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Item No. 15.1.3

Halifax Regional Council
June 18, 2024

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: May 28, 2024

SUBJECT: Appointment of Heritage Officer

ORIGIN

The Nova Scotia *Heritage Property Act* requires municipalities to appoint a Heritage Officer when they establish a Heritage Conservation District.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Heritage Property Act, R.S.N.S., c. 199, as follows:

19G (1) A council that has adopted a conservation plan and conservation by-law shall designate a person employed by the municipality as the heritage officer and the heritage officer shall be responsible for the administration of the conservation plan and conservation by-law and the issuance of certificates.

Heritage Conservation District Regulations, NS Reg 138/92

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. ratify and confirm the prior appointments by Council to the position of:
 - (a) Heritage Officer; and
 - (b) Alternate Heritage Officer, except Kurt Pyle;have terminated; and
2. appoint Seamus McGreal as the Heritage Officer pursuant to Section 19G(1) of the *Heritage Property Act*, and that this appointment be effective for the duration of their current conditions of employment with the Halifax Regional Municipality.

BACKGROUND

Section 19G of the *Heritage Property Act of Nova Scotia* enables municipalities to establish heritage conservation districts to protect areas of significant heritage resources. HRM has adopted three Heritage Conservation Districts (HCD): Barrington Street HCD (2009), Schmidville HCD (2018), and Old South Suburb (2020). In accordance with *Heritage Property Act*, Regional Council is required to appoint a Heritage Officer. The Heritage Officer is responsible for the administration of the Heritage Conservation District Plan and By-law and the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness for development within the Districts. The existing designated Heritage Officer is Aaron Murnaghan, the Principal Planner for Heritage, who was appointed by Council on [January 16, 2018](#).

DISCUSSION

Aaron Murnaghan has taken a term position with the Housing Accelerator Fund and is no longer responsible for the administration of heritage conservation districts. The position of Principal Planner for Heritage is currently being performed by Seamus McGreal and it is recommended that he be appointed as the Heritage Officer. Kurt Pyle, Acting Director of Strategic Projects, is the existing Alternate Heritage Officer, and was so appointed by Council on [November 17, 2009](#), and he will continue in this role.

Council has previously appointed Maggie Holm as the Heritage Officer, and Bill Plaskett and Jacob Ritchie as Alternate Heritage Officers. These appointments ended when their conditions of employment changed, or they left employment with the Municipality. Staff is recommending Council confirm these appointments have ended so there is a public record respecting the status of their appointments.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The HRM costs associated with processing this application can be accommodated within the approved 2024/2025 operating budget for C340 – Culture, Heritage, and Planning Information Services.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendation contained in this Report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

ALTERNATIVES

Council may choose not to appoint a new Heritage Officer, in which case Aaron Murnaghan would remain as the Heritage Officer. This is not the recommended course of action due to his new position with the Housing Accelerator Fund.

If this alternative is selected, item 1 of the motion could still be passed except that Aaron Murnaghan would need to be added. The revised motion would read:

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. ratify and confirm the prior appointments by Council to the position of:
 - (a) Heritage Officer, except for Aaron Murnaghan; and
 - (b) Alternate Heritage Officer, except Kurt Pyle;have terminated.

ATTACHMENTS

None

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: Kurt Pyle, Acting Director, Strategic Projects, Planning and Development, 902.401.9902
