



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 12.1.1
Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee
February 21, 2019

TO: Chair and Members of the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Denise Schofield, Director, Parks and Recreation

Original Signed

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: January 30, 2019

SUBJECT: Hope Booms Global Kitchen for Social Change, Murray Warrington Park

ORIGIN

July 19, 2018 - Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee motion:

MOVED by Councillor Smith, seconded by Deputy Mayor Mason:

That the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee;

1. Request a staff report to consider supporting Hope Blooms by allowing them to build a Global Kitchen for Social Change on the lands of Murray Warrington Park, and;

2. Engage the community and stakeholders during this process. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter S.N.S. 2008, c.39. Section 61(3): "The property vested in the Municipality, absolutely or in trust, is under the exclusive management and control of the Council, unless an Act of the Legislature provides otherwise."

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter S.N.S. 2008, c.39. Section 75(1): "The Municipality may agree with any person for the provision of a service or a capital facility that the Municipality is authorized to provide."

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter S.N.S. 2008, c.39. Section 75(2): "An agreement made pursuant to subsection (1) may allow for the lease, operation or maintenance of the facility or provision of the service by a person, including the sale or disposition to that person of property of the Municipality that continues to be required for the purposes of the Municipality."

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Community Planning and Economic Development Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

- (1) Authorize and direct staff to host a public information meeting, in collaboration with Hope Blooms Youth Social Entrepreneurial Ventures Inc.;
- (2) Authorize and direct the CAO or his designate to negotiate and execute an operating and stewardship agreement with Hope Blooms Youth Social Entrepreneurial Ventures Inc. which, in the determination of the CAO or his designate, (i) accords with the terms and conditions set out in Table 1 respecting the construction and operation of a Global Kitchen for Social Change in Murray Warrington Park, and (ii) appropriately accounts for the results of community and stakeholder engagement; and
- (3) Notwithstanding recommendation #2, staff will return to Regional Council to seek further directions if, in the determination of the CAO or his designate, the engagement process involving the community and stakeholders generates a clear consensus on the part of participants in favour of materially changing any of the terms and conditions described in Table 1.

BACKGROUND

Hope Blooms Youth Social Entrepreneurial Ventures Inc. ("Hope Blooms Inc.") encourages at-risk youth and the community at large in building positive environments that foster personal empowerment and healthy communities, while creating inclusive, diverse, flourishing spaces that foster potentials being actualized and build sustainable sources of health and wellbeing through active citizenship. Hope Blooms is a Canadian Registered Charity (number 83285-8377-RR001).

On April 21, 1998, Halifax Regional Council approved the Community Garden Project at Murray Warrington Park (2346 Brunswick Street, Halifax) which allowed the community group to design, construct and sustain a community garden (Attachment 3). Since 1998, Hope Blooms Inc. has been operating the community garden at Murray Warrington Park.

On June 24, 2014, Halifax Regional Council approved the construction and operation of a greenhouse by Hope Blooms Inc. at Murray Warrington Park. Hope Blooms Inc. received monetary support from Dragons Den in November 2013 to build the greenhouse in support of their work.

Hope Blooms Inc. is now seeking to expand its community garden and greenhouse facility with the addition of a Global Kitchen for Social Change (Attachment 1). The proposed 3000 sq. ft. building is described by Hope Blooms Inc. as a green energy, urban "Community Kitchen"; it will be constructed adjacent to the Hope Blooms garden and greenhouse with shared community space – built for community inclusion, social impact, local food production, food security and innovation, and building relationships across generations, across cultures and ethnicities, across barriers to language; through food in safe, inclusive and vibrant spaces. A presentation in support of their request was made at the July 15, 2018 Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee meeting (Attachment 2). Staff was directed to prepare a staff report to consider supporting Hope Blooms Inc. by allowing them to build a Global Kitchen for Social Change on the lands of Murray Warrington Park and to engage the community and stakeholders during this process.

This proposed facility will accommodate youth led programming, community dinners, cultural food and film events, community garden to table cooking and culinary classes, and social entrepreneurship.

DISCUSSION

Hope Blooms Inc. plans for a commercial kitchen offers the potential for shared use with HRM Parks & Recreation. The proposed site at Murray Warrington Park is a convenient location for local community members participating in HRM George Dixon Community Centre's Recreation programs to benefit from this resource.

The current request to add a kitchen and programming space will also further Hope Blooms Inc.'s ability to provide programs and services to support the residents of HRM. The garden and greenhouse provide a space, open to the public, to learn and teach youth about how a greenhouse operates, how plants grow and how to successfully contribute to community food security.

The proposed 3000 sq. ft. Community Kitchen would be located adjacent to the existing greenhouse. As part of the permitting process the kitchen may need to be attached to the greenhouse; a breezeway connection can be considered. Hope Blooms Inc. would be required to apply for and obtain the required permits to authorize construction. The permits will address all aspects related to the request to build; such as the National Building Code, HRM Zoning Requirements and HRM Development Engineering.

The proposed 3000 sq. ft. Community Kitchen will not adversely affect the public use of open space at Murray Warrington Park. However, the existing swing set will need to be relocated within the existing park by Hope Blooms Inc. to accommodate the proposed kitchen. In addition, a portion of the community garden space will be impacted by the proposed Kitchen. Therefore, staff will engage the community and stakeholders on the project prior to execution of the agreement if Regional Council approves the placement of the Community Kitchen in the park.

Staff is aware that Hope Blooms Inc is not in compliance with the existing Operating and Stewardship agreement for the greenhouse, but staff is working with them to bring them into compliance. Compliance with the existing agreement has been added as a key term and condition that must be met prior to granting permission for the Community Kitchen.

The following table outlines the conditions which must be met in the operating and stewardship agreement respecting the construction and operation of a Global Kitchen for Social Change in Murray Warrington Park.

Table 1 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Property Address/PID	2346 Brunswick Street, Halifax / 00148635
Owner	Halifax Regional Municipality
Operator	Hope Blooms Youth Social Entrepreneurial Ventures Inc.
Building Area	3000 sq.ft., subject to final measurement
Type of Agreement	Operating and Stewardship Agreement
Term	Ten (10) years
Renewal Term	10 years, at HRM's sole option
Management Fee	N/A
Key Terms	<p>Hope Blooms Inc. will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) comply with the existing Operating and Stewardship agreement with respect to the operation and maintenance of the greenhouse; b) operate the Community Kitchen in a manner that (i) complies with all applicable laws, regulations and municipal policies, and (ii) delivers on community and educational (e.g. youth-at-risk programming) objectives and provides services aligned with HRM's purposes and priorities; c) ensure the Community Kitchen is compatible with the use of the site as a public park, including making the building(s) accessible to the public, subject to time restrictions and access constraints related to safety or security concerns. Minimum exclusive HRM use of the Community Kitchen building(s) will be for one afternoon per week (weekday), for a minimum of 2 hours; d) ensure the Community Kitchen's common space is accessible to the public, subject to time restrictions and access constraints related to safety or security concerns. Minimum exclusive HRM use of the Community Kitchen's common space will be for two evenings per week (weekday) and one afternoon per weekend, with each of these periods of time not to exceed 3 hours;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">e) ensure shared use activity with HRM, minimum once per month (for a minimum of 4 hours). Dates and times to be determined by collaboration between George Dixon Community Recreation Coordinator and Hope Blooms Inc. staff. The intention is for Hope Blooms Inc. to share their skills and experience with and provide services to participants registered through HRM Recreation programs;f) demonstrate continuing efforts to consult with the community;g) ensure the included washrooms are open and accessible to the public when the Community Kitchen's building(s) are in use, subject to time restrictions and access constraints related to safety and security concerns;h) ensure impacted play equipment is relocated (or replaced) within Murray Warrington Park. Play equipment shall be installed (and certified) as per CSA "Children's Playspaces and Equipment" - CAN/CSA-Z614-14, to HRM's satisfaction;i) obtain the necessary permits to authorize construction from HRM before undertaking any construction on the facility;j) obtain permission from HRM before undertaking any relocation of the swing set;k) maintain and repair the facility and site as instructed by HRM;l) pay for all electrical, water, heating and cooling attributed to the operation of the kitchen;m) comply with all applicable policies of HRM;n) maintain its status as a not for profit society or charitable entity not engaged in business; ando) participate in any social or financial audits (and other reporting features) of the management of the facility. <p>The agreement will have HRM's standard terms regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) corporate status;b) appropriate indemnities to be provided by Hope Blooms Inc.;c) insurance coverage to be provided by Hope Blooms Inc.; andd) termination of agreement; Hope Blooms Inc. vacating the premises and removing equipment at the end of the term or any renewal thereof.
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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Entering into the proposed operating and stewardship agreement with Hope Blooms Inc. does not create financial implications for HRM.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations in this Report. The risks considered rate is low. To determine this, consideration was given to operational, financial and reputational risks.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

If Regional Council approves the siting of a Community Kitchen in Murray Warrington Park, staff will host a public information meeting in collaboration with Hope Blooms Inc. to gather public input prior to the execution of the operating and stewardship agreement. If engagement of the community and stakeholders generates a clear consensus on the part of participants in favour of materially changing any of the terms and conditions described in Table 1, staff will return to Council for updated directions.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Community Kitchen project meets all Council approved Environmental Policies.

ALTERNATIVES

The Standing Committee could recommend that Regional Council not permit the building of a Community Kitchen on HRM property, but allow the continuation of the community gardens and greenhouse as it has operated since 1998. This would not be recommended based on the community support and minimal impact to the surrounding environment.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Kitchen Site Plan
 2. Hope Blooms Inc. Presentation from the July 19, 2018 Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee meeting
 3. Halifax Regional Council Report – Hope Blooms Greenhouse Project, June 24, 2014
-

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Gary Young csla, Landscape Architect, Capital Projects, Parks and Recreation 902.490.7174





Plant a seed. Harvest a dream.

Hope Blooms Inc.
Canadian Registered Charity – No.83285-8377-RR0001

Mandate:

Hope Blooms engages youth in marginalized communities in actualizing their full potential and becoming positive agents of change in their communities and building bright futures through experiential education in creating innovative youth driven impact in food security, social inclusion, education, and environmental stewardship. Since 2007, Hope Blooms has provided a safe space for youth in Halifax's inner city to grow their own food, contribute to community development, and produce and market their own signature brand of herb dressing with herbs they grow themselves with 100% of proceeds going into scholarships for the youth involved.

Within a context of long term impact for generational change, youth join Hope Blooms when they are 5 years of age and graduate when they are 18 years at which time they receive a yearly renewed scholarship from the proceeds of their salad dressing social enterprise. What began with a small plot of land has grown into a youth-driven movement with over 50 youth from diverse ethnicities, including Syrian newcomers; 4000 square feet of organic food gardens where youth grow food for their community and mentor over 60 community members in their garden plots; an award-winning off-the-grid greenhouse designed by one of our youth; and a small commercial kitchen and food hub where culinary training, community suppers, celebrations, and salad dressing production takes place.

Hope Blooms has found that when people come together to create a positive impact in the communities in which they live, the social determinants of health are directly impacted, particularly education, food security, social inclusion, and safety support networks. We have created a social entrepreneurial environment where people, regardless of age or socio-economic status, can work together to build capacity, friendship, inclusion, and employment while giving back to the community.

We have outgrown our space over one year ago and community participants continue to increase beyond space capacity.

The North End of Halifax has recently become home to over 150 Syrian newcomers coming to Canada as refugees with many joining Hope Blooms in growing and sharing food. In Hope Blooms we also have over 30 African Nova Scotian families as well as over 20 immigrant families from around the globe. Hope Blooms has proven the effectiveness of building strong culturally and generationally diverse relationships through food growing, inclusive sharing, and together building spaces of empowerment and unity. Even though we serve a community which for generations been marginalized and underserved, our

collective organic food gardens and greenhouse in the heart of the inner city have become a central point of the community both socially and therapeutically. Our food hub on Cornwallis St is 1000 sq ft and has become a full time food security and food innovation space with full time, year round programming for youth and their families. Over the past year we have become unable to hold our expanding community at Hope Blooms. In this space, we now serve over 360 meals and snacks each month and offer year round full time programming that we now have to do in shifts with limited time frames and restricted capacity. We have had increased demand from 20 Syrian families to have increased food access at the garden site and to be involved in cooking at our food space. We have a waiting list now for Syrian women in our community who want to learn about starting their own social enterprise and use our commercial kitchen (we now have 2 families we share our kitchen with). This year we have grown to include 63 youth, all from within inner city Halifax. We have increased collaborations to now include Mi'kmaq Early Child Development Centre and Cunard Street Preschool Program to provide programming but can only provide for 1 day weekly. In our food hub we now have had to limit programming to our Junior and High School youth due to space capacity limitations. We have had 2 large community consultation visioning sessions facilitated by Dalhousie Management Without Borders Team where it was repeatedly stated that a Hope Blooms large commercial kitchen where families could cook together; where community members could learn how to run their own food based social businesses and give back to their community; and where all youth can participate in year round programming would be a much needed and valued space to have.

Proposal for Desired Outcome

Hope Blooms Global Kitchen for Social Change

An urban Global Kitchen for Social Change. Bringing people of diverse ethnicities, cultures, and generations together around food to build community for creating social inclusion, safety support networks, food security, social innovation and agri-food based social entrepreneurship development...with youth leading the way.

We believe when families reclaim the kitchen as a place to bond with and educate their children, communities become stronger and more equipped for the struggles of daily life. Bringing people together around food is one way to build community for creating social, racial and economic justice and change.

Vision: Location: Outer edge of Murray Warrington park next to our greenhouse.

2000 sq ft green energy urban community kitchen adjacent Hope Blooms gardens and greenhouse with shared community spaces – built for community social inclusion, social impact, food security and innovation; and building relationships across generations, across cultures and ethnicities, across barriers to language, through food in safe, inclusive, vibrant spaces. This would provide:

- 1. Youth led programming including STEAM based programming (Science, technology, engineering, arts, and math), mentorship, leadership, changemakers (creating social impact) and urban agriculture;**
- 2. Community dinners and culinary classes where a variety of local Chefs come in to share our kitchen and host dinners that are culturally diverse and innovative; sharing these spaces with other community groups, organizations in the North End.**
- 3. Social entrepreneurship to be taught experientially in collaboration with Canadian Food Inspection Agency, National Research Council, Retailers and serving youth, newcomers, and other vulnerable populations. ; offer kitchen space for developing social entrepreneurial agri-food products, taking them to markets and taking on a social issue to impact in community through this**

venture.

4. Host cultural foods and film in the space, all with celebrating the rich diverse ethnicities in this community; creating special community events around different cultural cuisines – appreciating our increasingly diverse community while also appreciating the historical hardships of this marginalized community – building bridges.

5. Hold garden to table cooking with growing your own food, harvesting, cooking and sharing community meals and recipes together;

6. Host Community “Dragons Den” style pitch events for youth social entrepreneurship ideas and have mentors from bigger community involved. Having Jr Master Chef events – where all Haligonians may take part in.

To have this Urban Global Kitchen adjacent our gardens will integrate food culture, food access, food systems and create long term and innovative sustainability for a marginalized community to directly impact determinants of health, in particular food security, social inclusion, support networks, education and economic development, all in the heart of the community they live in. It will create an innovative, holistic approach in a close, assessable location for members to come together and build a strong vibrant community that honors environmental stewardship, cultural heritage, empowerment from within, and capacity building in being the creators of positive change and sustainability.

Hope Blooms has the support of NS Mainland Building Trades, NS Construction Safety Council, and other organizations and donors who want to contribute to bringing this project to fruition. Hope Blooms would be responsible for all operational costs, stewardship, management, insurance, delivery of programming.

Without building this Urban Global Kitchen, we will not be able to serve the greater North End community; will not be able to further build food security; will not be able to share social entrepreneurship hands on education with the many Syrian newcomers and immigrants who want to work with us in addressing social issues; creating positive social impact and contribute to building an inclusive, vibrant healthy community for all; we will not be to offer year round food programming to more youth. We also are unable to afford spaces in community due to the significant increases in rent, which is making it harder to have a place for community food initiatives, and social change within the community we serve.

Appendix:

Hope Blooms Core Values:

- **Youth growing to be inclusive and impactful community leaders in a marginalized environment-** more than 50 youth grow over 3000 pounds of organic produce in and for their community; grow pride and a sense of belonging in community; grow a social enterprise that builds brighter futures, from the ground up, while giving back to the community.
- **Fostering culturally relevant and collaborative ecosystems with integrity-** Inclusivity and embracing diversity are core to everything we do, from welcoming new neighbors with open arms to inviting friends from all walks of life to take part in our programming. We collaborate with mentors from our local universities, community college, junior high and high schools, as well as many local restaurants, businesses, and organizations.
- **Innovation in urban agriculture education-** From hands-on skill-building in agriculture to designing and operating an off-the-grid greenhouse, youth have access to a suite of non-traditional educational programming. Working with mentors, youth take the lead in being stewards of our environment; learn best practices in organic food growing, ecosystems, and permaculture gardening; and sit on committees related to food and the environment.
- **Coaction-** Hope Blooms has found that when people come together to create a positive impact in the communities in which they live, the social determinants of health are directly impacted, particularly education, food security, social inclusion, and safety support networks. We have created a social entrepreneurial environment where people, regardless of age or socio-economic status, can work together to build capacity and employment while giving back to the community.

Some of our recent awards:

- Ernst and Young Special Citation Social Entrepreneur Of The Year Atlantic Canada – 2016
- Social Innovator of the Year – 2017. Halifax Assistance Fund
- Governor General – Meritorious Service Medal - 2016
- Lieutenant Governor’s Architecture Award for Outstanding Design in Greenhouse - 2016
- The Coast - Gold Winner Best Community Initiative - 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017.
- CBC’s Dragons Den top pitches of all time -2016 (youth who pitched were 10 years to 14 years of age)
- Halifax Urban Design Award of Merit for Community Initiatives 2018

Impact:

Food Security:

- Over the past 7 years youth have grown over 21,000 pounds of organic vegetables and fruit for community members, all free of charge.
- We have a small community food hub where on a monthly basis we serve 260 healthy meals and 306 healthy snacks.
- We have a farm exchange program throughout the Annapolis Valley and collaborated this past summer in bringing another 500 pounds of organic produce that our youth donated to the 110 Syrian refugees that now live in their community. The youth also gave 15 garden plots to Syrian families this past summer in order to grow food for their families.

Community Confidence & Inclusion:

- In a survey completed last year, 100 % of respondents indicated that they believe that having a plot in Hope Blooms garden has increased their ability to provide healthy food for their families.
- 99% of respondents felt a greater sense of belonging in their community since participating in the Hope Blooms garden and programs.
- 92% of respondents indicated that their level of community involvement has improved since joining the garden.
- We now have 53 youth, 12 seniors, 35 families (including 15 newcomer families from Syria) all volunteering with Hope Blooms and growing food, relationships, and community.

Education:

- In June 2016, our first Hope Blooms member, Mamadou Wade, graduated from high school and enrolled in the commerce program at the University of Toronto. He received an \$8,000 Hope Blooms scholarship, provided through sales of our dressings, and also won a \$70,000 TD Community Leadership Scholarship award. Mamadou is the first in his family history to undertake post-secondary education.
- All Hope Blooms youth graduating from high school this past year and all are in post-secondary education. Like Mamadou, all of them the first in their families to undertake post-secondary education. One of these youth, Bocar, has been involved in Hope Blooms since 10 years of age and has said, "Beauty and brilliance do not know a postal code. I want to be a role model for my younger sister and prove that where we live is not what defines us." Bocar is going to Stanford University to study computer science.

- In 2016, four of our youth received their Masters Organic Gardeners Certification - the youngest in Canada to receive this University credit. Alvero, one of the recipients who has been involved in Hope Blooms for the past seven years, stated, “I have learned so much about life from agriculture and from ecosystems where everything thing from a micro-organism to a tomato plant has equal value and reverence.”
- Our Youth Council was represented at York University February 10th with speaking with international delegates interested in having more involvement of youth in social enterprise. Our youth made connections with agents of change globally and have been invited since to speak in New York in 2017
- University of Toronto has studied Hope Blooms; published a case study on At Risk Youth and the benefits of social enterprise and has been incorporated into Social Finance curriculum for Social Finance at University of Toronto for 2017. Our youth are credited with this research.
- Dalhousie School of Health Promotion has conducted research this past year to measure impact through the lens of the youth parent (s)/ guardians. This research is being published in Spring, 2018.

**“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn”
Benjamin Franklin**

hopeblooms



3000 pounds organic fruits & vegetables,
all free for our community each year













Hope Blooms member from Halifax lands full Stanford scholarship

THE CHRONICLE HERALD
Published June 30, 2017 - 6:18pm

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Hope Blooms 'graduate' takes life lessons to college

THE CHRONICLE HERALD
Published February 23, 2016 - 6:27am

Videos



Mamadou Wade, scholarship winner from the Hope Blooms project, in their greenhouse on Brunswick Street in Halifax.





P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No. 11.3.2
Halifax Regional Council
June 24, 2014

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed
Councillor Barry Dalrymple, Chair Environment and Sustainability
Standing Committee

DATE: June 10, 2014

SUBJECT: Hope Blooms Greenhouse Project

ORIGIN

The May 30, 2014 staff report and the June 5, 2014 meeting of the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Subsection 61(3) of the *HRM Charter* says "The property vested in the Municipality, absolutely or in trust, is under the exclusive management and control of the Council, unless an Act of the Legislature provides otherwise."

Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee Terms of Reference: "To encourage the appropriate policy structure to address amount, use and protection of parks, forests (urban and rural) and open spaces for the use and enjoyment of the residents of HRM; and other related activities in the areas of parks and open spaces as identified by the Standing Committee and approved by Regional Council

RECOMMENDATION

The Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee recommends Halifax Regional Council authorize and direct staff to CAO, or his delegate, to negotiate and execute an agreement with Hope Blooms in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in Table 1 of the May 30, 2014 staff report respecting the operation of a greenhouse to be built at Murray Warrington Park.

BACKGROUND

As per the May 30, 2014 staff report included as attachment 1 of this report.

DISCUSSION

The Environment and Sustainability met and reviewed the May 30, 2014 staff report at their June 5, 2014 meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As per the May 30, 2014 staff report included as attachment 1 of this report

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Standing Committee meetings are open to the public.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The greenhouse project meets the Council approved Environmental Policy.

ALTERNATIVES

The Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee did not provide an alternative.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Staff report dated May 30, 2014

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

Report Prepared by: Quentin Hill, Legislative Assistant, 490-6732



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Attachment 1

Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee
June 5, 2014

TO: Chair and Members of the Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY: Brad Anguish, Director, Community & Recreation Services

DATE: May 30, 2014

SUBJECT: Hope Blooms Greenhouse Project

ORIGIN

Hope Blooms Youth Social Entrepreneurial Ventures Inc. (a federal not-for-profit corporation) has requested to expand its community garden at Murray Warrington Park to include a greenhouse that will be open to the public.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Subsection 61(3) of the *HRM Charter* says "The property vested in the Municipality, absolutely or in trust, is under the exclusive management and control of the Council, unless an Act of the Legislature provides otherwise."

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Environment & Sustainability Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council authorize and direct staff to CAO, or his delegate, to negotiate and execute an agreement with Hope Blooms in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in Table 1 respecting the operation of a greenhouse to be built at Murray Warrington Park.

BACKGROUND

Based on a staff report, dated April 21, 1998 (Section 3.2.12), at Committee of the Whole, Council approved the Community garden Project at Murray Warrington Park (2346 Brunswick Street, Halifax) in principle which allowed the community group to design, construct and sustain a community garden.

Since 1998, Hope Blooms has been operating a community garden at the Murray Warrington Park site. Hope Blooms is a federally registered not for profit organization (number 874493-9).

Hope Blooms engages at-risk youth and the community at large in building positive environments that foster personal empowerment and healthy communities while creating inclusive, diverse, flourishing spaces that foster potentials being actualized and build sustainable sources of health and wellbeing through active citizenship.

The community is involved in every aspect of this garden. There are 4 local schools involved, 5 local organizations that Hope Blooms partners with for workshops and food distribution and over 70 community volunteers, including 42 youth ages 5 through 15 years old and over 30 adults. The garden has 27 family plots on one side and 3 large communal plots that the youth use on the other side.

The garden is run largely by community members, including 9 youth garden leaders. Workshops at the garden are developed in partnership with community members; there is a youth mentorship component to the community gardening efforts; food is grown by community members and harvested by community members. During the 2013 growing season, Hope Blooms grew over 2000 pounds of vegetables and fruit, thereby having a direct positive impact on community food security.

Hope Blooms is now seeking to expand its community garden at Murray Warrington Park to include a greenhouse. This greenhouse project is meant to help the community expand the amount of food they produce each year, which will help to increase local food security in the community, and to expand community inclusion by means of mentorship and youth-at-risk programming.

DISCUSSION

Hope Blooms received monetary support from the Dragons Den in November 2013 to build a greenhouse to support their work. Build Right Nova Scotia (a cooperative of unionized contractors and tradespeople), subsequently offered to contribute all the supplies and labour necessary to build the greenhouse, allowing Hope Blooms to reinvest the funds from the Dragons Den back into the operations within the community. The greenhouse is being architecturally designed using the latest in green technology and incorporation of sustainable materials in its construction. Through discussions with Build Right Nova Scotia and Hope Blooms, HRM staff is recommending a model whereby HRM will own the greenhouse and Hope Blooms will manage the operations, maintain the structure and deliver youth-at-risk programming and other barrier-free offerings using its Community garden and the greenhouse. Build Right Nova Scotia is responsible for obtaining all construction related permits and approvals associated with this project. The land is designated as Park & Institutional and the greenhouse would be incidental to its use as a public park and used as a meeting place for education and social activities by the community as is contemplated under section 67(1) of the Land Use By-Law for Halifax Peninsula.

Hope Blooms intends to use the greenhouse to provide a space to extend the growing season into the fall and early spring. The space will be open to the public to come and learn, teach youth about how the greenhouse operates, how plants grow and how to successfully contribute to community food security.

Hope Blooms has requested that the greenhouse be built next to their Community garden at Murray Warrington Park. Through the management agreement, Hope Blooms will be required to operate the greenhouse once built, maintain it during the term of the agreement and run specific programming out of the greenhouse.

Mayor's Conversation on a Healthy Liveable Community

Local food production and promotion is one of the key outcome areas for this report. The greenhouse project with Hope Blooms helps to meet the need of this goal in the Halifax area. The greenhouse will help increase the amount of food that can be produced and it will help to extend the growing season making the food more accessible at certain times of the year that don't normally lend itself to optimum growing conditions.

Hope Blooms was a stakeholder in the Mayor's Conversation on a Healthy Liveable Community and consider themselves an active and successful part of the local food security in Halifax.

Healthy Communities Outcome Theme

Council's Priority Outcome Theme is Healthy Communities. As part of this outcome, it mentions the following: *"A healthy community is a physically active community and HRM's recreation services strive to provide access to facilities and natural assets that enable a range of choices for structured and unstructured leisure and recreation activities."* Community Gardening is an unstructured leisure activity. The Greenhouse will help provide residents access to a facility that will support education regarding this unstructured activity.

Continued support of the Hope Blooms community garden and construction of the greenhouse will deliver upon several areas of Community & Recreation Services Business Plan:

1. C&RS 1.4 Healthy Communities - Local Food Production

"Operational programs, policies, and regulations in support of local food production and promotion will be reviewed."

2. C&RS 6.1 Healthy Communities – Recreation and Leisure

"Expand barrier-free program offerings"

3. C&RS 6.5 Healthy Communities - Local Food Production

"Review vending services and Community Garden program to ensure alignment with Local Food Production and Promotion strategy"

Terms and Conditions of the Management Agreement

Table 1: TERMS AND CONDITIONS	
Property Address/PID#	2346 Brunswick Street, Halifax / 00148635
Owner	Halifax Regional Municipality

Operator	Hope Blooms Youth Social Entrepreneurial Ventures Inc.
Building Area	1,122 sq.ft., subject to final measurement
Term	Five (5) years
Renewal Term	5 years, at HRM's sole option
Management Fee	N/A
Key Terms	<p>Hope Blooms will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) operate the greenhouse in a manner that delivers on community and educational (e.g., youth-at-risk programing) objectives aligned with HRM's priorities;b) ensure the use of the greenhouse is compatible with the use of the site as a municipal park, including making the greenhouse accessible to the public during a reasonable part of day-light hours or normal business day hours (allowing for staff breaks/periods of leave), subject to maintaining a safe and secure facility;c) demonstrate continuing efforts to consult with the community;d) obtain permission from HRM before undertaking any significant construction on the facility or site;e) maintain and repair the facility and site as instructed by HRM;f) comply with all applicable policies of HRM; andg) participate in any social or financial audits (and other reporting features) of the management of the site. <p>The agreement will have standard terms regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) corporate status;b) appropriate indemnities to be provided by Hope Blooms;c) insurance coverage to be provided by Hope Blooms; andd) termination of the agreement.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Entering into the proposed management agreement with Hope Blooms does not create financial implications for HRM.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

If the project is approved, staff proposes to host a public information meeting in collaboration with Hope Blooms prior to the start of construction.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The greenhouse project meets all Council approved Environmental Policy.

ALTERNATIVES

The Standing Committee could recommend that Regional Council not allow the building of a greenhouse on HRM property but allow the continuation of the community garden as it has

operated since 1998. This would not be recommended based on the community support and minimal impact to the surrounding environment. This project will also help increase local food security, local food production and contribute to the health and well-being of the surrounding neighbourhood.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

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

Report Prepared by: Lee Moore, Community Developer, 490-4410
David Greener, Senior Solicitor, 490-3960

Original signed _____

Report Approved by: John Traves, Director, Legal, Insurance & Risk Management Services, 490-4219

Original signed _____

Report Approved by: Peter Stickings, Acting Director, Planning & Infrastructure, 490-7129
