

Press Release

December 14, 2009

For Immediate Release:

Environment and Heritage Working Together against Time

The circa 1750 Morris building sits just south of the intersection of Hollis and Morris Streets. It was the office of Halifax's first chief surveyor, Charles Morris, the man who oversaw the founding of Halifax and many other Nova Scotia communities. The construction of a 10 storey apartment and commercial development on that corner means the Morris building is one of three important historical buildings coming down, beginning today.

An unlikely group of collaborators has come together to save this piece of Halifax's heritage. Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, the Ecology Action Centre, HRM, Nova Scotia Power and Dixel Developments are working to move the building to an interim site before a final home can be found. Their plan is to rely on the centuries-old practice of building relocation, physically lifting a building from its foundations and moving it to a new home. Its temporary home will be the Nova Scotia Power (NSPC) parking lot adjacent to the site. NSPC has offered the use of the site for at least three years. Its next destination is yet to be decided; interest has been expressed for its future use as a museum, affordable housing and a youth centre.

By saving the Morris Building from the wrecking ball many different goals are being met:

- Retaining valuable construction materials in the Morris building.
- Extending the life of a building that still has good "bones" and is able to contribute to the building stock of the city.
- Demonstrating that demolition is only one of many options for redevelopment—indeed adaptive reuse, relocation and deconstruction have myriad advantages over it.
- Preserving an important part of Halifax's heritage and Charles Morris' contributions to the growth of Halifax.
- Allowing new development and boosting intensification in a walkable neighbourhood.

More background information to follow. Saving the Morris building is a major gift to everyone in the HRM this holiday season.

For more information:

Kim Thompson
Project Coordinator
Built Environment
Ecology Action Centre
(902) 442-0300
fernlane@ecologyaction.ca