

Halifax developer Ben McCrea dies at 73

By Mayya Assouad

HALIFAX — The way downtown Halifax looks today has a lot to do with Ben McCrea.



“A man who always had a keen sense of history as well as the future,” according to Austin French, HRM’s planning manager.

McCrea, 73, died on Tuesday.

French describes the prominent developer as a “major force for change.”

He says McCrea was a key player in shaping the first municipal planning strategy for the city, and in developing landmark properties such as Founders Square and Halifax’s Historic Properties.

“He was just a successful lone wolf sort of developer,” recalls Ralph Medjuck.

The Chairman of Centennial Group says he’s known McCrea for about 30 years. Although they were competitors during that time, Medjuck says he admired McCrea both for his achievements and for his ability to make his way through bureaucratic red tape.

“One of the most difficult things for developers these days, and has been for many years, is not money or markets, but the level of bureaucracy and getting things through and done in a timely fashion,” explains Medjuck, “and Ben was very good at that.”

According to Scott McCrea, his father’s drive to overcome challenges was about more than refurbishing historic buildings, it was about building a sense of community.

“He felt that places gave us a sense of ourselves, all of us, in a collective way,” he said.

“He really believed that on a personal level, in his environmentalism, conservation, that we needed to do something more, and we needed to overcome no’s, and that by challenging ourselves we’d be a better community.”

A funeral service for McCrea will be held on April 20th at the First Baptist Church in Halifax.

Source: Global News https://shawglobalnews.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/d_mccrea-border-r4x5-calnen-photography.jpg?quality=70&strip=all&w=720&h=480&crop=1