

## 95 CALEDONIA

95 Caledonia Road, Dartmouth NS

### Design Rationale

#### PROJECT BRIEF + CONEXT

The proposed development is located on a 51 353 SF property at civic number 95 Caledonia Road. The property fronts the corner of Caledonia Road and Kennedy Drive in Dartmouth, in a highly residential area with some recreational, institutional and commercial uses to the South. The development exists currently as a low-rise commercial plaza slated for demolition as part of the proposed development, zoned C-2 in Schedule 1 of the Land Use By-Law and Commercial as per Map 10 of the Dartmouth Future Generalized Land Use Map.

The surrounding context of the proposed development is a variety of existing neighbourhoods and building types. To the North and West are predominantly residential areas comprised of single-family homes and low to mid-rise apartment buildings. To the South are more recreational, commercial and institutional uses. This area includes a number of secondary and post-secondary schools as well as the Westphal Plaza and other retail establishments.

The proposed development is composed of a street front commercial portion with housing on the upper levels, intended to align with the Municipal Planning Strategy's vision for properties of this designation. The five-storey proposal will bring a variety of unit types to the area, contributing to the diversity of housing that is already present and respond to the scale of surrounding developments. The proposal intends to utilize already existing infrastructure, with an above grade parking structure proposed at the rear of the building to reduce visual clutter from the street-line. The proposed structure will be clad in materials consistent with the primary mass of the building for it to blend seamlessly with the design, and visual buffers are proposed on both interior lot lines to mitigate the impact on abutting properties. Upon comprehensive review and design, the proposal intends to align with the policies outlined for the area. The project responds to both the immediate and distant context of the property and considers these factors in its development.

#### RELEVANT MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRETEGY POLICIES

***Policy IP-5 It shall be the intention of City Council to require Development Agreements for apartment building development in R-3, R-4, C-2, MF-1 and GC Zones. Council shall require a site plan, building elevations and perspective drawings (...)***

***In considering the approval of such Agreements, Council shall consider the following criteria:  
(a) adequacy of the exterior design, height, bulk and scale of the new apartment development with respect to its compatibility with the existing neighbourhood;***

The proposed building mass is broken down by the treatment of the façade, framing portions of the building to resemble the scale of surrounding buildings. The height of the building is consistent with other buildings in the area with several existing developments to the north and to the south on Roleika Drive that have similar heights.

***(b) adequacy of controls placed on the proposed development to reduce conflict with any adjacent or nearby land uses by reason of:***

***(i) the height, size, bulk, density, lot coverage, lot size and lot frontage of any proposed building;***

The proposed building is of similar size and density to those that surround it. The design intends to respect the existing neighbourhood while bringing a new modern development and residents to the area.

***(ii) traffic generation, access to and egress from the site; and***

A traffic impact statement has been issued for the proposed development. It has been determined that the proposal will produce negligible traffic impacts along Caledonia Road.

***(iii) parking;***

The design features an at-grade, sheltered parking area to reduce the presence of parking on site without the need for excavation. This parking structure will be clad in materials consistent with the building design and blend in with the façade of the proposal. Any exterior parking will have a buffer in the form of a minimum 6' tall wooden privacy fence between the surface parking and any abutting property line.

***(c) adequacy or proximity of schools, recreation areas and other community facilities;***

The proposed development is sited within proximity to a number of schools and areas of recreation. Located to the south is the East Dartmouth Community Centre, Caledonia Junior High School, NSCC Akerley Campus, and Prince Andrew High School. With a variety of unit types in the proposed development, the placement is ideal in providing a wide range of housing types for a diverse population.

***(d) adequacy of transportation networks in, adjacent to, and leading to the development;***

The location of the proposed building is ideal for accessing transportation networks in Dartmouth. In addition to the vehicular access provided on site, two bus stops headed north and south are located directly outside the buildings main entrance. Located just north of Main Street, the proposal has many active networks leading to the development.

***(e) adequacy of useable amenity space and attractive landscaping such that the needs of a variety of household types are addressed and the development is aesthetically pleasing;***

The proposal incorporates a ground-floor amenity space to serve its residents with access to outdoor landscape areas. The multi-purpose amenity space is ideal for different sized groups and functions, satisfying the needs of all residents in the proposed development.

***(f) that mature trees and other natural site features are preserved where possible;***

The proposal includes generous front-yard setbacks, allowing for the preservation of mature trees on the site. Currently a vacant lot, the proposal intends to enhance the natural features on the site and incorporate them into the design of the building.

***(g) adequacy of buffering from abutting land uses;***

The proposal considers the impact it may have on abutting land uses and integrates adequate buffers in the design of the building. Along the rear lot line, perpendicular to Kennedy Drive, a minimum 6' tall wooden privacy fence and vegetation will be designed to provide buffering. Perpendicular to Caledonia Road, along the side yard where surface parking is proposed will be a minimum 6' tall wooden privacy fence to buffer the abutting land; vegetation already exists on the abutting property in this area.

***Policy C-48 Within the Town Centre Sub-Designation, Council shall retain the General Commercial (C-2) Zone while introducing special provisions to:***

Located on the periphery of the Town Centre Sub-Designation, the proposal intends to align itself with the visions for this area by satisfying the following requirements listed for properties within this sub-designation.

***(a) enable apartments on upper floors;***

Aside from grade related units, all dwelling units are located on the upper floor of the proposed development and granted a separate entrance from the main commercial use of the building.

***(b) provide for sidewalk-oriented retail;***

All proposed commercial uses for the building are located at grade, abutting Caledonia Road to address the main street front and animate the main sidewalk of the building.

***(c) require rear-yard, subgrade or limited sideyard parking;***

All parking on site is in either the rear or side yard. A parking located to the rear of the building will be enclosed and clad with materials consistent with the design of the building to mitigate visual clutter. Side yard parking is set back from the street to reduce the presence of parking at the street and interior property lines are treating with buffers in the form of a min 6' tall wooden privacy fence.

***(d) limit streetwall and building heights; and***

The mass of the building is articulated to reduce the overall size and scale of both the street wall and the building. Additionally, the height of the proposal intends to align itself with the general height of existing buildings in the surrounding area.

*Policy IP-1*

*1. (b) Generalized Land Use*

*The generalized land use categories for the City shall include: (1) Residential, (2) Commercial, (...)*

*Tables 4, 4a and 4b identify (RC-Sep 10/13;E-Nov 30/13), in matrix form, the permitted uses under each generalized land use category. The uses permitted in the Zoning By-law shall (...)*

All uses envisioned for the proposed development conform to the permitted uses listed in Table 4 of the MPS. The intention is to revitalize the commercial program of the site while introducing a diverse mix of unit types in the area that serve the greater community.

CONCLUSION

It is evident in the design strategies and policies described above that the proposed development aligns with Dartmouth's Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law. As the site is located on the periphery of important designations listed in the MPS, it warrants design standards that are related to these notable areas. The proposal can be acknowledged as bold and identifiable while taking precedent regarding scale and vision from its surrounding context. The proposal attempts to animate its context and engage the surrounding community while bringing a diverse mix of dwelling types to the area.

We thank you for considering this application and look forward to working with staff.

Regards,

John Dib, Student Architect  
BEDS, M.Arch Candidate

WM FARES ARCHITECTS  
3480 Joseph Howe Dr, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Halifax, N.S. B3L 4H7  
t. (902) 457-6676  
f. (902) 457-4686