

Save the View from Citadel Hill
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For: The Friends of the Halifax Common

By any criteria the Halifax Citadel is a very 'special place'. It was formally recognized as a nationally significant symbol of Canadian nationhood when it was designated as a National Historic Site in 1951 and today its recognized as one of the most important historic sites in Canada.

Last year 800,000 people went to the top of Citadel Hill to take in the iconic world famous view. This view is a common wealth that we all share for free with equal and open access.

REMOVING PROTECTIONS

More than 30 years ago citizens told City Council we wanted the view from Citadel Hill protected because we didn't want developers to block it. At that time, 1973, that Mayor and Council listened and protected the view from Citadel Hill. Let's make sure the vision, literally from that time, is upheld- don't allow policies which protect the view to be removed by HRMbyDesign.

HRMbyDesign is a well-greased machine- it's a process of persuasion- designed to tell us what we're getting but not to tell us what we're losing. The devil's in the details.

The proposed HRM by Design plan threatens the View from the Citadel by deleting current mandatory policies in the Municipal Planning Strategy that control the heights of building in the vicinity of Citadel Hill and that protect the view of the central harbour between viewplanes.

Policy 6.3.1 which calls for a "low to medium rise character of development in the area of approximately four traditional storeys" in the vicinity of the Citadel Hill will be removed & would give developers an automatic right to construct tall buildings that would block out the central harbour view of George's Island.

Policy 6.2 which currently requires the city to "make every effort to preserve or restore" views from Citadel Hill would no longer apply under HRMbyDesign.

These changes would allow Developers to build to heights that interfere with our common enjoyment of this historic and world-renowned scenic feature.

This is a privatization of the common view we all can share when we walk to the top of the Citadel and it's a privatization in two ways.

1. It allows individual developers acting independently for private profit to take over a part of the Common view -they will now privately own their chunk of the sky that we will no longer will see past.
2. It is a privatization in that whereas up until now everyone can enjoy the world-renowned view, once tall buildings take over the view only people wealthy

enough to buy condos, rent office space or a hotel room can take advantage of the view that used to be ours.

What's the business case for privatizing the public's view from Citadel Hill- the blue sky? of the Harbour? of George's Island? when 800,000 people voted with their own feet that this is something that is important to them and when Nova Scotia makes over \$1 billion per year from tourism?

SUSTAINABILITY & THE GREEN FACTOR

Nova Scotians and HRMers are some of the highest energy users on Earth. And yet Nova Scotians have not one bit of energy security- we import over \$3.5 billion worth of oil and spend \$500 million/year on imported coal if there is not a single choice for sustainability that the developers will be forced to take. We need to take the time to have a design plan that aligns how we live, eat, move, spend and act with good and required environmental policies.

In the proposed HRMbyDesign there are no mandatory requirements for sustainability. There's no requirements for increased green space or parks (despite having over a million square feet of empty space in the downtown); no green building codes; no green energy use; and no complete integrated sustainable transportation plan.

What is the business case for not taking this tremendous opportunity to transition to a green-collar economy? How will we be getting to the downtown? How will we be heating our buildings? Where will we be getting our electricity?

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Urban renewal projects which happened in the 60s & 70s in Halifax left us with several bad legacies- the Cogswells Interchange, Scotia Square, the Metro Centre and the MT&T Building. Each of these displaced people from the downtown- for example the Cogswell Interchange meant ~240 houses were torn down. And yet while HRMbyDesign purports to be about re-densifying the downtown, there is no mandatory requirement for affordable housing.

What families will be affording to live in the downtown? Of the several massive buildings already approved for development that have not yet been built because there's no demand and therefore there's no economic sense none are targeting families. Why would we presume that future developments will provide affordable housing when there is no requirement? Who will afford to live in the downtown?

Mr. Mayor and Council don't get it wrong on such important decisions- ensure that HRMbyDesign

1. keeps the policies that protect our view from and of the Citadel Hill;
2. required sustainability for energy use and transportation ; and
3. mandates affordable housing.