



**COMMUNITY DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
April 17, 2018**

PRESENT: Fred Morley, Chair
Eric Burchill
Christopher Daly
William Book
Reg Manzer
Councillor Sam Austin
Councillor Lindell Smith
Councillor Waye Mason
Councillor Richard Zurawski

REGRETS: Gaynor Watson-Creed, Vice Chair
Dale Godsoe
Jenna Khoury-Hanna
Rima Thomeh
Councillor Shawn Cleary

STAFF: Kelly Denty, Director of Planning and Development
Eric Lucic, Manager of Regional Planning
Kasia Tota, Principal Planner
Luc Ouellet, Planner III
Justin Preece, Planner II
Phoebe Rai, Legislative Assistant

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, and information items circulated are online at halifax.ca.

These minutes have received Administrative Approval in the interest of transparency

The meeting was called to order at 11:35 a.m., and the Committee recessed at 1:52 p.m. The Committee reconvened at 2:15 p.m. and adjourned at 2:54 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:35 a.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NONE

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

The agenda was approved as presented.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

The Chair noted that correspondence regarding item 8.1 had been received and circulated to Committee members.

8. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

8.1 Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law (Package A) – continued from April 10, 2019

The following was before committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated April 3, 2019
- A staff presentation dated April 17, 2019
- Correspondence dated April 12, 2019 from Robin Stewart

Justin Preece, Planner II provided the staff presentation regarding accessibility and mobility, noting that the proposed regulations would require a 15 metre setback from railway tracks for new buildings in a Comprehensive Development District (CDD) zone and new high-density dwellings.

Kasia Tota, Principal Planner presented on transitioning to the Centre Plan with respect to Development Agreement applications, applications for amendments to existing Development Agreements, and active applications seeking amendments to existing planning documents.

Tota responded to questions of clarification, noting that applications for amendments to Development Agreements would be considered based on the policies in effect at the time the agreement was approved; however, the project start and completion dates have time limits of one and two years, respectively.

A discussion ensued with respect to the language used in section 10 of the proposed Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (SMPS), specifically where the word “may” was selected rather than “shall” in terms of future municipal projects. Tota noted that under of the *HRM Charter*, the adoption of a municipal planning strategy does not commit the Council to undertake any of the projects suggested in it. Such planning strategies cannot bind future Regional Councils to undertake specific projects.

Kelly Denty, Director of Planning and Development added that the language was selected to manage expectations in the community and to ensure the document is not so directive, but rather sets aspirations and goals that allow for Regional Council’s discretion.

The Committee proceeded to consider a number of items identified at the previous meeting for follow-up discussion including Regional Plan Vision Update, Economic Development, Large Lot Development

Agreements and Approvals Process, Design Requirements vs. Design Manual, and Changes to Urban Structure.

Regarding suggested amendments to the Regional Plan, the Committee acknowledged that it was accepted that several chapters of the Regional Plan would need to be replaced, but there was some debate over whether it was appropriate to revise the Vision Statement. Staff noted that the recommended change would maintain the essence of the original vision and add new language based upon community consultation. Some Committee members cautioned against revising the Vision Statement in the Regional Plan as it was established immediately prior to the launch of the Centre Plan process as the guiding principle, and it is not advisable to change overall vision goals based upon a sub-plan. Other members expressed agreement with the proposed revision because it is more succinct.

One recommended modification to the proposed Centre Plan Vision was to amend part of the phrase “[The Regional Centre] welcomes all who want to live, work, play and learn here” to instead read “live, work, play and grow here.”

The Committee entered into a discussion regarding Future Growth Nodes. Concern was expressed regarding the connectivity of Strawberry Hill and Kempt Road to the surrounding area. Staff noted that CDD Development Agreements would require roads and infrastructure, comprising a much higher threshold for development that would include a master plan.

Respecting large lot development, Tota noted that the Centre Plan streamlines the development process for residents and developers from the existing timeline of 12-24 months under a Development Agreement application versus approximately 30-90 days through Site Plan Approval in the new policy, longer if the development is more complex. A suggestion from the Committee was to include clarity regarding timeline for the pre-application phase, i.e. the path to achieve a “complete” application.

Responding to a question regarding the number of large lots (one hectare or more) within the Centre Plan area, staff indicated they could prepare a list for the Committee.

Kasia Tota provided background information regarding how staff’s approach to design requirements has evolved over the course of the Centre Plan engagement process, noting that the concept presented in February 2018 provided 187 methods to achieve design objectives but allowed for alternative methods to be considered, which lacked assurance that any specific design element would be incorporated. Tota advised that the current proposal of 41 design requirements with multiple options to achieve each requirement does provide this assurance.

The Committee held a discussion regarding the concept of design requirements versus a design manual. It was noted that the 2018 draft document advised that “there may be circumstances where a certain qualitative method cannot be achieved or is not appropriate” (page 13). Concern was raised whether in the absence of a design manual, an advisory body and the Development Officer would have enough guidance on whether to approve requested variances.

Luc Ouellet, Planner III and Justin Preece provided detail on staff’s analysis regarding design requirements using an example of dealing with changes of elevations between streets when considering streetwall height. Staff noted that the modelling conducted included the interior of buildings such as how floor plates would be affected and underground parking. The Committee requested additional information from staff’s modelling of internal plate dynamics with land-use bylaw regulation.

Several Committee members commented that they feel that a design manual should be developed to compliment the land-use by-law.

The Committee held a discussion regarding density bonusing and public art, questioning how the value of art provided by a developer would be valuated. There was a suggestion that only money-in-lieu be accepted for public art, so that a committee could be tasked with ensuring the art represents the community. Tota noted that any art would need to comply with the HRM public arts policy currently being

updated and that allowing developers the option to install art meeting a minimum value of \$100,000 could achieve faster installation. They noted further that any art installed on private property must be publicly visible and accessible to the community, and corporate insignia would be prohibited.

Eric Lucic, Manager of Regional Planning spoke to the experience of administering a density bonusing program in Mississauga, noting that there are difficulties with having public art on private property including the need for easements because the art belongs to the municipality.

A discussion was held regarding the adoption process. Responding to questions, staff noted that the Centre Plan has been presented to stakeholder groups with positive responses and some minor recommendations. Tota agreed to bring some further information to the next meeting. They also noted that a response to the report prepared by Jennifer Keesmat was imminent.

The Chair concluded the discussion by asking Committee Members to consider language of possible amendments they may wish to bring forward at the next meeting.

9. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, April 24, 2019

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.

Phoebe Rai
Legislative Assistant