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Thea Langille
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Halifax Regional Municipality
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Re: Application for Municipal Plan Area Boundary Alterations and Municipal Planning Strategy Amendments and Land Use By-law Amendments, Winslow Drive Upper Tantallon, NS (PIDs: 41277765, 41277773 & 41249681)

Thea,

On behalf of our client, Ramar Construction Ltd., ZZap Consulting Inc. (ZZap) is pleased to submit an application for a Municipal Plan Area Boundary Alteration and Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) amendments and Land Use By-law (LUB) amendments for a proposed commercial development located off Winslow Drive in Upper Tantallon (PIDs: 41277765, 41277773 & 41249681). To support this application submission, the following materials are included:

- Completed Planning Application Form
- Appendix A: Preliminary Site Plan

1.0 Site Description and Location

The subject site is located within the Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville Plan Area and has direct frontage on Hammonds Plains Road (Route 213) and Winslow Drive. The site consists of three properties, PIDs: 41277765, 41277773 & 41249681, and has a total area of approximately 113,395 ft.² (2.6 acres). All three properties are currently vacant and have not yet been developed.

The subject properties are designated 'Residential' within the Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville MPS and is zoned R-1 (Single Unit Dwelling) within the Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville LUB. The subject properties also directly abut the Districts 1 & 3 (St. Margaret's Bay) Plan Area to the southwest. Abutting properties to the southwest are designated MU-A (Mixed-Use A) within the Districts 1 & 3 (St. Margaret's Bay) MPS and zoned MU-1 (Mixed-Use 1) within the Districts 1 & 3 (St. Margaret's Bay) LUB.



Figure 1: Subject Site

2.0 Summary of Development Proposal

Ramar is seeking to develop commercial buildings on the subject properties. The proposed buildings, as illustrated in Appendix A, provide a total of approximately 22,500 ft.² of commercial space and 132 surface parking spaces. The commercial buildings are proposed to be accessed via private driveways off Winslow Drive.

3.0 Application Request

This application is requesting the following:

1. Amend the Districts 1 & 3 Plan Area Boundary to include the subject properties.
2. Amend 'Map 1 - Generalized Future Land Use' of the Districts 1 & 3 Plan Area to designate the subject properties as MU-A (Mixed-Use A)
3. Amend 'Schedule A – Zoning' of the Districts 1 & 3 Plan Area to zone the subject properties as MU-1 (Mixed-Use 1)
4. Amend the Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville Plan Area boundary to exclude the subject properties.
5. Amend 'Map 1D – Generalized Future Land Use' of the Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville Plan Area by removing the subject properties
6. Amend 'Zoning Schedule 1-D' of the Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville Plan Area by removing the subject properties.

4.0 Rationale for Application Request

The proposed Plan Area boundary alteration and MPS amendments would enable a development scenario on the subject property that is consistent with its surrounding context. The properties currently straddle the Districts 1 & 3 plan area boundary where abutting properties are zoned MU-1 within the Districts 1 & 3 LUB and commercial uses such as service stations, fast-food restaurants and retail stores have been developed on those lands. To the east, the subject properties abut a small cluster of single-family homes that were developed under the R-1 zone within the Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville LUB. The easternmost of the subject properties (PID: 41249681) is encumbered by a Nova Scotia Power easement on the eastern and northern portions of the property (See Figure 2). Commercial uses cannot be developed within this easement and therefore will be oriented southwestern corner of the lot, creating significant separation and buffering from the single-family homes to the east.

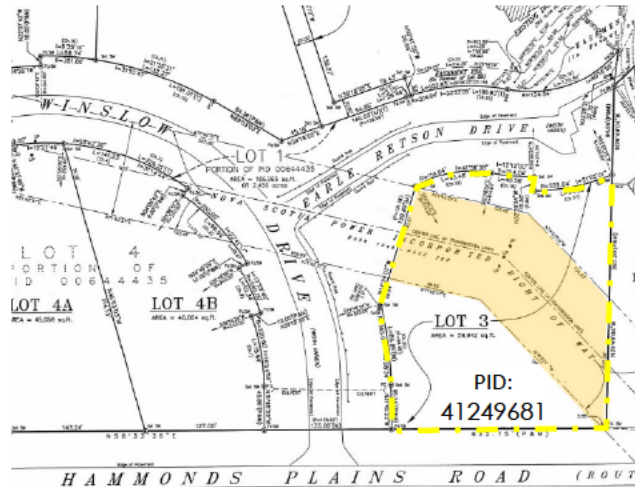


Figure 2: Nova Scotia Power Easement

Alignment with Regional Municipal Planning Strategy

The Regional Plan (RMPS) designates the subject properties as 'Rural Commuter'. The Rural Commuter designation encompasses areas within commuting distance of the Regional Centre that are heavily influenced by low-density residential development. The intent for this designation is to protect the character of rural communities and conserve open space and natural resources by focussing growth within a series of centres, as well as support the delivery of convenience services to the surrounding settlement area.

Further to their 'Rural Commuter' designation, the subject properties are located within the 'Upper Tantallon Rural District Growth Centre'. The RMPS chapter on settlement and housing includes objectives that focus new growth in centres where supporting services and infrastructure are already available. The objectives also aim to design communities that support complete neighbourhoods that are diverse and include a mix of uses. Rural District Growth Centres within the RMP call for a mix of low to medium density residential, commercial, institutional and recreation uses.

This amendment application proposes to develop underutilized vacant sites with commercial uses that are compatible and supportive to their surrounding context. The proposed MU-1 zone allows for a variety of commercial uses, as well as lot design and screening requirements minimize conflict between these uses, associated parking areas and abutting properties.

Impact on local community and broader region

The proposed MPS amendment will only impact development rights on the subject properties. The amendment will have a minimal impact on the local community and the broader region as it is minor in nature and is limited to a small geographical area.

We believe that the proposed amendment is an appropriate tool and process to enable a context sensitive development of existing underutilized vacant lands that will have a positive contribution to the local community and broader region.

Why current plan area boundaries and zoning boundaries are no longer appropriate

The MPS and LUB for both Districts 1 & 3 and Beaver Bank, Hammonds Plains and Upper Sackville are several decades old. Since that time, there have been several amendments to these documents in response to a variety of factors and subsequent applications. Past amendments have ranged from enabling new uses on certain lands, to altering boundaries. These past amendments were considered by staff, and ultimately approved by council because they involved a change that was appropriate for a particular area, and the change was not anticipated or relevant when the planning documents were first created and adopted.

The proposed amendments within this application are similar to past amendments that have been considered and approved. When these documents were first created, the subject properties were designated Residential and zoned R-1 with the intent of future development being in the form of single-family homes. Since that time, the Hammonds Plains Road has become a busier thoroughfare and the Upper Tantallon Area has continually grown as a commercial node that provides everyday services to surrounding residents. Additionally, Winslow Drive has become a prominent secondary access into the Westwood Hills Subdivision, a portion of which was enabled through an amendment to the Generalized Future Land Use Map of the Districts 1 & 3 Plan Area. This secondary access point that intersects with a prominent transportation route, has created a condition on the subject properties where commercial uses are more appropriate and desirable.

Based on these factors, we request that Regional Council enable the proposed plan amendments outlined in this letter to enable the proposed development on the subject properties.

5.0 Closing

We trust that the enclosed materials satisfy the application requirements, and we look forward to working with Staff, the public and Council throughout the application process. Should you have any questions, comments or concerns with regards to this application, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

Original Signed

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