for a connection. Mr. LeBlanc indicated that an overpass is shown in one of the options. The challenge with going under is the engineering. Peter Klynstra said it is outrageously expensive and the tracks would have to be moved up for the

slope to be correct. Mr. Regan disagreed. Paul Morgan indicated that the whole project has been designed with an anticipated sea level rise of 2.5 meters as a starting design grade.

Rich Baucham asked about the physical movement of water across the area of in fill. He is worried about the acid slate. He attended a presentation by Gordon Bater, Geologist, who studies the contours of the underwater characteristics of both the bay and the basin. The bay is shallow and depends on tidal flushing to clean it out and he believes that about 10 years ago there was a pollution with a red tide because of things building up back in the bay and this is a risk to all of the people in Bedford and where the infilling is taking place is along the edge of the Bedford Bay and Basin. He wanted to know if this has been looked at and if they considered restricting tidal flow as a result to infilling. Rob LeBlanc indicated that they were given the boundary and there are a lot of details that need to happen as part of the subsequent to the master plan process. Once an overall master plan is established, there will need to be an environmental study of the entire area and the out fall of the sewage treatment plant that the new configuration doesn't affect any of the flow of the sewage from the outfall. There are many more detailed studies that will need to happen following the over all master plan.

Kayleen Bell indicated that as part of the presentation open space was discussed and wanted to know what the difference is between open space and green space. Open space, traditionally, is active or passive use; green space would be preserving the forest in the plans for example. The 36 acres of open space includes the green space. She asked Mr. LeBlanc to talk about plans and activities associated with green space/open space. She believes she is going to see lots of bricks and buildings but she doesn't believe she will see much green grass/green space. Mr. LeBlanc said there will be natural edges with trails all the way through the proposal, the forest will be maintained, along the waterfront they are trying to balance the traditional model of a suburban development, where there is low density and big lawns, with creating a heart for Bedford, with a more Urban model. Design guidelines still need to be established. In the waterfront option, it is more urbanized, and would have street trees, etc.

Ms. Bell said if there is any possibility that the rock in the Mill Cove area that is being developed could be turned into green space. Eric Burchall said he believes she is asking what will be the interim open space planning in advance of development to the site. Currently the Corporation is working on designs for an extension of a finished boardwalk through the Mill Cove area. An interim landscaping plan is being reviewed and includes softening the area of rock. There is also low scale development being looked at for the area. Ms. Bell asked about a time frame for this work. Mr. Burchall said it would be dependant upon how Bedford Waterfront process moves as well as on regulatory approvals and development agreements etc.

Paul Morgan added that the time frame depends on how soon financing for infrastructure takes place. When it is all said and done, HRM and Waterfront Development Corporation will have to enter into discussions/negotiations and that's hard to comment on right now.

Bruce McCulloch said he said he thinks this is a great process. He indicated he hopes that the buildings are LEED buildings that will be developed. In terms of what Eric just said, all the concepts have green around Moirs Pond and he believes this could be built on sooner than the long term

vision. He likes the idea of the forest being maintained as shown in two of the concepts. He wanted to know how the underground parking would work with the sea level. Mr. LeBlanc said there are 2.5 meter that they have to build to, that's the geodetic that has to be built above high water mark, which means the building floors can't go below this, but the parking levels can. Peter Klynstra said it would be similar to the Sheridan Hotel on the Halifax Waterfront. From the street it looks like it's at the street level, but it is actually below highwater level. The idea is that the basement level would be parking. Mr. McCulloch asked if the same idea could be used to create a tunnel under the tracks for connection as Mr. Regan mentioned earlier. Mr. Klynstra said that they would go back and re-visit Walter's inquiry. Mr. McCulloch said he is curious to hear what Sobeys had to say about the movement of their building. Mr. Cantwell said that the trend of strip malls is going away and the model is gaining popularity. Lastly, Mr. McCulloch is very concerned with the connection from Shore Drive and the waterfront and expressed that he thinks this is not a good idea.

Patricia Chalmers said she is concerned about the impact and location of access road. Mr. Klynstra indicated that these are intended to be lighted intersections, which will likely help with the access. Ms. Chalmers asked if he really thinks so. Mr. LeBlanc said due to the grades, the access roads can not work in any other areas. Mr. Cantwell indicated that these are preliminary concepts and they have a professional Engineer looking at these entrances and they will review the concerns. The Larry Uteck interchange will, once built, will help pull traffic away and off the Bedford Highway over time. Mr. Klynstra also said that by having three access points it will help reduce traffic flows.

Ms. Chalmers asked what is the expect residential population of Phase 2. Mr. Cantwell indicated some where in between 3800 to 5500 people.

Bill Rice said it looks like this is going to be very expensive to develop and feels the project has taken on a life of it's own. He also doesn't believe the cost of the land is going to make it possible to build the size of the buildings being proposed. Mr. Cantwell said he is hitting on key points and a big part of the process is to balance off the cost of infrastructure with the revenue being generated by development so that there is a good balance. This has been looked at as part of the preliminary review of the options and they all seem fairly reasonable right now and it will be explored in further detail as the options are refined to a final concept plan. Mr. Rice wanted to know if the tax payers will be funding this. Mr. Morgan said the actual financing is yet to be determined in the future. Some of it may come from the Municipality, but it is yet to be determined. Mr. Cantwell said the Waterfront Development Corporation, a Provincial Crown Agency, uses a line of credit to invest and build things and then ultimately when they develop something that has land that generates proceeds they can use to pay off the loan. There certainly is a focus on making sure there is fiscal balance to what we are doing. To the extend that there is land being sold for development, private developer would pay money to reimburse for that infrastructure to the extent that we have public amenities such as parks, libraries, etc. that the public wants, there would have to be another source for that. The financing is a very integral part of this planning process.

Les Reese noticed floating debris (i.e. trees after a storm) towards the infilled area (where Crosby Island use to be) and it turns and comes back up the harbour near Waterfront Drive and believes that there is something happening the inner basin. He has concern about the swirling of water in this area and thinks it should be studied, and therefore favours Option 3. Due to the proximity of the

proposal to the Basin, he said that they have to be very careful to ruin the basin. Mr. LeBlanc said this will be looked at.

Kevin Gildart is concerned that this is a major project and would like to see it broke into smaller components so that it can be completed withing a reasonable period of time. He would also like to see a focus on ferry and commuter rail.

Brian Lugar is concerned with the last concept (option 3) with the connection to Shore Drive to the Waterfront. It's a concern because Shore Drive is very narrow and a number of years ago the residents lobbied to closed the connection from the Bedford Highway to Shore Drive because of the amount of cut thru traffic in a quite residential area. Shore Drive is not wide enough to accommodate traffic, it doesn't have shoulders, etc. He encourages that this be left out of the options at this time.

Mr. LeBlanc said that mix and matching can be looked at.

4. Closing Comments

Mr. Morgan said he would like to have comments and concerns no later than June 26, 2009. Mr. Morgan also gave the HRM website address again www.halifax.ca and indicated he had business cards at the front table.

5. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.