

Slide 1 - Title Screen



Orientation Tool Box

Halifax Planning
Advisory Committees

LAST UPDATED JAN 5, 2016

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Notes

Slide 4 - Overview

Overview

What is a Planning Advisory Committee (PAC)

The Application Process

Three Duties of a PAC

PAC Meetings

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Slide 5 - What is a PAC

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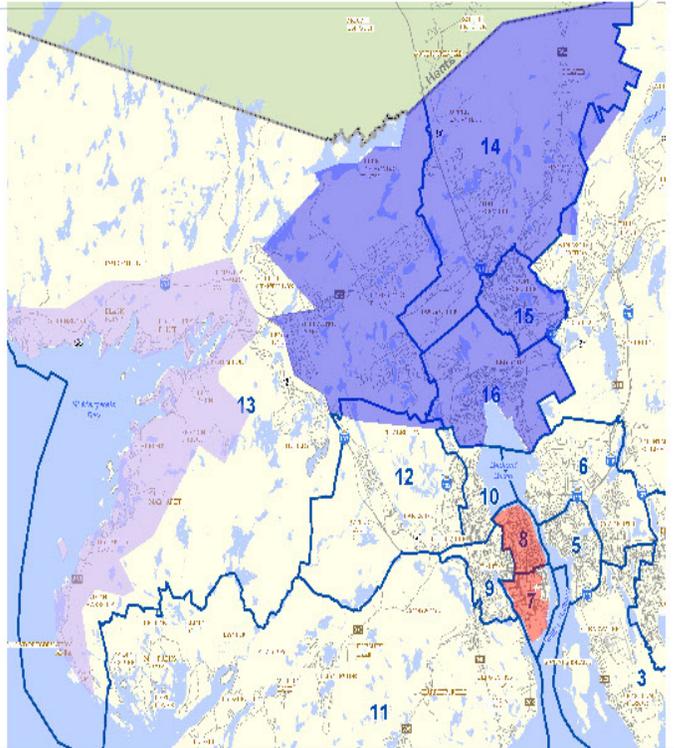
What is a Planning Advisory Committee?

As of Regional Council's February 19, 2013 decision, each community council may create up to two PACs.

Halifax & West Community Council
Districts 7 & 8 PAC

North West Community Council
St. Margaret's Bay Coastal PAC
North West PAC

Planning Advisory Committees are defined by a standard terms of reference that explains the legislative duties of the PAC and describes membership, appointments, and meeting procedure.



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Slide 6 - What is a PAC 2

What is a Planning Advisory Committee?

PACs hold regular meetings once a month to discuss development proposals requiring discretionary consideration in their planning area.

Those present at a regular meeting include Committee members, HRM staff, and often times the applicant or developer. Meetings are open to the public.

The Chair has the responsibilities of:

- managing the agenda and providing members the opportunity to speak and submit motions
- observe meeting procedure according to Administrative Order One
- permit members to ask questions of staff or in some instances the applicant

The main agenda items on a PAC agenda are development proposals and will include a presentation by an HRM staff planner, followed by discussion by the PAC.

After considering the proposal, the Committee will pass a motion in the form of a recommendation, which accompanies a staff report and staff recommendation to Community Council.

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Slide 7 - PACs & Application Process

PACs & Application Process

The PAC recommendation represents the PAC's decision at the meeting. It is forwarded to Council and also considered in planning staff's report.



PACs also host public information meetings where changes to municipal planning strategy are being considered.

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Slide 8 - Three Duties of PAC

Three Duties of PACs (Terms of Reference)

1. Planning Documents
 To advise community council with respect to the preparation or amendment of "planning documents" within their area.

2. Planning Matters
 To advise community council with respect to "planning matters" i.e. any discretionary decision regarding land use and development within their area.

3. Public Meetings
 To host public meetings associated with municipal planning strategy amendments.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGIES
 LAND USE BYLAWS

DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS
 These may include recommendations regarding massing, building height, materials, traffic, overall design and fit.

MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGIES
 SECONDARY PLANNING STRATEGIES

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Slide 9 - PAC meetings

Drafting Recommendations

Rules of Procedure

PAC meetings operate by the same rules of procedure as Council, with a few exceptions. The resulting recommendation is most visible to Community Council and should reference all considerations the PAC wishes Council to see.

- Recommendations are passed by motion.
- Motions are moved and seconded before they are debated or voted on.
- Recommendations relate to the planning policies referenced in the staff report.

Drafting a recommendation for a proposal

The PAC has three basic options:

1. Recommend that community council approve the application
2. Recommend that community council approve the application with a list of considerations/modifications
3. Recommend that community council reject the application (by defeating the motion to approve)

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Slide 10 - Public meetings

Public Information Meetings

PAC-hosted public information meetings engage a larger community by inviting the public to speak on discretionary proposals. PACs host public meetings in special circumstances, where an application proposes to change Planning Strategy. PACs play this role due to the significance of the process in amending Planning Strategy for the community.

Duties of the Chair

The chair is responsible for conducting the public meeting. This entails opening the meeting, describing its purpose, introducing planning staff and the applicant, calling members of the public to speak, directing questions, maintaining order, and closing the meeting.

Duties of the Committee

The role of the other committee members is limited to observation. Members should not speak at public meetings as the time for discussing the proposal is reserved for the future PAC meeting.

Quorum

A quorum of members is required at all regular meetings and PAC hosted public meetings (if the committee is even numbered, quorum is half the members; odd, half plus one). Your availability will be confirmed in advance.

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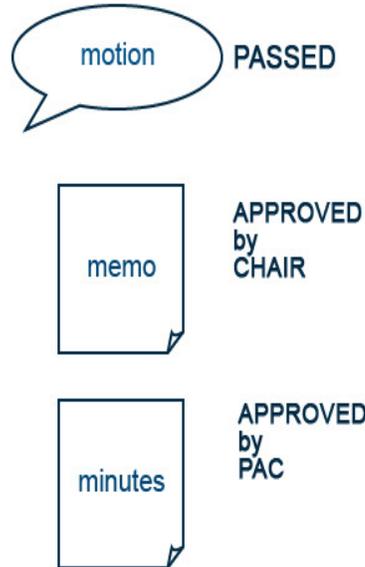
Slide 11 - Legislative Assistant

Role of Legislative Assistant

PACs are supported by the Clerk's Office, who communicate any advice given by the Committee.

Role of the Legislative Assistant

- Creates a record of meetings through minute-taking.
- Assists committee with rules of procedure and interpreting Administrative Order One.
- Notifies committee of meetings, distributes agendas and presents correspondence.
- Forwards committee's recommendation to Community Council as a memo.



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Slide 12 - Planning Process

Planning Process

The following two example cases illustrate the three legislative duties of the PAC in the context of the planning process.

In **Example A**, a Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw amendment requires the PAC to host a public meeting and subsequently, pass a recommendation at a regular PAC meeting.

In **Example B**, a proposal for a dog care facility requires a Development Agreement, prompting the PAC to review the case and pass a recommendation.

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Slide 13 - Planning Example A

Example A

- Application received
- Staff review of the proposal
- Initial report by planning staff
- Decision by Regional Council to initiate MPS/LUB amendment process
- PAC-hosted public meeting
- Meeting and recommendation from PAC
- Detailed review of proposal by staff
- Staff report to Community Council
- Recommendation from Community Council
- First Reading at Regional Council
- Public Hearing at Regional Council
- Decision at Regional Council

Case 18322: Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB) Amendment for the lands at the corner of Seymour & Coburg

Case 18322 shows how the PAC operates early on in the process, on this occasion, directly after the amendment process is initiated.

This example also illustrates how the final decision for the application rests with Regional Council, following a public hearing.

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Slide 14 - Planning Example B

Example B

- Application received
- Preliminary review of proposal
- Staff-hosted public information meeting
- Meeting and Recommendation from PAC
- Detailed review of proposal by staff
- Staff report
- First Reading at Community Council
- Public Hearing at Community Council
- Decision by Community Council
- 14 day appeal period

Case 18710: Development Agreement for a dog daycare and boarding facility

Case 18710 is part of a shorter development application process.

As it is not a Planning Strategy amendment but an application for a development agreement, a public meeting is still held; however, it is run by planning staff and not the PAC.

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Slide 15 - Conflict of Interest

Conflict of Interest and FOIPOP

Conflict of Interest

Should a conflict of interest arise with any member of the Committee, he/she is responsible for declaring the conflict of interest and withdrawing from his/her place for the duration of the matter.

Conflict of interest may involve:

- Indirect financial interest as a shareholder, official, or employee in any matter of the Committee's concern
- Direct financial interest of a family member or spouse.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP)

The FOIPOP Provincial Act may apply to PAC members regarding:

- The public may request information pertaining to the committee, (462,a). Committee members should be aware that this includes correspondence and emails regarding PAC matters.

-The privacy of individuals is kept respecting personal information held about them by municipalities (462, c). This applies primarily to how information about PAC members is handled. The municipality is charged with members' personal information, (including email addresses) and does not make them available to staff or the public without permission.

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Slide 16 - Conclusion

Conclusion

New Members

PACs require a variety of skills and expertise from members. More than that, members must learn how to operate effectively as a whole. Members are encouraged to ask questions of staff and come to understand the unique role of being a PAC member. It has been described as a process of osmosis.

Expectations

Members are expected to commit to regular monthly meetings, to attend PAC-hosted public meetings, to act with an open attitude and to operate by principles of fairness and democracy.

Outcomes

Planning Advisory Committees are an asset to their community. They facilitate citizen involvement in planning matters and have the potential to improve development outcomes. Through their recommendation, PACs have the potential to influence:

- The decision of Community Council
- The content of development agreements
- Planning policy

Notes

Slide 17 - Documents and Links

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Documents and Links

[Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act](#)

[Halifax Regional Municipality Charter](#)

[Local Government Resource Handbook - Development Control Technique](#)

[Halifax Regional Municipality - Administrative Order One Respecting the Procedures of the Council](#)

[Halifax Regional Municipality - Public Appointment Policy](#)

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Slide 18 - Contact Us

Contact Us

For further inquiries or comments regarding planning advisory committees
contact the Clerks Office

1841 Argyle St (City Hall)

PO Box 1749

clerks@halifax.ca

www.halifax.ca/municipalclerk/index.php

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