



LUCASVILLE GREENWAY SOCIETY



Lucasville Greenway Society
<https://lucasvillegreenway.wordpress.com/>

Leanne Lucas
Vice Chair, Lucasville Greenway Society

Monday, July 20, 2020

Ms. Kathleen Fralic
Engagement Lead
Planning & Development, HRM
Regionalplan@halifax.ca

Re: Protecting Sandy Lake – Sackville River in the Regional Plan

Dear Ms. Fralic,

I write today to bring further attention to an important ecological area requiring protection in the context of the Regional Plan review and the Halifax Green Network Plan (HGPN).

The Lucasville Greenway Society is one of 27 member groups comprising the Sandy-Lake – Sackville River Regional Park (SL-SRRP) Coalition. We fully support the efforts of SL-SRRP to ensure protection for the ecological unit which is the Sandy Lake-Sackville River watershed, including its submission to the RP+10 review (<https://www.sandylakecoalition.ca/rpsubmission>).

Preserving park land for use by all

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the necessity of access to outdoor recreational space for everyone. Getting out in nature is one of the few safe places that people have available for recreation, exercise, and ensuring positive mental health with the necessary restrictions on gathering are in place.

We see the lack of access to safe recreation space directly in Lucasville, where up to 10,000 cars per day travel the Lucasville Road. It is difficult to exercise by walking along the road, the elderly in the community need support to age in place, and there is an increased risk of diabetes and heart disease in those that perform less physical activity. We talk more about the difficulties that residents in Lucasville face, and the proposed Lucasville Greenway in the video that was produced by Planifax (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWhPe5KQ0wg>).

Once park land is lost, it is gone forever. We need to preserve park land that we have if we want it to be available now and for future generations.

Now is a crucial decision-making point

We understand an application for Secondary Planning for lands immediately west of Sandy Lake is imminent by at least one developer. This creates a new urgency for us to find solutions that protect the Sandy Lake-Sackville River watershed.

In 2018, Clayton Developments reached out to HRM suggesting they would be willing to trade their lands to protect the watershed, if HRM would be agreeable. We and the SL-SRRP see this as a potential solution and 'win-win' for all sides.

At this time, we ask that:

- The SL-SRRP be expanded by 1,800 acres (refer to Map 1 in the SL-SRRP submission). Research the SL-SRRP boundary in the RP+10 process so that new boundaries based on science are established to encompass all remaining essential watershed to be protected and managed as a regional park for all time. That would mean finding “win-win” solutions that serve both the community and present landowners needs.
- the Halifax Green Network Plan (HGNP) be included in its entirety in the RP+10.
- All requests in Sections A, B and C of the SL-SRRP Coalition submission be addressed and implemented within the RP+10 review.

Conservation work still to be achieved

We are thankful HRM has shown leadership with the recent passing of HalifACT and for the HGNP Map 5 amendment to the Regional Plan’s conservation design development agreement.

HRM’s acquisition of 160 acres next to Marsh Lake for the park in 2015 gives us some assurance the city indeed wants to expand and secure the park area.

We look to the RP+10 to expand the existing boundary to protect and enhance the existing watershed for all time.

Sincerely,

 Recoverable Signature

X L. Lucas

Signed by: aefcebd0-b99b-4fd0-8ccf-98fd05237c85

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cc: Mayor Mike Savage, HRM Council members, Leah Perrin, HRM Planning, Sandy Lake - Sackville River Regional Park Coalition