



**HALIFAX PENINSULA PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
July 24, 2017**

PRESENT: Ashley Morton, Chair
Sarah MacDonald, Vice Chair
Michael Bradfield
Jeana MacLeod
Councillor Lindell Smith

REGRETS: Joe Metledge
Sunday Miller
Grant Cooke
Amy Siciliano
Councillor Waye Mason

STAFF: Carl Purvis, Principal Planner, Urban Enabled Applications
Stephanie Salloum, Planner II, Rural Policy and Applications
Sharon Chase, Legislative Support, Office of the Municipal Clerk

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

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, and information items circulated are online at halifax.ca.

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m., and adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

- Community Announcements

Councillor Lindell Smith noted that there is a public information meeting on August 10, 2017 at Maritime Hall, Halifax Forum regarding the proposed development of a restaurant and pub at 2720 Gottigen Street.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 26, 2017

MOVED by Michael Bradfield, seconded by Councillor Lindell Smith

THAT the minutes of the June 26, 2017 meeting be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

MOVED by Sarah MacDonald, seconded by Jeana MacLeod

THAT the agenda be accepted as distributed.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES- NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS- NONE

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS- NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS- NONE

8. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD- NONE

9. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

9.1 Case 20894 – Application by WSP Canada Inc. for substantive amendments to an existing development agreement that enables a mixed-use development located at 5511 Bloomfield Street, Halifax.

The proposal details can be found at <https://www.halifax.ca/business/planning-development/applications/case-20894-5511-bloomfield-street-halifax>.

Stephanie Salloum, Planner II, reviewed both the site information and the proposal details. This development is mixed use and falls under Schedule Q. The changes to parking, amenity spaces and building footprint were highlighted. Stephanie Salloum shared the details of public engagement carried out and its response.

The Committee then reviewed the changes with a focus on: the increase in density, the design changes and the reduction in parking provided. It was noted that on Bloomfield Street the streetwall becomes 3 stories instead of 1. The Committee reviewed the new amenity space to determine if this surface space remained the same or increased. Councillor Smith shared a recent neighbourhood plan with the

Committee showing what else is planned or in development in this area. Schedule Q does not set a limit on lot coverage, allowing instead for a case by case review where setbacks can be considered with a design and compatibility focus. They also looked at the north elevation in the context of the existing Subway building. The Committee questioned whether the unit sizes had changed with the increase in the number of units? It was noted that removing the surface parking allowed for the extra four-storey piece, moving of the amenity space and expanding the penthouse floor and that this infilling offers better urban design. The Committee felt that the changes made a significant impact on the neighbourhood.

MOVED by Michael Bradfield, seconded by Councillor Lindell Smith

THAT the Halifax Peninsula Advisory Committee has reviewed the development agreement application for Case 20894 and recommends rejection based on the design as presented.

Ashley Morton stepped down from the Chair to speak to the matter and Sarah MacDonald, Vice-Chair assumed the Chair.

The Committee had further discussion where specific issues were identified as concerns. It was felt that the increase in height and mass was not appropriate, noting the 100% lot coverage in the new proposal. Including some setback and trees or streetscaping and sidewalks should be considered. The proposed lot coverage negatively impacts the adjacent Northwood Property. The Committee discussed the goal of increased density and how that density is defined and achieved. In this instance, the change in density and the new mix of units was seen as a benefit. It was noted that construction had already begun on the main structure but was in the early stages. This property is well served by public transit so a reduction in the number of parking spaces was not a concern. The Committee discussed how parking is allocated in building design and how it should be considered an optional cost to a resident and not an expectation. The Committee would advocate more than the minimum number of bike spots and would encourage the use of public transit and active transportation choices. The pedestrian environment should be considered and prioritized. The building design appeared to make no effort to blend into or enhance the neighbourhood. It was agreed that the changes to the original plan seemed excessive.

Ashley Morton resumed the Chair.

MOVED by Sarah MacDonald, seconded by Jeana MacLeod

THAT the motion be amended such that Halifax Peninsula Planning Advisory Committee notes the following:

- **The committee feels that the height and massing of the building is inappropriate. The committee is particularly concerned about the west wall facing the adjacent residential property and the increase to the street wall on Bloomfield.**
- **The committee feels that the limited setbacks and nearly-100% lot coverage are inappropriate.**
- **The committee is concerned about the street & sidewalk interface of the proposal, and any development agreement should seek to improve this interface.**
- **The committee regrets the lack of street-level trees.**
- **The committee welcomes the increase in bike parking infrastructure, and would support a further extension of this.**
- **The committee supports an increase in the total amenity space. Any development agreement should seek to enhance and preserve amenity space.**

MOTION TO AMEND PUT AND PASSED.

AMENDED MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

9.2 Discussion Regarding Mix of Family (Multi-Bedroom) Units in Residential Developments - Carl Purvis

Carl Purvis, Principal Planner, shared a PowerPoint presentation which reviewed mix of family units and how it is used in city planning. Much of what is cited in current Municipal Planning Strategies (MPS) comes from the MPS approved in 1978. Presently 1/3- 1/2 are required as family type accommodation depending on designation and development agreements. The Centre Plan will provide an updated framework. Carl Purvis reviewed census information from 2011 and 2016 which showed that HRM data is consistent with other Canadian municipalities. It was noted that there are factors which impact family decisions outside of the unit's size these include; parks, schools, affordability and increased mobility. City planners look for a balance between incentives (carrot) and requirements (stick) when engaging with developers. Developers and planners can focus on the use of square footage or number of bedrooms depending on what they are trying to measure or achieve, for example density bonusing and utility/services planning. The Committee agreed that multi-bedroom units help achieve the desired goal of unit diversity which will attract all demographics and abilities, with the focus on use of a space not the user.

The Committee asked whether the market can successfully address these issues or is the use of incentives necessary to drive density? Carl Purvis shared some specific examples of the approaches taken by other Canadian cities. Vancouver has used specific municipal planning strategies to drive density in their downtown where Calgary has used market driven forces. Halifax falls somewhere in between. It was identified that developers will look at both the market and the costs of their development. Here it becomes important to determine what is negotiable and what is required and then how tools such as density bonusing can be used. A factor which is unique and beneficial to Halifax is that developers still build purpose built rentals and not just condominiums. This can be explained by the mix of sectors in HRM: university, military and government as well as the demand for portfolio diversity among property owners. There are checks and balances which prevent saturation of the market. City planners aim for growth happening in the right spots and in the right forms.

10. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – August 28, 2017 Regular Meeting

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

Sharon Chase
Legislative Support