

Survey for Case 22267:

Mid-rise apartment buildings near Dartmouth Rd., Stone Terrace and Wardour St.

We would like to hear your thoughts about potential changes to the land-use planning rules near Dartmouth Road, Bedford. Two buildings are proposed for the area. These buildings cannot be built unless planning rules are changed. Before any changes are considered, HRM is asking residents for their opinions. Public feedback will be collected by staff and sent to Regional Council before any changes are considered. Please provide us with your thoughts. Feel free to write on the back of the survey or send us any other comments.

1. What concerns do you have about allowing apartment buildings and townhouses near Dartmouth Rd?

Dartmouth Road is already a very high use road, in particular during peak hours. During rush hour drivers frequently use Wardour Street as a means to avoid some Bedford traffic on the Bedford highway. Adding apartment/townhouses will only add to the already at time very busy street. A few years ago, my wife and I were made aware of the Bedford Cemetery on Wardour. I remember my wife being especially pleased with the appearance and care of the cemetery and especially the peacefulness to the location. Unfortunately, with my wife's passing, I now visit the cemetery on a weekly basis as I've found it so comforting given the relative peacefulness of the area. In addition, as there is no specific designated parking for cemetery visitors, I need to use on-street parking. I'm concerned with adding apartment/townhouse to the area will only see an increase of already limited on-street parking.

2. What benefits do you think allowing apartment buildings and townhouses could bring to the area?

I do not see any benefits of this development.

3. Please tell us what buildings might fit best in your neighbourhood?

This community is zoned for single-family, and that should be sufficient reason why it should remain so.
as per our zoning by-laws.

4. Is there anything else we should know about your neighbourhood?

Wardour St and Stone Terrace are notoriously hard to turn out of and turn into. There is a blind corner issue not being able to see cars that are headed from Bedford Highway as they travel at speed on Dartmouth Road headed into Dartmouth. I assume the city has data on how developing apartments in communities like these effects home owners' property values. There is not space to accommodate left turning vehicles onto either Wardour or Stone Terrace from Dartmouth Road.

5. Would you be interested in attending a virtual (online or by phone) public meeting about this project?

No, but I would encourage HRM to expand the survey of Bedford residents. This effects many given the neighborhood also contains the Bedford Library, and cemetery.

If you need extra space, please write on the back of this survey. Or, send us a longer letter or email.

Return the survey by mail or by email by November 10th, 2020:

Mail: Sean Gillis, c/o Halifax Regional Municipality, PO Box 1749, Halifax, NS B3J 3A5

Email: gillisse@halifax.ca

Additional Comments:

Adding apartments and townhouses to the neighborhood will see an increase in on-street parking. As I noted my wife is buried at the cemetery on Wardour Street. My wife and I very much liked this site as its accessible and relatively quiet given it's located in a single-family home neighborhood. I'm also concerned that approving this development will set a precedent for future developments in the community.

A response to case 22267

Dear Mr Gillis

I write this letter under duress. We are in the second wave of a world wide pandemic and we have a potential COVID exposure in our community and we live beside another community with potential community spread. WOW!! Talk about stress. Considering all the aforementioned we are asked for our input on a development in our community. Talk about piling it on.

Firstly: there are concerns about the information packet:

The first paragraph states that this is being done under the direction of Council. Was Council aware that the 2nd wave of the pandemic would be occurring?

2nd paragraph 2nd statement;

Two multi-unit buildings are proposed for the study area. The study area map appears to illustrate 4 multi-unit buildings, so I am confused, is 2 or 4 multi-unit buildings?

Secondly: meaningful public engagement:

On reading the information there were no websites or links where the public could obtain information on the process of public engagement, HRM Charter, and/or the Bedford MPS. This raises the question as to where are we in the process and how to get informed? The over-arching question is; how is this meaningful engagement, if access to pertinent information is not readily available? Not everyone has access to applicable documentation or technology.

Lastly: The most important aspect, the people:

You are foisting an imposing construction, a large increase in population $[(48 \times 2) + (51 \times 2) = 198 \text{ people}]$ overwhelming a residential area. This number probably is a very conservative guestimate as it assumes there are only 2 people per unit and only 2 buildings where the map shows 4 buildings. **Does this double or triple the current proximal population? Is this reasonable and/or excessive? A change to the character of the neighbourhood and the community definitely!!**

Traffic is a concern in this area presently, so adding more people and cars is going to cause further disruption to people's lives in the community. Some struggle in

the area presently, so it is an issue. Traffic infrastructure appears to be wanting and a review would be prudent.

There should **NOT** be ANY changes to the MPS during this time and any construction should follow the current MPS rules. No building should tower over neighbouring houses so nothing above 1 ½ - 2 stories similar to the construction on Brunswick St and Cornwallis St. (I believe). With a green space this type of structure would not be imposing on the neighbours and would augment the community character. Another possibility is a similar type of development as the retirement community further along Dartmouth Rd.

This is **unconscionable** to request a response of this magnitude from the people while the pandemic is happening.

Respectfully,

Redacted

November 4, 2020

Mr. Sean Gillis

gillisse@halifax.ca

I am providing some comments on the survey you have proposed for the following cases. This letter will be sent as a document attached to an email addressed to you and to Councillor Tim Outhit.

SURVEY FOR CASES 22267 AND 20476

1. CONCERNS ABOUT ALLOWING APARTMENT BUILDINGS AND COMMERCIAL SPACE PER THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS.

a. TRAFFIC AND SAFETY CONCERNS

- i. The subject area is plagued with congestion at the intersection of Wardour Street and Dartmouth Road. Throughout the day and evening it is very difficult to make a left turn from Wardour on to Dartmouth Road due to the primarily constant stream of traffic in both directions on Dartmouth Road. The potential for serious accidents is high as vehicles both from Wardour and North Street attempt to turn on to Dartmouth Road especially when attempting a left turn. To add to the congestion, many vehicles driving north west on Dartmouth Road towards the Bedford Highway attempt to avoid the traffic lights at the Bedford Highway by taking a shortcut down Wardour. This results in traffic heading south on Dartmouth Road attempting a left turn on to Wardour while at the same time, vehicles on Wardour and North are attempting to turn onto Dartmouth Road. The proposed developments will significantly increase the traffic congestion at this intersection. Traffic lights at the intersection of Wardour and Dartmouth Road will decrease the risk of accidents but will not alleviate the increased traffic in the area. Also, since the alignment of Wardour to North is not symmetrical, the traffic light intersection may not be as simple as a "normal" intersection.
- ii. Wardour Street is a narrow residential street not designed for higher density traffic patterns. During the day there is a high volume of vehicles in both directions relative to the nature of the street. This is due to vehicles coming off the Dartmouth Road from both directions and either using Wardour (if coming from the direction of Dartmouth) as a shortcut or going to residences along the Shore Drive or Eaglewood areas. Also, for the past few months I have walked along Wardour in the early evening and am quite surprised at the number of vehicles (and their speed) that are on Wardour at that time. The addition of 99 residential units along with several thousand square feet of commercial space will add significantly to vehicle traffic on a primarily residential street, Wardour.

- iii. The addition of two driveways to Wardour Street for a potential 99 residential units plus visitors and commercial customers adds to the future congestion near the intersection of Wardour and Dartmouth Road. This would impede traffic flow along Wardour and cause additional difficulties for traffic exiting and entering Dartmouth Road, Wardour and North.
- iv. Southbound vehicles on Wardour have the potential to also use Camden and Perth Streets as an alternative to Shore Drive. An elementary school and park borders on both of these currently relatively low traffic streets. Any additional traffic on these streets is a safety issue for the students at the school. Traffic using Camden and or Perth must then traverse Fort Sackville Street to access Shore Drive and ultimately the Bedford Highway. All of these streets are relatively narrow residential streets not designed for heavier traffic flows.

b. INTEGRITY OF CURRENT NEIGHBORHOOD

- i. The current neighborhood is primarily single family residential. There is an apartment building on Dartmouth Road which is on the peripheral of the area. There are also two buildings on the north side of Dartmouth Road to the west of North but again these are peripheral to the primary residential area. The Wardour area is a low density leafy environment containing two old cemeteries and one country style school and is near to historic Scott Manor House on Fort Sackville Street.
- ii. Multi-unit, multi storey buildings, one of which will have a commercial component do not fit within the single unit residential aspect of the Wardour area.

2. BENEFITS OF ALLOWING APARTMENT BUILDINGS IN THE AREA.

- a. There are really no benefits to putting two large residential buildings in the area. There are also no benefits of putting more commercial space in one of the buildings. There are many commercial enterprises in the general area (Sunnyside and Bedford Place Malls) and along the Bedford Highway that can be accessed by the current residents. There also appear to be vacancies in some of these commercial areas so there is no need of additional commercial space in the Wardour corridor.

3. BUILDINGS THAT MIGHT FIT BEST IN THIS AREA.

- a. Single family residential buildings would fit best in this area. Residential buildings were torn down on property which is part of one of the proposed multi-unit buildings. There is no reason why new single family residential buildings could not be built in the area.

4. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS.

- a. The zoning for the area under proposed development case 22267 is currently designated RSU (Residential single dwelling). This zoning was originally set out for a purpose; to provide for single residential dwelling. There have been no significant changes to the area that would cause the designation to change (or to justify an Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) amendment that sets out a site specific policy) to allow for a different use than RSU. There currently is vacant land at 37 and 39 Wardour but only because the two dwellings were torn down. Presumably if these lots were put on the market, they could be developed for new single family dwellings. Simply because a developer acquires a particular property does not provide grounds for permitting a zoning change or site specific amendment.
- b. The zoning for the area under proposed development case 20476 is currently RSU with a Development Agreement for the parking lot. Similar comments to the above apply here. If the developer is going to discharge the development agreement, it should revert to the original zoning RSU.
- c. My understanding is that the (MPS) realizes that the maintenance of the integrity of existing residential neighborhoods is an important objective. In my view these two developments do not align with this MPS objective and in addition to generating substantially more traffic in an area that is currently congested will change the character of the existing neighborhood.

5. REGIONAL COUNCIL REPORT DATED NOVEMBER 12, 2019 RE CASES 20476 AND 22267

- a. If I am interpreting this document correctly, it appears that HRM staff is recommending that rather than a site-specific plan amendment, the Bedford Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (SPS) be reviewed to develop new policy for the area covered by the specific sites indicated in the Cases and an area on the north side of Dartmouth Road. I do not know why the area to the north of Dartmouth Road is to be included in a potential new policy since that area is fully built and is primarily residential with a commercial portion north of North Street.
- b. The report mentions that “ at a regional level, there is policy support to consider higher densities within the proposed study area”. The report states that the Regional Plan? and the Integrated Mobility Plan support directing growth towards areas that are walkable, bikeable and have good transit service. The Regional Plan ? also apparently identifies the Sunnyside Mall area as a Growth Centre. The area is already built out except for part of the properties in the subject Cases so I am not clear on why it is considered a growth area.
- c. The way the report reads, one would think that it is directed towards a significant land area such as Bedford West at its origination or the full Larry Uteck area, not the proposed study area which is simply the North side of Dartmouth Road (already built out) and the relatively small properties in the subject cases.
- d. So I am not really clear on why a comprehensive SPS policy plan review is suggested for a couple of properties.

- e. The staff report mentions the provision of housing as a long standing priority of council. The number of new multi -unit apartments currently being constructed in the Bedford West and Larry Uteck district in an area of multi unit buildings is substantial. In addition there are currently four large ongoing excavations on the Bedford Highway between just south of Larry Uteck Boulevard to Moirs Mill Road. Although I do not have specific knowledge of what will ultimately be constructed on these sites, a reasonable inference would be at least a significant number of housing units. There is no need to put two new multi-unit buildings in an area of single family homes when there is so much construction of new units in the above mentioned areas.

6. CONCLUSION

- a. I do not feel the addition of these multi- unit apartment buildings and the relevant commercial space in a single family old residential area adds anything to the area or the region and in my view will negatively impact the enjoyment of the area by the residents.
7. I would be interested in attending a virtual or hopefully a live public meeting about this project.

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