

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Public Information Meeting
Case 21584

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

Wednesday, October 30, 2019

6:30 p.m.

Stairs Memorial United Church - Hall - 44 Hester St., Dartmouth, NS

STAFF IN

ATTENDANCE:

Darrell Joudrey, Planner, Planner III, HRM Planning
Anne Totten, Planner III, HRM Planning
Meaghan Maund, Planner III, HRM Planning
Jared Cavers, Planning Technician, HRM Planning
Tara Couvrette, Planning Controller, HRM Planning

ALSO IN

ATTENDANCE:

Councillor, Sam Austin, District 5
Rob Leblanc – Applicant, Fathom Studio
Philippa Ovonjiodida - Applicant, Fathom Studio
Roger Boychuck - Applicant, Fathom Studio, Traffic Engineer
Benjamin Carr – Land owner – Developer
Joey Arab - Land owner – Developer

PUBLIC IN

ATTENDANCE:

Approximately: 41

The first part of the meeting was open house style which went from 6:30 – 7:30 pm with boards set-up at the back of the hall to view and discuss with the developers.

1. Call to order (7:30 pm), purpose of meeting – Darrell Joudrey

Mr. Joudrey introduced himself as the Planner and Facilitator for the application. They also introduced; Councillor Sam Austin, Tara Couvrette – Planning Controller, Jared Cavers - Planning Technician, and Rob LeBlanc – Applicant, Fathom Studio.

Case 21584 - Application by Fathom Studio, on behalf of the property owner, to enter into a development agreement for an 11 storey multi-residential building on lands at 18 and 22 Rosedale Ave, and Floral Ave, Dartmouth.

Mr. Joudrey explained; the purpose of the Public Information Meeting (PIM) is: a) to identify that HRM has received a proposal for the site; b) to provide information on the project; c) to explain the Planning Policies and the stages of the Planning Process; d) an opportunity for Staff to receive public feedback regarding the proposal. No decisions are made at this PIM.

2. Presentation of Proposal – Darrell Joudrey

Mr. Joudrey provided a brief introduction to the application and then made a presentation to the public outlining the purpose of the meeting, status of the application and the applicants request. Mr. Joudrey outlined the context of the subject lands and the relevant planning policies.

3. Questions and Comments

Elizabeth Eaton – How soon is the earliest this would start? **Rob Leblanc** – 8 months to a year for the development process and 3-6 years to start construction.

Richard Vonner – What building is the Heritage building? **Rob Leblanc** – It is on the top of Rosedale Dr.

Emmett Austin – Scattered development, is this something that we should be scared of? **Darrell Joudrey** – this application is the opposite of scattered development. **Emmett Austin** – do you think this development

would be approved under Centre Plan as it is presented now? **Rob Leblanc** – this application went in over a year ago, so it is considered under the old process. However, as we submitted this we looked at the policies that were drafted under Centre Plan and designed the building to meet a lot of the policies that are in the Centre Plan. **Emmett Austin** – What do you see this doing for our end of the city and affordable housing? **Darrell Joudrey** – there is no authority under the charter to ask for affordable housing. The developer can work with the province and provide it if they wish. **Benjamin Carr** – There is nothing designated in the proposal right now but something they are opened to consider.

Ron Fritz, Brookside Ave – has concerns over the increase in traffic this will bring to the area. Wanted to know who did the Traffic Impact Study. **Rob Leblanc** – One of the real reasons we were excited about this site was its walkability, proximity to transit and access to the ferry and bridges. **Roger Boychuck** - explained that HRM has traffic guidelines that are followed when doing the Traffic Impact Study (TIS) and explained how they work. **Ron Fritz** – stated that traffic doesn't flow the way he explained it, 1 every 30 sec's, traffic flows almost bumper to bumper, failing to let pedestrians through legal marked crosswalks especially at those peak hours. If you have an additional, almost, 200 vehicles pushing into the network at peak hours and you want people to be walking and biking how can you mitigate that? **Roger Boychuck** – agrees that with regards to crosswalks, cyclist and the active transportation network there are issues that need to be addressed on a broader scale. From this developments perspective the overall impact is relatively small. **Ron Fritz** – the context of the site is light industrial, how does this fit in? **Rob Leblanc** – spoke to the reason for Centre Plan and concentrating development to the Urban Core area to stopping sprawl. Bringing more people in to the core to create a more walkable space, more transit and engage active transportation. **Darrell Joudrey** – Explained there is also an Integrated Mobility Plan that council has approved in principal and it is applied to most applications.

Bruce Fraser, Emma Court – wanted Darrell to explain about low income housing and how it isn't in the charter because in the paper for the Willow Tree Development there was money put aside in a special fund for it. **Darrell Joudrey** – explained a little bit and then **Councillor Sam Austin** explained the housing piece and reiterated that we do not have the ability under the charter to require a certain number of units to be affordable housing. Also explained what happened at the Willow Tree Development and the fund that was set-up for affordable housing.

Benjamin Carr, nephew of Joey Arab, property owner – explained when the application was submitted Centre Plan was not yet in. This was designed based on what was available at that time. Explained there are two design options at the back of the room. One under a development agreement, which they prefer and is more desirable, and one that is as-of-right under Centre Plan.

Ann Guy, Hester – Likes how walkable the neighbourhood is. This is a really really big change from what is in the area now. Low density to high density very quickly, that is a concern. Will the buildings have windows/balconies that look down into the yards on Hester St.? **Rob Leblanc** – explained the difference between what could be built under Centre Plan and what could be built if they got a development agreement. They prefer the development agreement process over doing what could be under Centre Plan. Explained where the balconies would be located and explained there is a 30-foot green strip (buffer) around the development. Went over the buffer that would be around the whole development.

Krista Marshall – wanted to know if the development agreement processes is not accepted is what you are proposing in the back (on the posters) under Centre Plan what you plan on doing? **Rob Leblanc** – no, that is a massing study to show what would be allowable under the current Centre Plan. If the development agreement doesn't go through, it would be right to the property line tough to be able to get the same density on the site.

Public – the setback in a minimum of 30 feet all the way around? **Rob Leblanc** – On Hester St. and 20 feet on the eastern/western side. **Public** – the greenspace looks like it is made for the residents and not the neighbourhood. Your greenspace is mostly in the middle. Doesn't like that they keep threatening the Centre Plan option if they don't get the development agreement option. **Rob Leblanc** – It is more of a horseshoe configuration for the greenspace plan because that is what works best for everyone. Doesn't want it to come across as a threat when they talk about the Centre Plan option, they just want everyone to be informed. **Philippa Ovonjiodida** – Spoke to why they keep talking about the Centre Plan – only to make sure all options are provided to the community not as a threat.

Leigh Mathews – Is parking included with the rent? If not where are all those people who don't want to pay going to park? Down here. **Joey Arab** – No, it would be an additional cost. Most people are willing to pay extra for parking, so they don't have to worry about the elements. **Leigh Mathews** – they call these types of developments a neighbourhood buster. I worked so that when I retire I can enjoy my nice quiet sunny backyard and your development is going to ruin that. Are you going to buy us all out in this area because when we go to sell out houses you are going to be doing this development and the noise and dirt will decrease the value of our homes?

Public – The McKay Bridge will be going under a refit in the next few years, and we all saw the impact on the neighbourhood when the McKay Bridge is down to one lane on the weekends and this is just going to make things worse and have a big impact. Also, with what happened with the crane in Halifax, what is in place to mitigate something like that and a natural disaster? The financial impact that it has had on so many people, both businesses and residents is tremendous. Will the city make sure the developer etc. have all the proper insurances in place? **Darrell Joudrey** – stated there is an administrative order in place that all developers must follow.

Bill McKenna, Floral Ave – Finds this project is a beatification of the whole area and will create employment for people. Congratulates the planners, traffic division, and all aspects of this whole plan.

Public – how many parking spaces will there be? **Rob Leblanc** – almost 1-1, .95 ratio. **Public** – you are about 40 short for the number of units proposed. How many parking spaces and how many unites? **Rob Leblanc** – 184 parking spots and 201 units proposed. **Darrell Joudrey** – as part of the Integrated Mobility Plan we are hoping that people will use other modes of transportation.

Rev. Ralph G. Yarn – 36 Hester St., talked about underground parking, dropping the house down over the back from Rosedale, are you planning to put a driveway over 36 Hester St? **Rob Leblanc** – No, **Rev. Ralph G. Yarn** – are you planning on putting a stairway or walkway down there? **Rob Leblanc** – it is not in the current plan but is something that could be considered. **Rev. Ralph G. Yarn** – Parking along this area, streets are narrow, your residents will end up parking down here, on the streets, in the church parking lots, etc. and when we have nothing going on it's not a big deal, but this will cause issues. My concern is how well has this been thought threw. I am concerned for residents that have worked so hard on their yards and their homes and now they will have this massive development beside them. I cannot conceive that this will benefit the community. This does not fit into the nature of the neighbourhood. Would love to see a house there. **Rob Leblanc** – offered to look into the stair's suggestion.

Public – Parking is always a contentious issue. Would the city be willing to issues parking permits for people who live on the side streets so that they would have authorized parking? **Darrell Joudrey** – offered to put that question through to development engineering and traffic operations. **Public** – for the church parking lots, over in Halifax they have had to start booting people and that has resolved most of the issues. Concerned a nice new development will push property taxes up and this will affect people who are working to live because this will cause rents to go up and those people will be forced out. Maybe with this new development the city will pay more attention to our area, pave and look after the roads a little bit better. Has concerns about the height of the building. It will detract from lots of sunny backyards, quality of life for a lot of residents that have lived here for a very long time.

Ann Guy, Hester St. – the demo of the current building – how long will that process take? Our buildings/homes may not make out so well in that process. Can you talk about blasting a little bit? **Rob Leblanc** – there has been no geotechnical study's done yet. They are normally done once we get approval. Because of that we don't know what will be required at this site. Taking down that building is relatively strait forward and about 30 days of work. We wouldn't be digging any deeper than the current foundations. **Ann Guy** asked about how much of the building would be parking etc. **Rob Leblanc** went over the size and how many storeys of the building would be parking. There are also protections in place blasting.

Public – What are you going to do about the rodents that will be coming down here because of this development. **Darrell Joudrey** – there is an administrative order in place that requires best management practices. There has to be a plan in place to deal with rat's and other animals that are displaced because of this. Development Services would deal with this and can be contacted.

Casey Malone, Hester St. – do you have images of the shade study? **Rob Leblanc** – stated he could assist with that (Casey Malone will email him). **Casey Malone** is a big gardener and likes birding and is concerned about the impact of losing all of the trees that are there. Is concerned about the balconies being glass and pitching to add something to the glass to limit the chances of birds hitting it so they can pick up on it. Wanted to know if it is true that there is about a 4 storey drop from the Rosedale level to behind this side of the church. **Rob Leblanc** – yes, between a 3-4 storey difference. **Casey Malone** – if we were it imagine what it looks like now, it is not 11 storey's it is more like 15. **Rob Leblanc** – yes, from this elevation it would be 3-4 storys plus the 11 storey at the center. **Casey Malone** – In all the images I have seen I haven't seen any images from that angle. Also, wants to second or third the interest in affordable housing. People are getting pushed out of here. The bus stop that is right next to Sobey's, when a bus is parked there letting people off and on and cars are trying to leave and come around there has been so many close calls. That bus stop is going to have to go or somebody is going to get hurt. **Public** – what about the ambulances? **Casey Malone** – Is this within supports of the Urban Forrest Plan? **Rob Leblanc** – Yes

Public – the church has a water problem seeping through the foundation every spring. The area behind has a steep slop coming down about 50 feet, will there be anything in place to mitigate water coming onto our property? **Rob Leblanc** explained that part of the plan is they must provide a storm water management plan and address a no net runoff approach. We can't create additional runoff onto adjacent properties.

Richard Vonner – Who owns 36 Hester St.? **Benjamin Carr** – we own it.

Councilor Sam Austin – thank everyone for coming out and providing their comments.

Sharon Gallant – Who owns the chain-link fence that runs along the back of the yards on Hester St.? **Rob Leblanc & Developers** – Nobody was sure who owed it.

4. **Closing Comments**

Mr. Joudrey thanked everyone for coming and expressing their comments.

5. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9 p.m.