

January 14, 2019

Halifax Regional Municipality
PO Box 1749
Halifax, NS B3J 3A5

Re: 3514 Joseph Howe Drive Design Description

The design intent for this new 12 storey multi-use building is to provide a high-quality, well-designed retail and residential environment to create and serve a pedestrian friendly streetscape experience along Joseph Howe Drive at the existing Chain of Lakes Trail. The Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy, Section 2A Plan Dutch Village Road (RC-Oct 4/16; E-Nov 26/16) was used to guide planning requirements for the site.

The design provides for 324 residential rental units, comprised of 224 one bedroom units, 100 two bedroom units, aimed at the higher end market. 360 underground parking spaces are provided for tenant use as well as storage lockers, virtually eliminating the need for on street parking. 54 surface parking spaces are provided behind the podium, supporting the new retail spaces on the ground floor level.

For those without automobiles, or looking for more sustainable transportation options, 170 parking spaces have been provided for bicycles, 168 of which are Class A. For transit, the site is well located with no less than six routes serving both directions on Joseph Howe Drive. Additionally, the Bayers Road terminal is steps away and the Mumford terminal within 10 minutes walking distance. Local amenities are also within walking distance or serviceable by transit.

In addressing all of the prescriptive requirements of section 2A.7, governing highrise buildings proposed in Area A, we have designed the proposal to meet each requirement, with the exception of requests to amend the land-use by-law on the definition of height in 2A.7 (a) and the definition of streetwall height in 2A.7 (b).

In regards to the 2A.7 (g) requirement that we have a maximum front yard setback, we submit that our podium is less than 3 metres except for one section of a ground floor, which amounts to a mere 2.7% of the total podium streetwall. 2A.7 (g) does not indicate that the entire podium from the main floor to the top of the fifth floor in total needs to be a maximum 3m setback.

Furthermore, the two large arched openings would in theory, violate 2A.7(g) as well, since they have floors 2 to 5 above them, with voids at level 100. Clearly, the intent of the policy is not being offended by the presence of this stand alone building being more than 3m away from the streetline.

We have addressed the requirements in the Plan Dutch Village Road, Highrise Buildings, 2A.7.1, as follows:

- a) Towers have been placed away from streets and other properties and spaces as per prescriptive requirements and we have accentuated the defining element of the building as the base/podium of the building based on its design.
- b) The design of the site incorporates rooftop landscaping overlooking the Bedford Basin as well as the Chain of Lakes Trail. Building entrances are intertwined into the glass streetwall with residential and service entrances deployed in the rear. Retaining walls, although a necessity on the site, will be incorporated into the design via architectural block finishes. Lighting on the building and on the site will be comprised of modern post lighting at grade, rail lighting, sconce lighting. Signage is being intertwined into the architectural panels facing North and South and also suspended signage from the overhanging 2nd floor of the podium facing East to create a clean, seamless and non-overbearing look.
- c) The design can be rationalized as three major components: first floor retail designed to engage with existing pedestrian corridor; a floating four-storey residential podium above the retail; and two rear towers rising 7 stories above the podium. These three components inform the massing of the building, organized into three separate elements, a 'base', 'middle' and 'top'.

The podium consists of a 5-storey glass box with continuously glazed retail space on the ground level and four levels of randomized protruding residential balconies and bedrooms above. The retail spaces and residential balconies above engage and interact with the street, creating a strong community presence and opportunities for more eyes on the street. The podium and streetwall are vertically articulated and continually differentiated by randomized protrusions and recesses that are deployed throughout the podium. The pattern differentiates the façade patterning along the length of the streetwall and all sides of podium above the first level of retail.

At the base ground level, three retail spaces with integrated signage, continuous glazing, five prominent protected entries and a street level patio space support a vibrant pedestrian environment. Levels 2-5 feature residential units with randomized protruding residential balconies and bedrooms that cantilever out from the 5-storey glass box, in what appear to be a randomized pattern. The alternating 5 foot cantilevers of the hovering balconies create a sheltered, yet dynamic condition for the sidewalk below. The resulting streetwall is an animated façade designed to support and elevate the pedestrian experience along Joseph Howe Drive.

The 7 story rear towers are a simplified interpretation of the randomized podium pattern creating a dialogue between the two forms. Using repeated tower floorplates to simplify and streamline the aesthetic of these two masses ensures that the towers' profiles are minimized and that the focus of the design remains with the pedestrian scale of the podium. As required, the towers feature floor areas of 625 m², are separated by 25m and are set back from side and rear lot lines by 12.5m.

Above the towers, well designed mechanical penthouses use simple extruded masses with open frames extending towards each elevation, to emulate the shape and pattern of the tower and podium below. The open frames of the penthouses are of the same language as the towers and podium below, albeit much lighter and airier, allowing their presence to be minimized.

d) The design reflects the substantial movement and mobility, historical and present day, that varies across every day in front of the site. The combination of historical rail, current pedestrian and cycling movement on Chain of Lakes trail, and Joseph Howe Drive's major traffic corridor create a place of vibrant motion and random activity. This has been captured and reflected in the project's design.

Every ten feet of the façade is distinctively different. This vertical articulation is accomplished using protrusions, recesses, and material changes. These sections are substantially narrower than street wall is tall. We do not agree that breaks are required, as the word break does not appear anywhere in this requirement. That being said, as a matter of good faith, we have provided a version of the design with three breaks, in addition to the repetition free façade which is distinctly different every ten feet.

e) The street wall base is designed for multiple retail amenities supported by a café with deck, a full length arcade and five prominent entrances with prominent signage. The goal is to integrate these retail operations to serve the building tenants, the substantial pedestrian traffic along Chain of Lakes Trail and vehicular traffic along Joseph Howe Drive.

f) Materials used shall be curtain glasswall, architectural metal panels, and architectural stone panels with no ability to rust, bleed efflorescence or change color over time to any elements. They will also be chosen to deal with the highest impact wind and storm events that are present in this region.

g) All areas not used for parking will be hardscaped with patio stones of a minimum 2" thick to handle the traffic. All soft landscaping on the property shall be comprised of a combination of sods, beachstone and trees to minimize weed growth and maintain sustainability.

h) All stormwater for the site is being drained within the underground parking garage. All surface parking, generators, transformers and meters are to the rear of the property or are shielded by landscape elements, such as trees.

i) Sidewalks have been incorporated into the design all the way around all the buildings to allow for safe pedestrian traffic.

j) There are not blank walls on the building design

k) Servicing studies have been conducted and existing infrastructure has been deemed adequate for the density and use of the site

l) High Quality Landscaping is provided at ground level featuring stone, softscape and a hardscape patio; Large Rooftop Amenity Spaces above streetwall podium providing exceptional views for resident gatherings and activities; vegetated areas, walkways and covered and non-covered seating areas;

Please feel to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Original Signed

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Keith Tufts
Principal
Lydon Lynch Architects