



Mayor Mike Savage
Halifax Regional Councillors
Clerks Office, Halifax City Hall
1841 Argyle Street
Halifax NS B3J 3A5

July 26, 2013

Dear Mayor Savage; Councillors:

RE: Case # 16417, Spirit Place Development

On behalf of the Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project (NSRAP), I am writing to urge Halifax Regional Council's support of the proposed "Spirit Place" development on Windsor Street.

Since 2009, NSRAP has been actively engaged in promoting the well-being of older members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans*, and queer (LGBTQ) communities in Nova Scotia. We've held community forums on our aging population, and we are developing inter-generational partnerships with LGBTQ youth and Elders to preserve our history; with support from the Department of Seniors we partnered with Northwood to develop LGBTQ cultural competency training for staff and residents, and we continue to work closely with the NS Departments of Health and Seniors to ensure that our Elders enjoy safety and security as they age.

Spirit Place has indentified itself as LGBTQ-welcoming, a safe housing option for older LGBTQ people that bridges the gap between independent living and continuing care. That doesn't mean that Spirit Place will serve our community exclusively, but it does indicate a strong engagement with the best principles of diversity and a clearly identified respect for LGBTQ persons.

Such facilities are urgently needed. The generation that fought the long hard battles against HIV/AIDS, homophobia, and transphobia; that won our basic human rights, should not have to worry about where and how they will be able to live as they grow old. Spirit Place alone can't eliminate their concerns, but it can certainly help. Its help will be most welcome!

In closing, we believe that the caring community of St. John's United will be good watchdogs over the stewardship of Spirit Place, that their strong engagement with the local community will see Spirit Place become an integral part of the economic and cultural life of this vibrant neighbourhood.

Respectfully yours,

Lisa Buchanan
Chair
Board of Directors
Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project

Equality for All