

Friends of Halifax Common presentation to

HRM Standing Committee Community Planning & Economic Development

April 20, 2023

Friends of
**HALIFAX
COMMON**





Figure 2: Map of Original Halifax Common Land Grant Boundaries, 1859



FHC (2007) to honour the 1994 Plan
to keep, recapture, not give up 240 acres
~3,000 supporters



A Pathway in the Heart of Halifax



Common Roots Urban Farm

Camp Hill Cemetery

Museum of Natural History

Citadel Community Centre

Emera Oval

Public Gardens

Halifax Citadel National Historic Site

Victoria Park

-    North Loop (30 minutes, 2km)
-    South Loop (30 minutes, 2km)
-  Other Walking Loops



Presentation

Draft Halifax Common Master Plan



▶ Presentation Themes

1. Public Consultation Options: Survey, Comments or Public Meetings
2. Protecting the Common as a Whole
3. Reclaiming + Expanding Public's Leisure Space
4. What is the Public's Role in Shaping the Common?
5. Planning for a Public Wanderers Block-
6. Vision, Purpose, & Policy Process
7. Governance: Commoning the Common for Commoners

1. HRM's chosen Public Consultation Options?

- Survey
- Email comments

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/halifax-common-master-plan?utm_source=All&utm_campaign=Sept.... The page features the Halifax logo and navigation links for 'Open for Comment', 'Archived Projects', and 'Home'. The main heading is 'Halifax Common Master Plan', accompanied by social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Email. Below this is a photograph of a person riding a bicycle on a path in a park, with orange and white circular graphic overlays. The text on the page reads: 'Review the Halifax Common Master Plan and share your feedback regarding next steps and priorities as we move toward implementation.' It then states that the plan was approved in principle by Regional Council in February 2022 and that public consultation will continue to validate the plan. A sidebar on the right includes a 'STAY INFORMED' section with an email subscription form and a 'Who's Listening' section featuring Carolle Koziak Roberts, Project Lead at Halifax Regional Municipality, with her contact email and a profile picture.

www.shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/halifax-common-master-plan

Recommendation:

- **Extend Time Frame**
(plan for the entire Common)
- **Public Meetings**
(presentation & feedback)

2. Protecting the Common as a Whole



Protecting the **Entire** Halifax Common

1. Legislative Protection

- Little comment & no commitment
- References complementary plans, memoranda of understanding (MOU), etc. in the appendices? numerous relevant provincial laws?

2. Conservation

- Gets a nod but no mention of role of Province

3. Board of trustees model

- Dominated by stakeholders: primarily the Health Authority, with seats for stewardship organizations ; Friends of...' groups as per consultants report

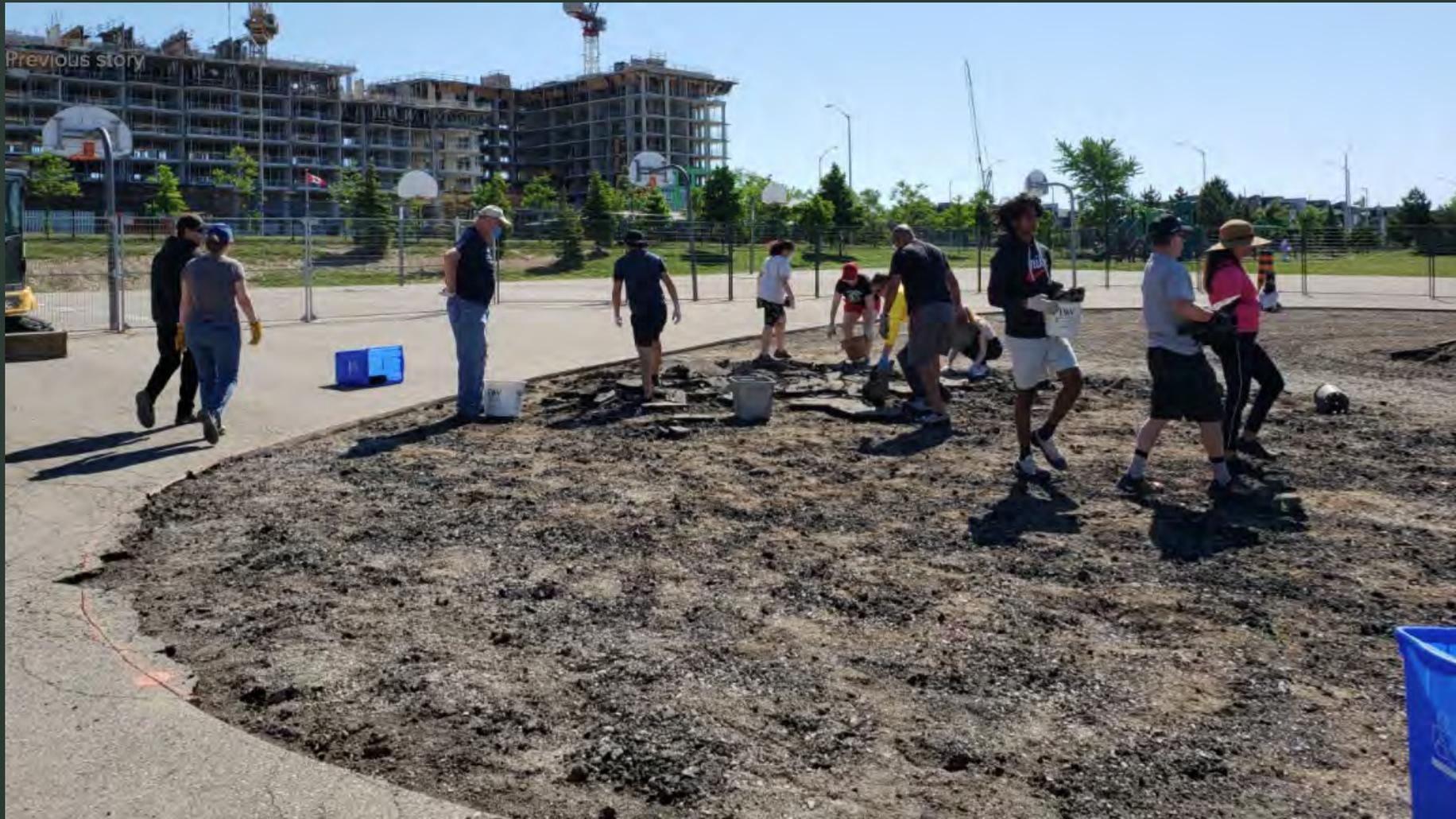
4. Last recourse

- Petitions 'for' & petitions 'against'
- Plebiscite

Recommendation:

Legislative Protection

3. Reclaiming / Expanding Public's Leisure Space



depaveparadise.ca project, Palermo Public School, Oakville, Ontario. Photo: Halton Environment Network

Strong Intention / Weak Action

- **Public consultation core outcome:** maximize Green Space. Also minimize built infrastructure, plant trees, protect vast openness of lawn of North / Central Common.
- **Policy Direction:** Preserve and reclaim the Halifax Common – cohesive Common District including MOU with Capital Health, land use planning regulations
- Municipal Open Space Management...protection...retention / enhancement / connected spaces /
- Land use as per original intent of Halifax Common being for the public / acquire additional land for open space, park & recreational use / **This is omitted in Plan**

Recommendation:

“Be Bold”

4. What's the Public's Role in Shaping the Common?



Disconnect:

Contrast: public input & draft plan

Colossal 500p

nice photos, maps, illustrations
not accessible. Needs executive
summary

Policy Gaps

Leaves out lands not owned by
HRM and Wanderers Block

Privatization: Wanderers Club

Commercialization: Emera Oval

Installation: Art, Landscape,

Father Knows Best

beginning... Halifax Common Master Plan 2017-2018



Q: What do we need to talk about as we begin the planning process?

Q: How might the Common best serve your needs & the needs of the growing city?

Good process / Inclusive process

The Whole Common

- Natural landscape
- Open
- green + open space
- sense of connection
- water features
- integration with context
- minimize development
- limit imposing developments

Recreational infrastructure

- indoor spaces + shelters

Diversity + inclusivity

- equitable access
- safety
- animated public space
- people places
- arts & events
- enabling youth arts
- food & vending
- multi-generational family focus

Action on implementation

Recommendations for Public's Role

1. Executive Summary
2. Decision Making:
 - Open, informed & fair procedure
 - eliminate secret deals
3. Actions are not being implemented

5. Plan Omits Wanderers Block

- **Natural History Museum**
- **Halifax Lancers**
- **HRM maintenance depot**
- **Public Gardens greenhouses**
- **Lawn Bowling Clubhouse / Green**
- **Power House**
- **QEI 8-storey parking garage**
- **Wanderers Field**

If you look
at pictures
from the
1800's, this
was a
stadium"
declares
Derek
Martin.



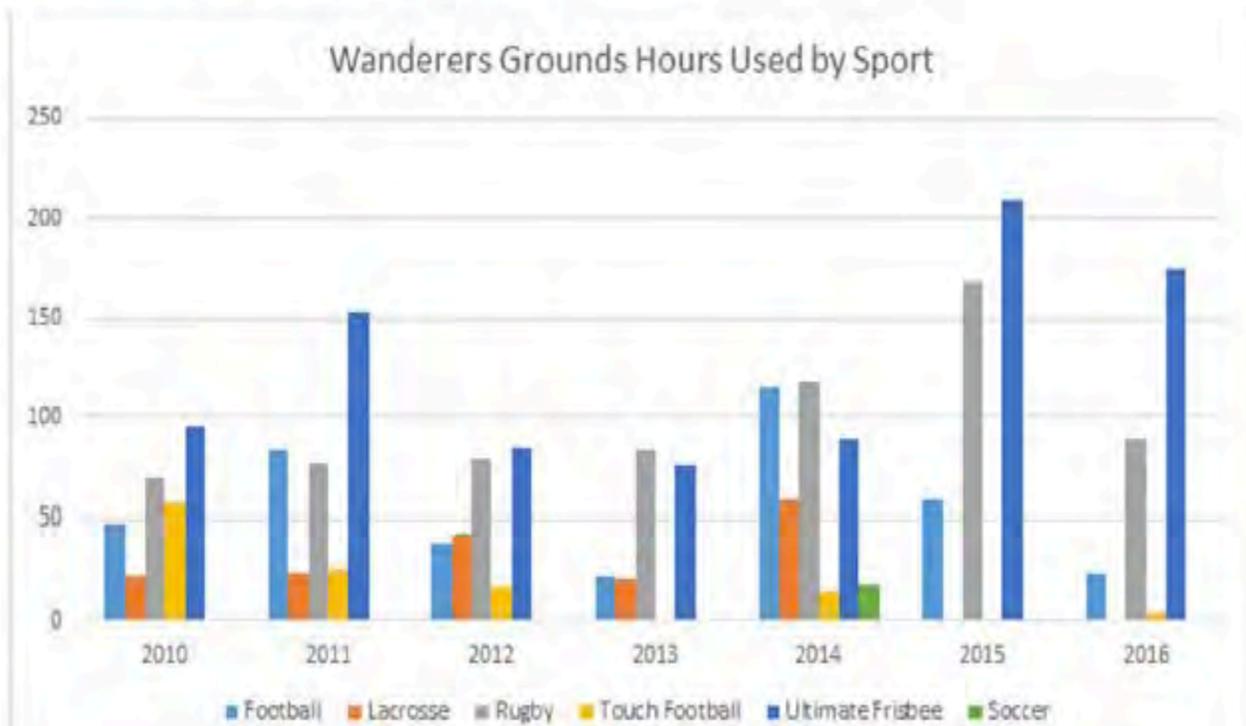
WANDERS GROUNDS, HALIFAX, NS.

WANDERS GROUNDS
HALIFAX - SOME YEARS AGO

30 Years Ago

Wanderers Club- premiere private profit

Table 1: Use of Wanderers Grounds by Sport 2010-2016



Friends of Public Gardens GreenHouse Proposal

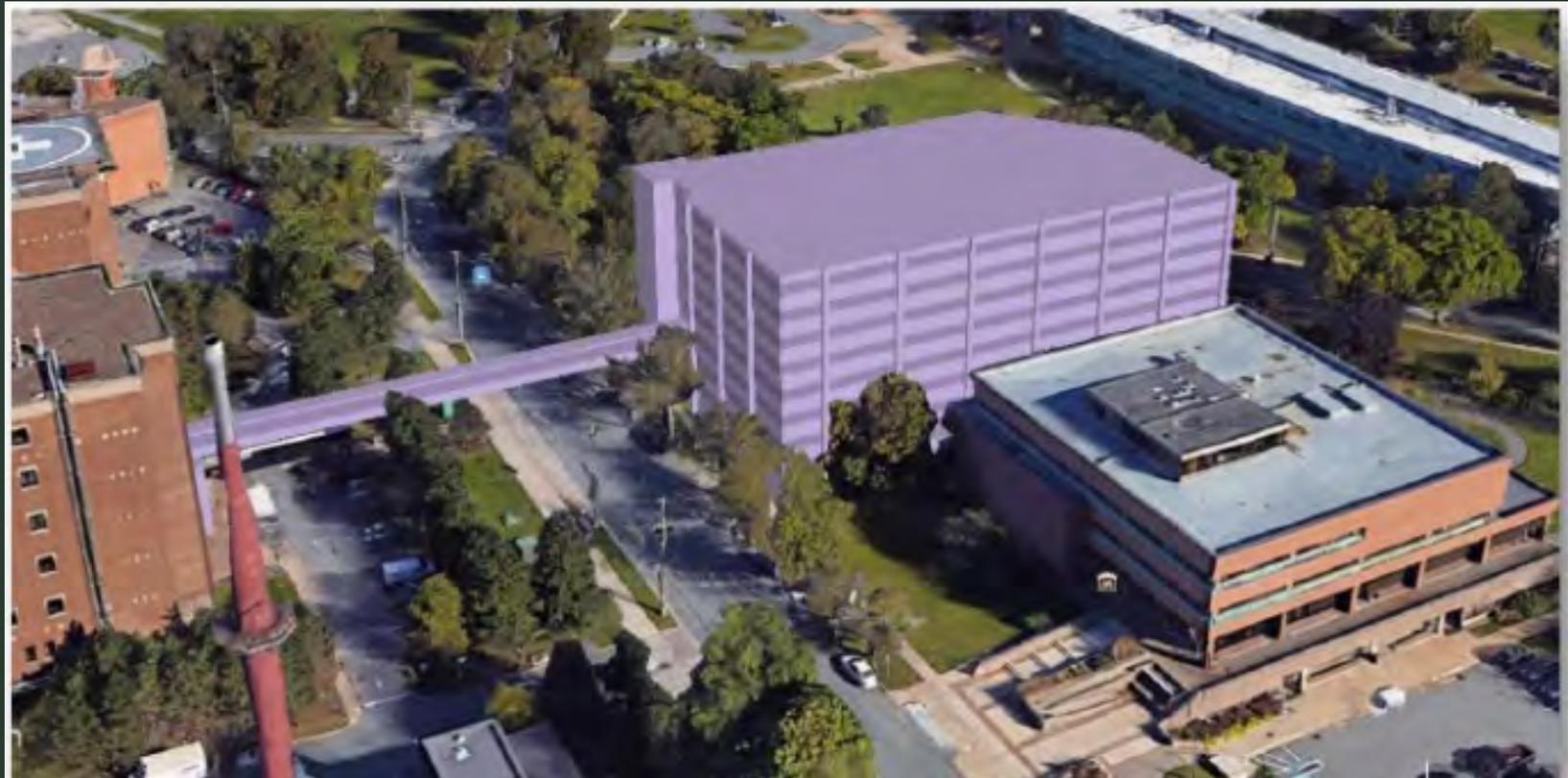


Plans for a Victorian greenhouse proposed by the Public Gardens Foundation on the Wanderers Grounds. - Public Gardens Foundation

Recommendation:

- **Include Wanderers Block in Public Consultation; no side deals**
- **Return Wanderers Field to Amateur Players; move private stadium to better location as 2017 HRM report, not as a premiere sports venue**
- **Move HRM Depot (as per 1994 Plan)**
- **Develop Common's policy for corporate sponsorship, public art , lighting, etc.**

7. Commoning the Common for Commoners



1994 Plan

It's 2018 - 24 years to uphold
their promise

Let people know what the city is already doing with the common

What about the promise of a park on the School for the Blind?
MAKE USE OF ALL THE PROPERTY PROVIDED TO US

Keep the Common as intended - few buildings,
more relaxed, ordinary, healthful, natural,
sustainable, enriching use for HS, citizens,

COMMON ROOTS FARM → WANDERERS GRO
① REMOVE DEPOT, ② →

Get rid of depot.

Regulate the whole of the Common.

Don't privatize the view of the Commons
by building high rises around the perimeter.

No more privatizing. Let's have a common
owned by the commons

Make the entire common green + keep development

Let the Univ build Stadiums to use. Not
Tax dollars. I don't even watch Soccer.

- It would be nice if the entire common was connected
Pathways (nice ones with trees) ✓
- Fewer parking lots or no parking lots

Recommendation 1994 Plan

- entire grant (240a)
- keep land
- recapture land
- not give up land

**'...to and for the use of the
inhabitants of the town of
Halifax as Common
forever'**

1763 – 2023

www.halifaxcommon.ca

Thank You

Public Green Space- more demand many missed opportunities

Grace
Maternity



Coming Victoria Park Extension

Soon Summer 1986

~
Civic Hospital

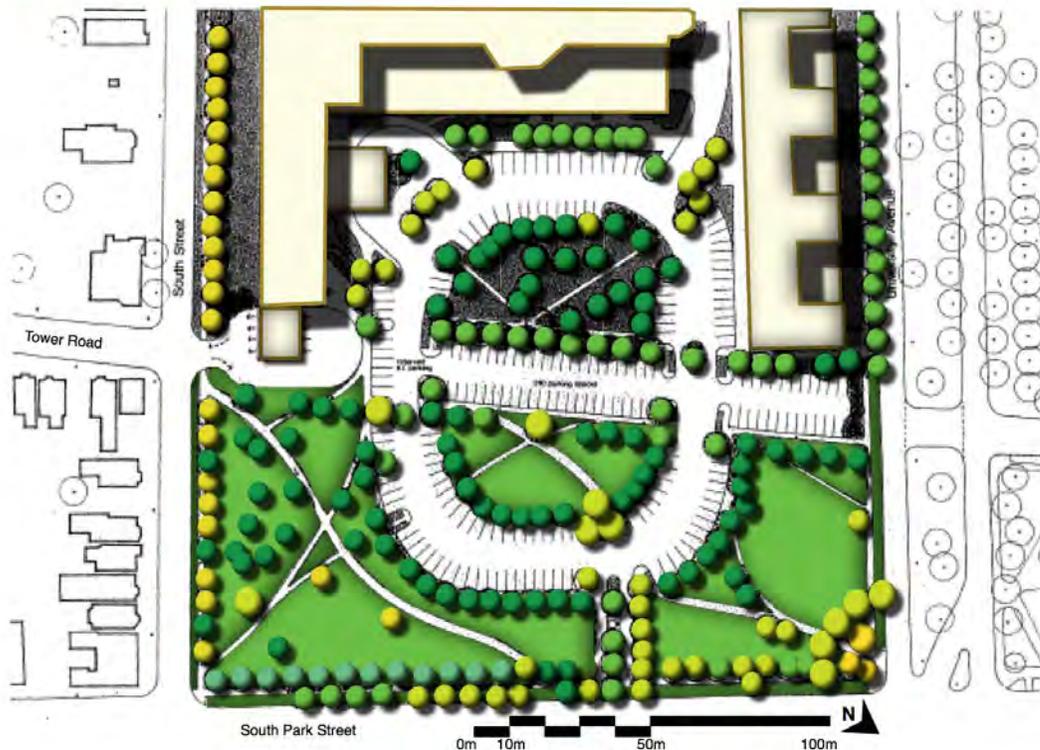
~
QEHS

~
Cathedral
sideyards

~
CBC TV

~
St Pat's

~
Centennial
Pool ?



The VG parking lot pictured above was formerly part of a Common land open space network. In 1986, a landscape plan was created to return much of the parking back to parkland. The site, outlined in yellow above, has yet to be converted.

For more information about the landscape plan or about the Halifax Common, please visit <http://www.halifaxcommon.ca/> or email friends@halifaxcommon.ca

The above landscape plan was designed by Peter Klynstra in 1986 and presented in 2014 by the Friends of the Halifax Common and Urban Perspectives.



Peter Klynstra
LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTS
LIMITED

