

DISTRICT 7 & 8 PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

November 4, 2013

PRESENT: Mr. David Fleming, Interim Chair
Mr. Brenden Sommerhalder, Acting Chair
Ms. Jennifer Powley
Mr. Adam Conter
Ms. Katherine Kitching
Mr. Michael Bradfield
Ms. Sunday Miller
Councillor Waye Mason
Councillor Jennifer Watts

REGRETS: Mr. Michael Haddad

STAFF: Mr. Mitch Dickey, Planner, Community & Recreation Services
Ms. Cathy Mellett, Municipal Clerk
Ms. Krista Vining, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Melissa Eavis, Legislative Support

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Committee agreed to have Mr. Brenden Sommerhalder Chair the meeting until Mr. Fleming's arrival.

The special meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. in the Halifax Hall, 2nd Floor City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

2. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Public Information Meeting scheduled November 21, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at the Bloomfield Centre (Multi-Purpose Room), 2786 Agricola Street, Halifax re: Case 18771: Application by Westwood Construction Limited to amend the development agreement for "Gladstone North" located at Gladstone and Almon Streets, Halifax, to allow for the replacement of two approved semi-detached dwellings (4 units) with a commercial surface parking lot and associated landscaping and seating area.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None

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

MOVED by Mr. Bradfield, Seconded by Ms. Powley that the District 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee record discussion points on a flip-chart, to be reviewed/agreed upon at the end of the discussion and put forward as recommendations or comments. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – None

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – Deferred October 28, 2013

6.1 Case 18547 and Case 18548: Land Use By-law and Height Precinct Amendment, Development Agreement - 2183 Gottingen Street and 2215 Gottingen Street

The following was before the Committee:

- Staff memorandum dated October 28, 2013
- Correspondence from Phil Pacey, Chair, Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia,

Mr. Mitch Dickey, Planner gave a presentation on Case 18547: a request by the Housing Trust of Nova Scotia, for lands at 2183 Gottingen Street to amend the Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law by adding the site to Schedule Q and to amend the height precinct to increase allowable building height; and to enter into a development agreement to allow a 6 storey, 115 unit building with ground floor commercial space; and Case 18548 for lands at 2215 Gottingen Street to amend the Halifax Peninsula

Land Use By-law by adding the site to Schedule Q and to amend the height precinct to increase allowable building height; and to enter into a development agreement to allow a 9 storey, 124 unit building with ground floor commercial space. Mr. Dickey outlined the applicable Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB) policies to the project and addressed Committee questions regarding Schedule Q additions, Height Precincts, and affordable housing policies.

In response to questions regarding Schedule Q additions, Mr. Dickey stated that areas defined as Schedule Q are subject to more comprehensive planning and can allow Council greater control over the details of project in Schedule Q areas.

In response to questions regarding Height Precincts, Mr. Dickey noted that the MPS does not define mid-rise development and staff interpretation is 12 storeys. Also, Height Precincts address the total height of a building including mechanical.

In response to questions regarding existing affordable housing policies, Mr. Dickey clarified that Development Agreements cannot require Affordable Housing components and that any Development Agreements that are approved will still stand even if land is subsequently sold.

Mr. Ross Cantwell representing the Housing Trust of Nova Scotia made a presentation, outlining details regarding the affordable housing aspect of the project. He indicated that a community liaison group has been formed. Mr. Cantwell answered Committee questions regarding project funding, affordable housing requirements, and community response to the project.

Mr. Eugene Pieczonka, the principal architect on the project from Lyndon Lynch, addressed the design aspects of the project. He discussed guiding principles of the design and key elements.

The Committee expressed that it would not be necessary for them to review this project again before it went to Community Council and that it was more important for this to be vetted through the Community Steering Group.

Mr. Fleming entered the meeting during the discussion and resumed as Chair prior to recommendations being put forward.

The following recommendations were agreed to by the Committee in regards to Case 18547 and 18548.

The District 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee recommended:

1. That staff consider as short a possible time frame for the development agreement so the project proceeds expediently and affordable and market housing benefits are achieved.

2. That they value the affordable housing aspect of the project. (Policy 2.8 and 1.4.4 of the Municipal Planning Strategy)
3. Their strong support for the community steering group's ongoing involvement in the design aspects of the project. It was noted that the designs were still in draft form and, as the developer works with the community liaison group, it is recommended that planning staff should monitor how the interest of the community and comments from the PAC are considered in the final plan.
4. The Committee commented on a number of design considerations related to safety including alleyways, recessed entryways and other aspects of the overall design of the project and recommended that the design be reviewed with regard to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
5. That consideration should be given to the pedestrian experience along all frontages, including those along Gottingen and Maitland but especially along Prince William, and the potential blank wall posed there.
6. Specific consideration was given to the laneway on the north side of the Met site with interest in incorporating the right of way into the design or utilizing other design mechanisms that will lead to a more safe and pedestrian friendly environment.
7. That close attention should be paid to the inclusion of seating, bike racks, quality lighting, planters and other amenities that enliven the public realm and create connectivity with the community. Consideration should also be given to activating the entranceways on Gottingen as well as Maitland
8. Consideration should be given to historical references to the area and treatment of townhouses could be multi-colored or in other ways, reflect the local character of the North End Neighbourhood. It was observed that the porches on Maitland are generic and they could provide an opportunity to be more visually interesting and connect with the aesthetic of the local community.
9. Consideration was requested in regards to the Met site to consider the orientation of the commercial space so that these areas face Gottingen rather than the interior of the site
10. That the height of the project was considered appropriate to the policies as long as consideration is given to step backs and street wall heights.
11. That special attention is required along the North side of the Diamond site that lies adjacent to Dalhousie Legal Aid to address the blank wall (through the use of a mural, wall treatment, living wall etc.)

12. That the Project needs to incorporate, as much as possible, usable green space and careful consideration needs to be paid to this in the landscape plan included in the development agreement:

- Green planting should be considered in accordance with the Urban Forest Master Plan and consultation with HRM,
- Green roofs should be considered if feasible, and
- Only vegetation appropriate to the local climate should be considered.

Councillors Watts and Mason recused themselves from participating in recommendation 10 regarding height as this was a matter that would be considered by Community Council.

Other comments made by members of the Committee included:

- Concern regarding building heights and how these will effect Creighton Street and other streets overlooking the project
- Concern for setting precedent regarding heights of future infill development between the project sites and consideration of those land owners and tenants
- Concerns regarding the aesthetic of the protruding section at the south east corner of the Diamond site along Prince William Street
- Explore possible performance space opportunities in mews area
- Explore solar panel technology options and how they can be incorporated into the project design

In response to a question of clarification raised by Mr. Bradfield respecting the accuracy of the amount of amenity space per unit, Mr. Dickey indicated that this would be addressed through the review process.

7. ADDED ITEMS - None

8. NEXT MEETING DATE – November 25, 2013

Comment was made that some members of the Committee would like to consider changing the date of the meetings, if possible. This will be discussed at the next meeting date.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, November 25, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Melissa Eavis
Legislative Support