



**DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
November 10, 2021**

PRESENT: Ted Farquhar, Chair
Jonathan Lampier, Vice Chair
Sujana Devabhaktuni
Thomas Gribbin
Jesse Hitchcock
Alex Kawchuk
Sarah MacDonald
Nancy Soliman

REGRETS: Elizabeth Barry
Nicholas Robins
Cristina Verissimo

STAFF: Jill McGillicuddy, 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.

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m. and adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ted Farquhar, Chair called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 11, 2021

MOVED by Nancy Soliman, seconded by Jesse Hitchcock

THAT the minutes of August 11, 2021 be approved as circulated.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

MOVED by Jonathan Lampier, seconded by Sarah MacDonald

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

7.1 Correspondence

Jill McGillicuddy, Legislative Assistant advised there was correspondence from Thomas Gribbin, and Ted Farquhar, Jonathan Lampier.

Correspondence was circulated to the Committee members.

Thomas Gribbin provided an overview of correspondence that was forwarded to Current Planning staff in July 2021. Additionally, the response from Erin MacInytre, Director, Current Planning to Gribbin was forwarded to the committee members.

Committee members outlined questions and concerns regarding the Committee's role in the site plan approval process. Some of the key issues raised were:

1. The committee still does not have a tracker requested in the March 10th, 2021 meeting that tracks each recommendation of the committee and whether it was accepted or not by the applicant. Without this tracker it is impossible to determine whether the DAC has any benefit to the City of Halifax.

2. We are a team of highly qualified professionals and bring innovation and best practices to this volunteer role. Our wish was to help the City and our expectations of the role were higher. This is not a good use of citizen volunteer time.

3. The committee has no meaningful input into the site application process and recommendations are (almost) all ignored.

4. It feels like members are expected to rubber stamp everything. Meetings are a waste of time.

5. Terms of reference are too narrow - for example, the TOR have very little to do with the environment and sustainability.

6. Our terms of reference limit us to advising on 51 trivial design requirements. These DR's do not require a group of professionals to review. What benefit is there to the City? How is it worth the effort of gathering City staff, clerks and professionals together monthly to review?

7. Political theatre - HRM gets the benefit of saying it has a team of arm's length experts reviewing applications and recommending approval. However, the DAC's mandate is so narrow that it has no meaningful influence on any developments. The volunteers feel that the City may be leveraging their involvement to provide the impression of citizen involvement when none exists.

8. The committee members are not upset because they lack personal influence. It is a frustration that this is how the City chooses to do design review. There should be more meaningful input from citizens in some form.

9. HRM does not have an architecture dept and relies on DAC to provide advice but DAC recommendations are all ignored. What is the point?

Jonathan Lampier, Vice-Chair provided an overview of correspondence that was forwarded to Regional Council as part of the Centre Plan, Package B review.

Committee members had questions regarding the amendments to the Regional Centre Land Use Bylaw as it relates to the Committee's mandate and the usefulness of the DAC within the process of site plan approval.

Staff will attend the next meeting to discuss the changes to the Regional Centre Land Use Bylaw as it relates the Committee and the requested recommendations moving forward.

7.2 Petitions – None

7.3 Presentations – None

8. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

9. REPORTS – NONE

10. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – December 8, 2021

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Jill McGillicuddy
Legislative Assistant