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Parks Canada  
Parcs Canada

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
OCT 21 2010  
*Ms* *gn*  
MUNICIPAL CLERK

Historic Properties  
1869 Upper Water Street  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 1S9

July 5, 2010

Halifax Regional Municipality  
JUL 15 2010  
Chief Administrative Office

Mr. Dan English  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Halifax Regional Municipality  
P.O. Box 1749  
3rd Floor, 841 Argyle Street  
Halifax, NS B3J 3A5

RE: Proposed Convention Centre – Halifax, Nova Scotia

Dear Mr. English:

It has come to my attention that the three levels of government are considering the construction of a publicly sponsored Convention Centre on two city blocks located two streets below the Halifax Citadel National Historic Site of Canada in downtown Halifax. A number of individuals and organizations have contacted the Minister responsible for Parks Canada to express their concern about the impact of the proposed centre on the view from the Halifax Citadel National Historic Site of Canada and have asked that the Government of Canada not fund this project.

I understand that the proposed Convention Centre will not violate the legislated view planes or the ramparts by-law, which were enacted to protect strategic, historic views from the Halifax Citadel and to ensure that modern structures are not visible from within the site. However, a development of such height and scale in close proximity to the Halifax Citadel will negatively affect the context and setting of the site in terms of its relationship with the downtown and the harbour. The Commemorative Integrity Statement for the Halifax Citadel, a document intended to clearly define the historical significance of the site and its heritage values, describes the importance of the site's setting and the need to ensure future development respects the historic scale of the fort and its surrounding topography. To this end, the 2009 management plan for the Halifax Defence Complex states that Parks Canada will "work with stakeholders, responsible authorities and owners of properties in the vicinity regarding complementary land uses..."

It was for this reason that Parks Canada staff participated in HRM by Design, a public consultation process aimed at defining the parameters for future development in downtown Halifax. We were pleased when a pre-bonus height of 22 metres was established for Grafton and Argyle Streets as part of this process but disconcerted to later

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learn that a provision had been inserted in the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (DHSMPs) to allow the construction of a publicly-sponsored Convention Centre to a much greater height. This would seem contrary to the statement under Section 3.1.1 in the DHSMPs which suggests "a transition in heights to the Citadel, heritage areas, low-rise neighbourhoods and the waterfront" were amongst the considerations informing the heights framework adopted in the plan.

Parks Canada recognizes the positive impact a new Convention Centre could have on local tourism, an industry in which we are a key player and of which we are very supportive. However, we are concerned about the negative impact a development of such height and scale and in such close proximity will have on the setting of the Halifax Citadel. I am, therefore, writing also to the Government of Nova Scotia and PPP Canada Inc to respectfully urge the parties involved in discussions related to funding for this project to carefully assess the potential implications of constructing the centre as currently proposed and, if possible, consider alternative design options that will not negatively impact the commemorative integrity of the Halifax Citadel. It is my sincere hope that an approach may be found to balance the need for economic growth and development with the protection of a treasured national historic site.

Yours sincerely,

*Carol Sheedy*

Carol Sheedy  
Director General, Eastern Canada  
Parks Canada

Cc : Linda Frank, Field Unit Superintendent – Mainland Nova Scotia

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Councillors Meeting <u>COW</u>
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DCAO <u>M. Labrecque W. Anstey</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Solicitor Item No. <u>3</u>
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other <u>J. Church, J. Donovan,</u>
	<u>P. Townsend, A. Fillmore, P. Dunphy</u>