

06-580

CITY OF HALIFAX
Memorandum

TO: Her Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council
FROM: Barry B. Coopersmith, City Manager LOCAL: 6500
DATE: 15 February 1994
SUBJECT: Africville

Late last week I met with Mr. Irvine Carvery and a committee of four others to discuss Africville. The specific area of the meeting was unknown to me prior to its start. It appears that the Africville Genealogical Society wishes to represent the community of affected people from the time of the Urban Renewal Program. They are looking for some compensation on the issues. I have asked them to itemize what they would like me to consider.

As a result of the meeting, I have begun a file review and discussion with staff to bring myself up to date. The subcommittee that was established several years ago will be resurrected. I will keep you informed as the situation progresses.



Barry B. Coopersmith
City Manager

- BBC/meb
c.c. R. Britton
M. E. Donovan
R. Ridgley
C. Isaacs

15 Feb ✓

CITY OF HALIFAX
Memorandum

TO: Her Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council
FROM: Barry B. Coopersmith, City Manager LOCAL: 6500
DATE: 29 April 1994
SUBJECT: Africville

Attached for your information is a copy of my letter to
The Africville Genealogical Society dated April 14, 1994.

I am awaiting a reply from the Society.

for Mary Elizabeth
Barry B. Coopersmith
City Manager

BBC/meb
Attachment

0013 E



City of Halifax

City Manager

14 April 1994

The Africville Genealogical Society
Sub-Committee on Compensation
P. O. Box 391
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3K 2B8

Attention: Mr. Carvery

Dear Mr. Carvery:

I have now had an opportunity to review the video and books and documentation associated with the former relocation project. An internal committee has also reviewed much of the details associated with this situation and we have met and discussed what the City might be able to do.

I believe that much discussion is required on the points that you have so appropriately enunciated and, to that end, I would request that yourself and your committee be available to meet with me in the next few weeks.

As I indicated at our first meeting, there are a number of issues to be addressed including legal obligation, moral obligation, the representation issue, and the numerous possible alternative solutions to any and all of the above.

Before other people become involved in the process, I would request that your committee and myself sit down and discuss these issues to try and develop an action plan and a timeframe in which we might achieve some conclusions.

I look forward to the opportunity of discussing these issues with you in the very near future. I would appreciate if you could contact Mary Elizabeth of my office at 421-6500 to arrange a suitable time for such a get together.

Thank you very much.

Yours truly,

Barry B. Coopersmith
City Manager

BBC/meb

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 749
Halifax, N.S.
B3J 3A5

Location:

Third Floor
Duke St. Tower
3001a Square

C O N F I D E N T I A L

B

C I T Y O F H A L I F A X
Memorandum
File 06.500

TO: Mayor Ducharme and Members of City Council

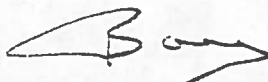
FROM: Barry B. Coopersmith, City Manager LOCAL: 6500

DATE: 3 June 1994

SUBJECT: Africville Genealogical Society

On 2 June 1994 a meeting was held with a sub-committee of the above group. We discussed their points at issue. We agreed to continue discussing until we reached an acceptable solution for all. We have tentatively set 3 more meeting dates. One is late June, one late July, and one in late August. Our approach will be to identify an issue and then jointly find solutions to that issue before moving to the next issue. No specific time frame was set for conclusion. It was agreed that we wanted to deal with the anguish of the aggrieved as an issue. Community input throughout the process is a given. Council and the community will have to ratify any final agreement.

I will keep you informed.



Barry B. Coopersmith
City Manager

-jep

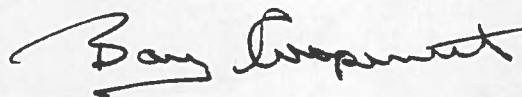
C I T Y O F H A L I F A X
Memorandum

TO: Mayor Ducharme and Members of City Council
FROM: Barry B. Coopersmith, City Manager LOCAL: 6500
DATE: 26 July 1994
SUBJECT: Africville

On July 26, 1994 there was a meeting with the Africville Genealogical Society regarding compensation. My consistent position has been that although there are unlikely any legal issues to which the city is liable nor is it likely the city is responsible for any financial issues, my personal opinion is there are some moral issues which should be dealt with. This conclusion is drawn because thirty years later there is still aggravated residents and a significant number of people who feel they have been wronged. By today's standards we would not treat any community the way communities were treated in the past. My suggested approach to dealing with the feelings of those involved was to develop a series of joint actions for both the city and the Africville Genealogical Society to follow through on that would help heal the wounds.

Until today's meeting it appeared this approach would be satisfactory. During the past month something has happened to change the committee's mind. Financial compensation for the individual property owner appears to be uppermost in their mind. They have indicated that they will have to take any change of approach back to the community in some sort of a community meeting. I have agreed to attend a community meeting tentatively set for the afternoon of August 20, 1994.

There have been no commitments made on behalf of the city other than a commitment to work with a representative group to try and come to some common solution on the issue of Africville which is both acceptable to the community and the city.



Barry B. Coopersmith
City Manager

-jep
cc Africville Advisory Committee:
R. Britton, Social Planning
M. E. Donovan, Legal Dept.
R. Ridgley, Finance Dept.
C. Isaacs, Alderman's Office

C I T Y O F H A L I F A X
Memorandum

TO: Mayor Ducharme and Members of City Council
FROM: Barry B. Coopersmith, City Manager LOCAL: 6500
DATE: 29 August 1994
SUBJECT: Africville Meeting - Saturday, 27 August 1994

This memo is being written about an hour after the above noted meeting and is intended to give Council my immediate impressions of what occurred at the meeting and the vents surrounding it.

The general tone and demeanour of the meeting was extremely hostile and emotional. Questions were asked and no time or ability was given, in many instances, to respond. The same three or four questioners asked the majority of questions over the two hour duration of the meeting. It was my intent to be there as a resource to the committee. It was their intent for me to be there as a whipping boy. I did not have answers to a lot of their questions and they demanded that I obtain them and soon. It would be my hope that at least this opportunity to vent frustrations by the 60 to 75 people in attendance might help to focus what it is they are specifically looking for.

The press were there in force and much of the audience's dialogue was directed at the cameras, not at me. The Carvery Brothers, Ed and Victor, have vowed to stay at Seaview Park until they get additional compensation. There was also some suggestion that the people of Africville might take more drastic action and block the bridge or the CN Rail lines for a day or more. One reporter in particular from CBC TV started asking a question. I asked if he was from Africville, he indicated he was not; hence I refused to answer his question as I was there to discuss with the people from Africville. As the meeting broke up he started asking questions as I was walking to my car. I had earlier told him that I had no comment to make. I am sure he will edit the tape in such a way as to make me look as bad as he can.

There were many words thrown around like the whites killed their people through toxic waste dumping. There was also some suggestion by the audience that the City stole their homes and their land. It was indicated that their parents were weak and gave in. This generation of Africville descendants were well educated and strong and they would get their land and their birthright back as well as being compensated for the injustices that they believe were done to them. Generally, most of the meeting was emotional.

A Mr. William Gaye (I think) stood up and tried to incite the group, telling them about a Mr. Barz (?) who stole their families' land directly adjacent to Africville and how there was a plot with involvement from the Irvings to develop their land. He was generally well received by the group and I believe he may become aligned with them in some way in the future.

Regarding the content of the meeting, I attempted to explain why I thought I was there and this appeared to fall on deaf ears. My explanation was consistent with the memos I sent you previously. In the course of some of my comments I do recall saying that Council has been consistent in the past in refusing compensation for garbage, odour, etc. and that the Halifax contingent at the Metropolitan Authority has continually voted against compensation.

Some people at the meeting appeared to have done their homework and referred to Minutes of the Planning Committee in 1945. A Council-approved water line in 1947 that never materialized and Finance and Administration Committee Minutes and staff reports from 1968.

At the part of the meeting I was in attendance, there appeared to be some support for the following:

- a) What plans does the City of Halifax have for compensating the residents of Africville for hosting the landfill for 27 years.
- b) Does the City of Halifax intend to give the people of Africville a comprehensive compensation package for treating them so poorly.
- c) Who received what compensation in the past as a result of Africville. Will the list of names and amounts be available.
- d) Time for discussion is over and it is now time to act. There must be a substantive proposal given to the people in the next two months at the absolute latest.
- e) There should be a new committee with representatives from each family negotiating.

Consistently, several members of the audience talked about "a home for a home, jobs now, and substantive compensation." Another issue that one individual raised several times was that they received the land as a grant from the Queen and how could the land be taken by the City when they had a land grant. When I tried to explain the process used I was not allowed to finish speaking. I also tried to speak of the process used to compensate people but to no avail. Two members of staff were

present, one in her private capacity and one to assist me. Eddy Carvery kept talking about Fairview Cove and eight million dollars for land there and Halifax destroying a community and only provided a small portion of that price in compensation.

There was also some discussion about a motion in December 21, 1967 from Finance and ----- Committee about an increase in compensation and about a Trust Fund to Seaview Baptist Church. The Carvery's at Seaview Park talked about Skin Heads and Klan coming out and threatening them.

Finally, the community asked the press and myself to leave so they could further develop their strategy. Mr. Irvine Carvery said he would be back to me with further communication.

Observation:

As I have indicated before, I believe that should the same circumstances have arrived today the Africville community would have been treated substantially different. The difference might not have been in terms of finite compensation but differently in terms of the actions the City would take. Today's society would not allow the actions taken by the City in the manner they were taken.

Over the past 30 years this issue has not gone away. I would suggest that it will not just go away now either. There is some perceived injustice that has taken place and it really is up to us to see if we can be creative enough to deal with that perception.

Some ideas that we have previously come up with include:

- providing free land for the church, possibly jointly with the Federal and Provincial Governments and the private sector
- a mini-Northwood for the people who were originally in Africville
- perhaps we can, with assistance from the Federal and Provincial Governments and the private sector, do some specific job targeting for the immediate descendants of Africville
- perhaps for the teenagers and those in their twenties who are descendants of Africville we can set up some kind of scholarship to help them take better advantage of the formal education system.


These are just a few things that could be looked into to help with a solution. It is my opinion that if after 30 years this

issue has not gone away that it will not. I do appreciate that these solutions are not consistent with the compensation scenarios that have been expressed by the community at the public meeting. These suggestions have also been discussed in general terms with the Africville Genealogical Society sub-committee on compensation.

The Africville Genealogical Society had asked some weeks ago to be put on the Council Agenda for early September. Unless otherwise directed, it is my intention to place them as a delegation on the agenda. I will not personally be in attendance at this meeting; it falls on a religious holiday. I could ask them to wait two weeks if you wish this to be delayed. It would not be my inclination to do that. Unless I hear to the contrary they will be on the Agenda as a delegation on 7 September.

These are my immediate impressions after the meeting and after further reflection and consideration I may change my opinions. Because of the possible coverage this meeting may get and the pressure it may put on members of Council I felt obligated to give you these preliminary impressions.

Should you have any questions or wish clarification on any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Barry B. Coopersmith
City Manager

-jep

CITY OF HALIFAX
MEMORANDUM

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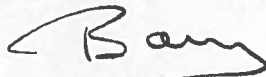
TO: Mayor Fitzgerald and Members of Council
FROM: Barry B. Coopersmith, City Manager LOCAL: 6500
DATE: 31 January, 1995
SUBJECT: Seaview Park

As Council members are aware, over the last few months a privately owned and occupied mobile trailer and truck camper have been located at Seaview Park.

Staff has been monitoring this situation but no action has been taken. The current situation is not contrary to any City ordinances. Staff is in the process of drafting an ordinance. Through Section 347 of the City Charter, all City property is under the care and management of the City Manager.

Through our monitoring, it appears that there are times when the trailer and camper have been abandoned for what might be two to three days in a row.

It is my suggestion that, if the camper and trailer are found to be vacant and abandoned, standard procedure be invoked which is that the trailer and camper would be removed. Unless I hear differently from Council members, in particular, the Council members appointed to meet with the Africville Genealogy Society, it is my intention to advise staff to remove any abandoned trailers/campers.



Barry B. Coopersmith
City Manager

-gc

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CITY OF HALIFAX
MEMORANDUM

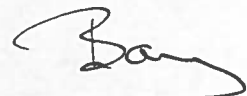
CONFIDENTIAL

TO: Mayor Fitzgerald
FROM: Barry B. Coopersmith, City Manager
DATE: 6 February 1995
SUBJECT: Seaview Park

I received your memorandum of 31 January on Seaview Park. As it happens, I sent a memorandum to you and the aldermen on a strategy for approaching this situation on the same day (see attached). In this memorandum I was particularly interested in your, Alderman Blumenthal's and Alderman Uteck's opinion since there were Council's appointments to the committee which met with the Africville Genealogy Society.

I agree with you that this has been going on for some time and it would be preferable for it to come to a quiet end. The question is how best to do this. Staff's collective opinion is that we attempt to remove the camp when it is abandoned. Obviously this means we must wait for that to occur. Any more direct action may well engender considerable press coverage, etc.

I understand you spoke to W.B. Campbell about this issue this morning. You requested no action to be taken until you spoke with Mr. I. Carvery. I will wait for your response prior to action being taken.



Barry B. Coopersmith
City Manager

attach.
cc: Members of Council
BBC/gc

CITY OF HALIFAX
MEMORANDUM

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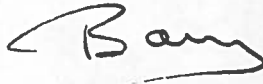
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Barry B. Coopersmith
City Manager

-gc

1 Feb