

Priority Post

November 8, 2006

Mr. Warren Reed
1540 Summer Street, # 406
Halifax, NS B3H 4R9

Dear Mr. Reed:

Re: Your Human Rights Complaint

Thank you for your submission to the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission. We have reviewed the information that you have provided in your intake questionnaire, additional information that you provided in subsequent correspondence and information provided by the Respondent The Halifax Regional Municipality (Regional Planning).

The basis of your allegations concern the apparent absence of acknowledgment for issues surrounding accessibility in various government legislation. In particular, you have expressed concerns relating to omissions of accessibility provisions within The Nova Scotia Alcohol and Gaming Authority, Nova Scotia Environment and Labour, Halifax Regional Transportation and Public Works and the Halifax Regional Municipality Planning and Development Services.

Before a formal complaint can be filed, Commission staff assess the information provided by the Complainant to determine if it is sufficient to form the basis of a complaint. This information must show some indication of discrimination based on one of the protected characteristics in the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*.

With Respect to the former 3 possible Respondents, omissions within that existing Legislation falls outside of the jurisdiction of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission. If you have concerns with respect to this legislation I would encourage you to contact your local MLA and/or advocacy organization. The Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission or a Board of Inquiry does not have the authority to impose such amendments upon the Nova Scotia Government.

With Respect to the Regional Plan strategy, I have contacted the Manager of the Regional Planning Project, who has informed me that the plan at its present stage serves only as a general guideline, wherein the specifics have not yet been addressed. I have been informed that during the second phase of the process (Community Visioning) accessibility and other issues will be addressed in greater detail. Given this, filing a complaint might be premature.

In discussing the issues involved in your complaint with the Halifax Regional Municipality Manager of Regional Planning a number of assurances were given. Among these were:

- Proactive and direct consultations with a number of advocacy organizations including The Nova Scotia Persons with Disabilities Commission, The Nova Scotia Paraplegic Association, The Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Disabled Individuals Alliance as well as several others,
- The Principles of Universal Design will be implemented in the Regional Plan, and
- Specific concerns articulated by you such as curb cuts, ramps, entrance systems would be reviewed in light of the Principles of Universal Design.

I understand that you might be disappointed with this decision. You may request that this decision to discontinue your complaint be reviewed by the Co-ordinator of Investigation and Compliance ("CIC"). If you choose to request a review please complete and return the attached *Request for Review Form* by **November 28, 2006** to the attention of Martin Schulze-Allen, CIC, for evaluation and review. If you do not ask for a review by this date, your file will be closed.

Sincerely,



Darryl MacPherson
Human Rights Officer
(902) 424-1702