



**DISTRICTS 7 & 8 PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
February 22, 2016**

PRESENT: Mr. Brenden Sommerhalder, Chair
Ms. Sunday Miller
Mr. Grant Cooke
Councillor Waye Mason
Mr. Ashley Morton
Ms. Sarah MacDonald

REGRETS: Mr. Joe Metlege
Councillor Jennifer Watts
Mr. Michael Bradfield

LEAVE OF ABSENCE: Ms. Katherine Kitching

PRESENT: Mr. Mitch Dickey, Planner
Ms. Jillian MacLellan, Planner
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Cailin MacDonald, Legislative Support

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/160222d78pac-agenda.php>

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. and adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall 1841 Argyle Street.

- Community Announcements –

The Chair welcomed new member, Mr. Ashley Morton, to the Committee. The Chair provided a brief update on the upcoming Chair and Vice Chair elections which will take place in March.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 26, 2015, November 23, 2015, January 18, 2016 and January 26, 2016

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Ms. MacDonald

THAT the minutes of October 26, 2015, November 23, 2016, January 18, 2016 and January 26, 2016 be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

MOVED by Mr. Morton, seconded by Mr. Cooke

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

The Legislative Assistant noted that there were four pieces of correspondence received for Case 20149 and that these items had been circulated to all members of the Committee.

7.2 Petitions – NONE

8. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

9. REPORTS

9.1 STAFF

9.1.1 Case 20149 - Application by WSP Canada Inc. for lands at 2858/2866 Gottingen Street and 5518 Macara Street to amend the Halifax Peninsula Land Use Bylaw by adding the properties to Schedule Q and for approval of a development agreement to allow an eight storey, mixed use development with 71 units.

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

- A staff memorandum dated February 17, 2016
- A staff presentation dated February 17, 2016
- Four letters of correspondence received by residents with regard to the proposal. These letters are available on file.

The Chair invited Mr. Mitch Dickey, Major Projects Planner, to present Case 20149 – Application by WSP Canada Inc. for lands at 2858/2866 Gottingen.

Mr. Dickey described the location of the site, noting that it has frontage on both Gottingen and Macara Streets in North End Halifax. He commented that the site is made up of three parcels and that it has an area of approximately 15,000 sq. ft. He continued by describing the context of the site and its neighbourhood surroundings.

Mr. Dickey described the planning framework. He noted that the site is designated Major Commercial and is zoned C-2 (General Commercial) as well as commented that Schedule Q can be applied. He commented that under C-2 zoning there are no height limitations or architectural design controls in place.

Mr. Dickey shared that Schedule Q is unique to the Peninsula. He further commented that Schedule Q identifies areas where Council wishes to promote residential and mixed use redevelopment. He also shared that design controls for Schedule Q are implemented through a development agreement.

Mr. Dickey highlighted neighbouring mixed-use developments which have been built or in the process of being built, many with a height of 7 or 8 storeys. He continued by discussing the municipality's Centre Plan. Mr. Dickey noted that there has been much discussion on Schedule Q throughout the review of the plan and he confirmed that the current application must be evaluated under the current planning policies.

Mr. Dickey commented that the proposed application outlines an 8-storey mixed-use building with 3500 sq. ft. ground floor commercial and 71 residential units made up of 1 and 2 bedroom units and three 2-bedroom townhouse units. He also noted 53 parking spaces on two levels are being proposed.

Mr. Dickey shared that the site plan is proposing 100 per cent lot coverage. He went on to review the elevations with the Committee. Mr. Dickey commented that there have been concerns with the height of the development as well as the 100 percent lot coverage which contributes to a loss of privacy for neighbouring residents. He continued by showing the Committee 3D renderings of the proposed development within the context of the streetscape from the Gottingen Street and Macara Street perspectives.

Mr. Dickey highlighted the following areas for discussion by the Committee, including: height and mass; interior property line setbacks; streetwall and stepbacks; design and exterior materials; residential unit types; and on-site parking location and access point. As well, he outlined the status of the application within the development process.

The Chair thanked Mr. Dickey for his presentation and opened the floor to questions of clarification from the Committee.

Councillor Mason asked for clarification on what is permitted by developer related to the zoning. Mr. Dickey responded that for a residential building there are angle controls in place, however 100 per cent lot coverage is allowed.

Mr. Morton asked whether there was any ability to regulate the unit mix. Mr. Dickey responded that one unit out of three units is required to be 2-bedroom or larger. Ms. Miller asked for clarification of the penthouse units. Mr. Dickey responded that the penthouse is made up of four larger 2 bedroom units.

MOVED by Mr. Cooke, seconded by Ms. Miller

THAT the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee has reviewed the application by Application by WSP Canada Inc. for lands at 2858/2866 Gottingen Street and 5518 Macara Street to amend the Halifax Peninsula Land Use Bylaw by adding the properties to Schedule Q and for approval of a development agreement to allow an eight storey, mixed use development with 71 units and recommends approval of the application as contained in the staff memorandum package dated February 17, 2016.

Ms. Miller shared concerns about the lot coverage being 100 percent and the proximity of the entrance of the parking garage to the neighbouring residential homes and asked for clarification of this distance. Mr. Dickey responded that the distance was approximately 1 metre. He also shared that the parking garage entrance must be located on Macara Street because of existing bylaws preventing it from being located on Gottingen Street.

Ms. Miller shared her appreciation for the second level greenspace. As well, she shared concerns about the west side blank wall and the overall privacy for existing residents.

Mr. Cooke commented on the location of the parking garage entrance and asked for further clarification. Mr. Dickey commented that it would be possible for traffic services to review the placement of the parking garage entrance to determine whether placement on Gottingen Street could be considered. Mr. Morton commented that he preferred the entrance on Macara Street since there is considerable pedestrian traffic along Gottingen Street.

Ms. MacDonald commented on the number of parking spaces and suggested more be added. Councillor Mason commented that parking in the North End is now at a premium as on-street parking is limited. The Committee continued to discuss the implications of parking.

Councillor Mason shared concerns about the lot coverage being 100 per cent under Schedule Q and its impact on residents in the area and neighbouring single-family homes. He also echoed Councillor Watts's letter which outlined a need for 3 and 4 bedroom units in the area.

Mr. Morton echoed the comments include a greater mix of unit size and encouraged the developer to include 3 and 4 bedroom units within the apartment units as well as the townhouse units.

Mr. Morton expressed concerns with the development being 100 per cent lot coverage and commented that he would like to see the sidewalk along Gottingen Street widened. Ms. Miller echoed Mr. Morton's comments and expressed concerns that although the area is zoned as C-2, it is recognized it as a residential area.

Ms. MacDonald shared concerns with the appearance of the building's façade commenting that a neutral colour palette would be more fitting for the area. Mr. Morton commented on the façade of the townhouses as well as their relationship to the sidewalk. Ms. MacDonald commented on the lack of distinction between the appearance of the townhouses versus the commercial frontage.

Ms. MacDonald commented that she would prefer to see multiple commercial units proposed to encourage a more dynamic streetscape. Mr. Morton echoed Ms. MacDonald's comments and further commented that the entire commercial interface have interaction with the street. Mr. Dickey commented that animation along the commercial frontage will be a consideration throughout the application process.

MOVED by Mr. Cooke, seconded by Mr. Morton that the motion be amended as follows:

THAT the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee has reviewed the application by WSP Canada Inc. for lands at 2858/2866 Gottingen Street and 5518 Macara Street to amend the Halifax Peninsula Land Use Bylaw by adding the properties to Schedule Q and for approval of a development agreement to allow an eight storey, mixed use development with 71 units and recommends approval of the application as contained in the staff memorandum package dated February 17, 2016, with the following considerations:

- **Concern that the blank wall of the west side of the development creates a poor interface with abutting residential properties. (consider setting back farther, incorporating landscaping, or by reducing overall heights of the wall)**
- **Concern for pedestrian experience at Gottingen Street given the existing narrow sidewalk and proposed commercial uses.**
- **Concern with the extent of the proposed lot coverage - the development needs to be setback farther from property lines. Decreases in massing should focus on the west side of the development.**
- **Three-bedroom or greater units must be included in development, with the unit mix to occur in units aside from or in addition to the townhouse units.**
- **Concern regarding the appearance of exterior design (i.e. committee expressed distaste for the green/yellow colour scheme and "shrapnel" design elements).**
- **Townhouses do not feel like "townhouses." Townhouses should feel more like independent units. As currently proposed they lack design elements that differentiate them from the rest of the development (i.e., front stoops, yards, or other elements that would differentiate the townhouses)**
- **Ensure commercial interfaces at Gottingen Street contain visual interest and definition of entrances.**
- **Ensure opportunity to allow for subdivided commercial spaces (e.g. plumbing availability)**

AMENDMENT PUT AND PASSED.

The question was called on the main motion.

MOTION AS AMENDED WAS PUT AND PASSED.

The Committee provided the following additional comments:

- The Committee appreciates that there is common access to top floor amenity space
- The Committee appreciates the provision of greenspace at the top of second floor.

9.1.2 Case 19858: Amendment to the Halifax MPS and the Halifax Peninsula LUB to allow for the development of a multiple unit residential dwelling at 6345 Coburg Road, Halifax recommends approval of the application as contained in the staff memorandum package dated February 17, 2016.

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

- A staff memorandum dated February 17, 2016
- A staff presentation dated February 17, 2016

The Chair invited Ms. Jillian MacLellan, Planner, to present Case 19858: Amendment to the Halifax MPS and the Halifax Peninsula LUB to allow for the development of multiple unit residential dwelling at 6345 Coburg Road, Halifax.

Ms. MacLellan described the context of the site at Coburg and Larch Streets, noting that the site is a single lot at 10,566 sq. ft. She commented that the site is designated R-2 and it is located in a height precinct accommodating heights of 35 ft.

Ms. MacLellan described the surroundings of the site which includes Kings College and Dalhousie University across Coburg Road, a 17-storey mixed residential and commercial building across Larch Street to the west, a 3 ½-storey multi-unit residential building abutting the property to the east and a low rise residential neighbourhood to the north.

Ms. MacLellan shared that an application was initiated by Regional Council on June 23, 2015 and that the proposed design was not included as part of Council's consideration for initiation and design criteria was included instead. She outlined the criteria for the building included a 4 to 5 storey building stepped down to 3 storeys with appropriate setbacks from residential properties.

Ms. MacLellan commented that a public information meeting was held on December 13, 2015 and she went on to describe the features of the development as presented at the public meeting. She commented that the applicant has since revised their proposal as a result of the feedback learned at the public information meeting.

Ms. MacLellan stated that the current proposal is 5 storeys and includes 28 residential units with a mix of bachelor, 1 and 2 bedroom units. She shared that the setbacks are approximately 10.5 ft. from the shared property line and commented that the main residential entrance is off of Coburg Road with individual unit access from Coburg Road, Larch Street, and the rear of the property line. Ms. MacLellan commented that 20 parking spaces located underground with vehicular access from Coburg Road are being proposed.

Ms. MacLellan shared that the setbacks range from 3.75 to 6.3 ft. from Coburg Road and Larch Street and noted that recessed balconies facing Coburg Road, Larch Street and the shared property line are being proposed. She noted that landscaping is being proposed along Coburg Road, Larch Street and shared property line.

Ms. MacLellan highlighted areas for discussion by the Committee, which included the proposed amendment to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to allow for the consideration of a multiple unit dwelling. She also noted that staff were seeking feedback on the design and built form of the building, its relationship to neighbouring properties and the proposed landscaping.

The Chair thanked Ms. MacLellan for her presentation and opened the floor to questions of clarification from the Committee.

MOVED by Mr. Morton, seconded by Mr. Cooke

THAT the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee has reviewed Case 19858: Amendment to the Halifax MPS and the Halifax Peninsula LUB to allow for the development of a multiple unit residential dwelling at 6345 Coburg Road, Halifax recommends approval of the application as contained in the staff memorandum package dated February 17, 2016.

Councillor Mason commented on the absence of a compelling rationale to amend the Halifax MPS and the Halifax Peninsula LUB as consideration for the Committee. Mr. Morton commented on the potential residential capacity of the site considering its close proximity to universities in the area.

Councillor Mason commented that an elementary school is nearby in the area which supports single family homes. Ms. MacDonald commented that this area reminded her of the Tower Road neighbourhood which has a mix of single family homes and multiple unit residential properties which works well together.

Ms. Miller commented on the challenge that the area is zoned as R-2 and the impact of this development on the existing neighbourhood. The Committee continued to discuss the implications of amending the Halifax MPS and the Halifax Peninsula LUB to allow for this development.

MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.

The Chair asked whether the Committee had any further comments or questions.

Mr. Morton inquired about the Committee's ability to share additional comments should the application move forward. He expressed his desire to see more trees added to the proposed landscaping.

Ms. Miller questioned the location of the parking garage entrance. Ms. MacLellan responded that staff are currently in discussion with traffic services as they would prefer to see it on Larch Street. Although, she commented that from a planning perspective uninterrupted pedestrian way on Coburg Road is advantageous and noted concerns on Larch Street.

Councillor Mason shared concerns with the setbacks along shared property lines particularly given that windows are being proposed.

The Chair encouraged Committee members to share any additional comments on this application by email with Ms. MacLellan.

10. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – March 21, 2016

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6: 07 p.m.

Cailin MacDonald,
Legislative Support