

UNSM OPPOSES PREMIER'S STANCE ON HRM DECISION



HALIFAX, October 24, 2008— The Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities is concerned that Premier Rodney MacDonald is encroaching in an area of municipal responsibility. The Premier has expressed publicly his dissatisfaction with HRM's decision to reject the Armour Group's proposed Waterside Centre development in downtown Halifax and is looking for a way to overturn this decision.

"Municipalities across the Province are very concerned with the Premier's intentions," said Union of Nova Scotia President Warden Lloyd Hines. "The Premier is interfering in land-use planning matters which are clearly a municipal responsibility under provincial law. While the Premier may not like HRM's position, the decision was made based on input from the public through open hearings. If the developer is unhappy with this decision, there is an appeal process available through the Utility and Review Board," Hines further stated.

Land-use planning is an important aspect of municipal government. It enables municipalities to create a vision of what their communities will look like in the short and long term. Such decisions must be made by municipalities without provincial interference.

In 2007 the Province and the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities signed an MOU stating that both parties would agree to respect their areas of jurisdiction. The Premier's intention of overturning HRM's decision on a particular development matter undermines this basic principle.

UNSM is the voice of Nova Scotia's 55 municipalities mandated to present the municipal perspective to the Province.

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