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Item No. 10.1.1 (i)
Halifax Regional Council
December 6th, 2011

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

~~Kim Mason~~, Chair, Stadium Analysis Steering Committee
Peter Spurway, Vice Chair, Stadium Analysis Steering Committee

DATE: November 28, 2011

SUBJECT: Stadium Analysis – Phase 2

ORIGIN

In February 2011, Regional Council passed a motion that saw the appointment of a citizen led volunteer Halifax Stadium Analysis Steering Committee (SC). In summary the purpose and mandate of the Steering Committee was to:

- Provide advice and direction to a staff resource team
- Serve as the public face for the project from a communications perspective
- Engage in the discovery and examination of the potential of a Stadium for Halifax, initiated by the opportunity to participate as one of 7 Host Cities across Canada for the FIFA Women's World Cup in 2015, and potentially the FIFA U-20 event in 2014.
- Follow a two Phase process and present recommendations back to HRM Council for their approval/decision at the conclusion of Phase 1. If advanced, at the conclusion of Phase 2, make recommendations including site selection, operational plan, facility design and construction methodology.

Following a detailed and thorough review, attached is our Phase 2 recommendation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The analysis, completed in consultation with specific stakeholders including (but not limited to) the general public, key community and sport stakeholders, HRM staff, and hired consultants, has led the SC to recommend the following to Halifax Regional Council:

- That Council proceed to Phase 3 that includes the construction of a stadium which would meet the requirements of the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup Event.

'Recommendations Continued'

- That the design of the stadium be compatible with soccer and football, with the permanent seating consisting generally of two side grandstands of essentially equal capacity, and providing an intimate spectator experience.
- That the stadium be constructed with a 14,000 permanent seat configuration with the ability to expand, through temporary seating, to 20,000 seats (or more).
- That the stadium be located on grounds sufficient to support a future Campus style recreation centre and be able to accommodate future development of additional recreation facilities.
- Based on the foregoing, that HRM consider two potential sites that have been identified through our analysis and criteria application as the two best-suited locations.

BACKGROUND

A discussion regarding the potential of a sports recreation stadium for Halifax has been ongoing for 25 years. In order to capture the opportunity to participate as a Host City for the FIFA Women's World Cup in 2015, and to ensure a thorough and informed review of the ongoing potential stadium analysis, a comprehensive review was undertaken by HRM through the deployment of a Council-mandated Citizen led Stadium Analysis Steering Committee. The two-phased approach as approved by Council is outlined below.

Phase 1: Per the mandate, the volunteer Steering Committee started Phase 1 of its analysis on March 23, 2011 and has been meeting on a bi-weekly basis since that time. This phase included a feasibility study to determine community usage in legacy mode, stakeholder interest and public identification with the idea of a new stadium. On August 9, a presentation to HRM Council recommending that the Steering Committee be permitted to advance to Phase 2 was passed.

Phase 2: Phase 2 included site and design analysis, and started with the issuance of an RFP that was awarded to local firm Fowler Bauld Mitchell (FBM), supported by CBCL, Sierra Management, CEI Architecture and CRA. Following extensive Public Engagement (PE) including online, in person and a CRA led telephone survey, the SC is now recommending that, pending budget availability, Regional Council approve a motion to proceed with the construction of a Stadium that would meet the FIFA World Cup requirements, prompting an influx of incremental tax revenue as well as the opportunity to showcase Nova Scotia on a world stage. The FIFA opportunity brings with it certain capital funding opportunities that will ease the financial burden that would otherwise be borne by HRM, and conclude a 25-year discussion surrounding the possibility of a stadium for Halifax.

As capital cost estimates formed part of the Phase 2 review, an approach was successfully made to Council on October 18th wherein a Council Report entitled "Stadium Analysis: Capital Funding Options," was presented and approved to enable discussions to occur with potential funding partners, including other levels of government. Funding decisions fall outside the mandate of the SC. However, our Class Capital Cost report enables a range of accuracy that ensures HRM has sufficient details as it approaches potential funding partners.

DISCUSSION

BUILD DECISION – During public consultation sessions, the SC heard a high level of support for a stadium. While voices of those opposed to a proposed stadium were present at all 4 PE sessions, the clear majority present was in favor of building a stadium and an overwhelming “build it big” perspective was evident. Some SC members entered into these PE sessions with their own apprehensions. However, deeper analysis in conjunction with our consultants and public feedback eventually resulted in 100% consensus among members that the decision to build the stadium was appropriate.

SITE: A site criteria matrix was developed by SC members in consultation with FBM to aid in an unbiased, thorough and emotion-free assessment of potential sites as well as preferred design elements that could be applied to all potential locations. The matrix, which is attached for reference, included 12 criteria, each with sub components that had a weighting applied depending on importance to ensure the best possible outcome. In addition, a Risk Factors section at the end applied “high risk” criteria that had the potential to discount or augment a particular site’s overall score. This matrix was approved and agreed to with consensus among all steering committee members on both the criteria and the accompanying weightings selected. The *application* of this matrix to the sites generated significant debate among SC members. In the end, a final review and approval of the Site Criteria assessment was achieved and the final recommendation of the SC is that the best suited location, based on the application of the criteria developed and supported by dialogue at PE sessions and insights gained from the consultants, is the Commodore Drive location within the Dartmouth Crossing Precinct. This location, while second to Shannon Park in public sentiment *and* scoring prior to risk factors being applied, offers the better current opportunity based on accessibility, visibility, expandability and ease of acquisition. Please refer to the attached matrix for complete scoring criteria and assessment.

DESIGN: The recommendation of the Steering Committee is to build a 14,000 permanent seat facility, with the potential to expand through temporary seating. This configuration meets the FIFA 20,000 seat minimum. We are recommending this design as the opportunity to draw larger events and expand usage in legacy mode supports the upfront investment. In addition, over the life span (50+ years) of the stadium, the costs associated with this design would quickly be depreciated and associated benefits would continue to accrue in the form of increased use and tax revenue generation. The value for money/cost benefit reveals that with take up/pull down costs of fewer temporary seats factored in, the larger seating configuration over the long run will enable a broader use, have the ability to attract more large events, and subsequently generate more opportunities to attract non sport events and tax revenue.

In addition to seating capacity, the SC also looked at the field of play and spectator experience. Consistent with CSA standards and recommended by FIFA, an intimate spectator experience, with no visual impediments between the field of play and the stadium seating, was recommended.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Budget implications of this report are outlined in detail in the attached December 6th, 2011 staff report.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

Financial Management Policies/Business Plan compliance is outlined in the attached December 6th, 2011 staff report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement was a major component of Phase 2 and was executed through various channels: Online surveys (705), telephone surveys (400), 4 Public Engagement Sessions, media outreach, and social media, including Facebook and Twitter. In addition, Public Engagement sessions included live streaming to the internet to ensure those unable to attend had access to SC members and the public discussion. Two of the Public Engagement sessions were held in Halifax at the Halifax Forum, and two were held at Farrell Hall in Dartmouth to maximize attendance. The results of these various public engagements can be found in the attached CRA report, which includes an Executive Summary outlining the preferred location of Dartmouth and more specifically, Shannon Park in 39% of the surveys completed.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives can be broken down into the three areas which form the major components of the Phase 2 mandate: Alternative recommendation (No stadium), Alternative Site, Alternative Design.

Alternative Recommendation: NO build: Impact is that Halifax will miss the opportunity to participate as a host city in FIFA 2015 and associated tax revenue for the municipality, province and federal government is forfeited. The \$375,000 already invested by Council for this study produced a thorough report that can be drawn upon at a later date. No stadium is built and Halifax remains one of Canada's only major cities without a stadium.

Alternative Site: The alternative to the top site identified (Commodore Drive within the Dartmouth Crossing Precinct) is Shannon Park, which represents the most favored public location. For this reason, Shannon Park scores high in the matrix on elements related to civic pride and the "community" aspects of the site in legacy mode. Although through surveys (telephone and online) Shannon Park emerged as the preferred site by the public, education surrounding this site is critical to a clear understanding of the risks over and above the emotional desire to see the waterfront visibly upgraded and this large area of land developed to a higher use. In addition, there is a lack of clarity regarding current ownership and disposal of this land, and since this land has never been formally offered to HRM, it is not viewed as easily acquired. Should this land be offered to HRM in the near term, the concern for readiness still exists, given some environment hazards identified during previous thorough reviews of this property. The

unfortunate loss to be borne by HRM by not seeing these Shannon Park lands revitalized is the lost opportunity to leverage this current situation as the catalyst to see this highly desirable upgrade accomplished.

Alternative Design: The most significant components of the design considered by the SC related to field of play and permanent seating (# of seats in general). Our recommendation, which was largely supported through public feedback, is the construction of a 14,000 permanent seat facility. An alternative was a 10,000 permanent configuration with added temporary seats to accommodate the FIFA World Cup. We did not choose this option as we felt that long term, the larger configuration would be more cost effective and would reduce take up/pull down costs, the costs to acquire (rent or own temporary seating) and that the benefits of this larger design would outweigh the initial capital costs. The value for money/cost benefit reveals that the larger seating configuration over the long run will enable a broader use, the ability to attract more large events, and subsequently generate more opportunities to attract non sport events and tax revenue. Refer to detailed report for financial projections.

ATTACHMENTS

Refer to Staff Report and Attachments

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.
