



**DISTRICTS 7 & 8 PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
JUNE 23, 2014**

PRESENT: Councillor Mason
Councillor Watts
Ms. Katherine Kitching, Vice Chair
Mr. Michael Haddad
Mr. Adam Conter
Mr. Adam Hayter
Mr. Michael Bradfield

REGRETS: Mr. John Czenze
Mr. Brenden Sommerhalder, Chair
Ms. Sunday Miller

STAFF: Ms. Jillian MacLellan, Planner
Mr. Andrew Reid, Legislative Assistant

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

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/D78PAC/140623d78pac-agenda.php>

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. and the Committee adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Councillor Watts read announcements about the Halifax Forum, a Hope Blooms BBQ and a community meeting on St. Patrick's Alexander school. Councillor Mason announced a public information meeting for Fenwick Tower.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 28, May 5, May 26, and the additional minutes of June 18, 2014

Mr. Bradfield noted a typographical inconsistency regarding a surname in the May 26 minutes. Ms Kitching requested clarification on the minutes of April 28.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, SECONDED by Councillor Mason that the minutes of April 28, May 5, May 26, and the additional minutes of June 18, 2014 be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions: 8.1 Discussion regarding holding a special meeting on July 8th, 2014

The Committee agreed to address item 8.1 prior to item 7.1.

MOVED by Councillor Mason, SECONDED by Mr. Bradfield that the agenda be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

6. CORRESPONDENCE & PETITIONS

6.1 CORRESPONDENCE

A letter was received April 11, 2014 addressing the Chair of the Planning Advisory Committee from a resident regarding Case 18322.

The Committee also had before them a letter to HRM dated June 12, 2014 from a coffee shop owner regarding Case 18322.

6.2 PETITIONS

The Committee had before them a petition from residents regarding Case 18322 attached to the April 11, 2014 letter

7. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

7.1 STAFF

- 7.1.1 Case 18322: Application by Geoff Keddy and Associates for the lands at the corner of Coburg Road and Seymour Street to amend the Municipal Planning Strategy for Halifax and Land Use By-law for Halifax Peninsula to develop a mixed use building through a development agreement

The following was before the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee

- *A staff recommendation/information report dated June 12, 2014*
- *A letter and petition received April 11, 2014*
- *A letter dated June 12, 2014*

Ms. Jill MacLellan introduced Case 18322, describing the site context, outlining the site's designation and zoning, surrounding uses and details of the proposal as recorded in the December 10, 2013 staff report. Ms. MacLellan also presented revised renderings, site plans and elevations. Ms. MacLellan stated that the applicant is proposing 2,300 square feet of commercial floor area. She clarified that this increase from the original proposal of 1,500 square feet transpired after the public meeting and that the at grade parking with entrance from Coburg Road has been removed in favour of an underground parking entrance on Seymour Street. Regarding the commercial space, Ms. MacLellan stated that the applicant was looking for a potential expansion in the types of commercial uses and that the PAC may comment on this topic. Other feedback requested from the PAC comprised the following: the merit of considering the amendment, height and density, relationship with the surrounding neighbourhood, the proposed massing, placement and setbacks, and the overall design of the building.

Members of the Committee questioned the number of units permitted on site as of right, asking Ms. MacLellan to confirm if the applicant could have four units on Coburg Road lot and three units each on the side street lots as of right. Committee members also inquired about the height of the existing building, the number of parking units and the price point per unit.

Ms. MacLellan responded that the number of as of right units was dependent on lot area and frontage. She stated that the current six units were a legal non-conforming use. Ms. MacLellan also explained that the non-conforming use designation would stay with the lots if they were sold. Regarding the height of the existing building, Ms. MacLellan did not have the exact figures but indicated it was slightly above 35 feet. Ms. MacLellan stated that there would be 21 parking units. Regarding price per unit, she stated that this would be based on the market.

Committee members inquired into the revisions of the proposal concerning the parking entrance and the commercial floor area.

Ms. MacLellan explained that the major change from the original proposal was the removal of at grade parking and relocation of the parking entrance to Seymour Street. This change was made to accommodate concerns at the public meeting about accessing the site from Coburg Road.

The Vice Chair asked the Committee to discuss the topic of the site's commercial uses.

A debate ensued between Committee members over commercial designation and types of use. Certain members expressed the concern of the neighbourhood residents with commercial development in the vicinity of a large number of single family homes. Other members indicated the opportunity of exploring commercial designation beyond RC-1 that would open the use to include what the neighbourhood might want.

Regarding proposed uses, Ms. MacLellan responded that the applicant has mentioned office uses as an option and would like to keep the uses less intense.

The Vice Chair asked the Committee to comment on building height, mass, and density.

Certain Committee members reiterated local residents' preference for the R-2 zone. One Committee member asked the applicant if the proposed building would be built to the property line or pulled back by 5 feet. The Committee member requested that the proposed building have a space in front of it and not reach the property line of Coburg Road.

The applicant, Mr. Geoff Keddy stated that they were going to pull the building back so that it would be flush with the Mona Campbell building.

Responding to questions around setbacks, Ms. MacLellan added that the proposed building would be further from the sidewalk than the location of the Needs Convenience Store.

Certain members of the Committee raised issue over the proposed building's height and massing and stated that it was inappropriate to compare the proposed building with the Mona Campbell. Members also outlined safety concerns. They proposed that the building be setback as far as the Mona Campbell building for pedestrian experience, safety and driver's visibility. Another member of the Committee agreed that the setback would add to safety but argued that the applicant could not be held accountable for the poor alignment of Seymour Street and Vernon Street.

In response to concerns for massing and height, the applicant stated that the proposed height would be the same as Mona Campbell and that the penthouses would be setback so that they are not visible from the street. The applicant indicated that the materials of the commercial floor would be glass and that there would be a curve at the intersection to help enable sight and safety.

Committee members asked Ms. MacLellan if there were precedents elsewhere for having a stepback on three to four storey buildings.

Members of the Committee also highlighted the concern of a precedent being set for the immediate neighbourhood.

The Committee expressed their support for greater attention being given to the space in front of the proposed building along Coburg Road.

The Committee also inquired into the size of the units and questioned whether there would be family units and how family units could be encouraged.

Responding to stepbacks, Ms. MacLellan stated that it would be dependent on the area but that on three to four storey buildings there may be a stepback. Regarding family units, Ms. MacLellan stated that the proposal compares to more recent applications, with larger one bedroom units and bachelor suites and a small number of two-bedroom units.

Members of the Committee agreed that they would like to see more two bedroom units. Members also expressed that this topic should be revisited, as other cities have set rules in place regarding bedroom counts.

Committee members returned to the topic of commercial space and debated whether the types of uses should remain constrained to those allowed in the RC-1 designation, or expanded. The Committee also discussed improvements to the first floor commercial area.

In determining their recommendation, the Committee debated a variety of topics. Members of the Committee suggested that staff look at creating a stepback on the Seymour Street side. Other members of the Committee indicated the economic benefits of the development and that care should be taken in making this request.

The Committee members deliberated over what modifications they would like to see imposed on the amendment. The Committee agreed that providing a greater setback of the proposed building on Coburg Road would enhance the pedestrian experience and driver safety.

MOVED by Mr. Conter, seconded by Mr. Hayter that the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee recommends to the Halifax and West Community Council that the application for the lands at the corner of Coburg Road and Seymour to amend the Municipal Planning Strategy for Halifax and Land Use-Bylaw for Halifax Peninsula to develop a mixed use building through a development agreement be approved providing the following considerations:

- Maintaining the existing commercial uses within the zoning with the allowance to increasing commercial size
- Further enhancing the pedestrian experience
- Driver and pedestrian safety as it relates to visibility
- Higher number of bedrooms per unit
- A setback on Seymour Street and the south wall in the interest of reducing the massing along Seymour Street

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Discussion regarding holding a special meeting on July 8th, 2014

There was a request for a special meeting as it pertained to the case before the Committee at the June 18th public meeting.

MOVED by Councilor Watts, SECONDED by Mr. Haddad that the Committee holds a special meeting on July 8th, 2014 at 4:00 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall and keep its July 28th, 2014 meeting if required. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – July 8th, 2014

10. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

Andrew Reid
Legislative Assistant