



**HALIFAX PENINSULA PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING
MINUTES
October 5, 2017**

PRESENT: Ashley Morton, Chair
Councillor Lindell Smith
Councillor Waye Mason
Amy Siciliano
Jeana MacLeod
Grant Cooke

REGRETS: Sarah MacDonald, Vice Chair
Joe Metledge
Michael Bradfield
Sunday Miller

OTHERS PRESENT: Shawn Cleary, Councillor District 9
Jacob JeBailey, Principal Architect, WM Fares
Cesar Saleh, Vice President, Planning and Design, WM Fares

STAFF: Andrew Bone, Planner III, Planning and Development
Holly Kent, Planning Technician
Phoebe Rai, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Municipal Clerk
Hannah Forsyth, Legislative Support, Office of the Municipal Clerk

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

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to the Committee are available online at Halifax.ca

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. and the Committee adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:01pm pm at the Halifax Forum (Maritime Hall), 2901 Windsor Street, Halifax.

The Chair encouraged the public to view the posters illustrating the project and to speak to staff until 7:25 p.m.

2. PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

2.1 Case 20267 - Application by WM Fares Architects to change the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law to allow for a 5-storey mixed-use building with ground floor commercial uses and residential uses at the site of a former service station at 6482 Chebucto Road, and on two additional properties (2586 Beech Street and 2585 Elm Street), Halifax.

The Chair invited Andrew Bone, Planner III, to present Case 20267. Bone outlined the role of the City Planner as related to the proposal. Bone stated the purpose of the meeting was to provide information to the public on the proposed development at the corner of Chebucto Rd., Beech and Elm Streets, Halifax and to explain the process involved for an application of this type. The meeting's purpose is to receive feedback, hear concerns, and answer questions regarding the proposed development.

Bone described the history of the site as well as its context and explained the existing Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS). The municipality has been actively working on a Centre Plan and staff has provided recommendations of high level policies in a draft form. The proposed Centre Plan identifies the area as a corridor suitable for mixed use residential with commercial ground floor, and suggests building height from 4-6 storeys and a floor area ratio (FAR) of 3.5.

Regional Council directed staff to continue the process to consider site specific MPS amendments related to several proposals including Case 20267, subject to the application generally aligning to the draft Centre Plan. Council advised that the principles of transition, pedestrian-orientation, human scale, building design and context-sensitivity be considered.

The Chair invited Jacob JeBailey, Principal Architect, WM Fares to present the building proposal on behalf of the applicant.

Jacob JeBailey stressed that the proposal is not fixed and that the group is open to concerns and modifications. JeBailey presented an overall map of the site for context and outlined existing amenities, the central location on the peninsula and the urban context. JeBailey's presentation included street views and visuals on how pedestrians are using the street and how residents are accessing their homes. JeBailey stated the importance of integrating those elements into the design. A site map included storey heights and grade changes with commercial sites at the street level.

The Chair clarified the rules of the question and answer and the format for a productive feedback session before opening the floor to comments from the public.

Robert Estey-Willick, Beech Street shared concerns on behalf of owners and operators of a clinic on Beech Street. Estey-Willick stated the development threatens the clinic and will disrupt the tranquil environment the clinic needs. They also expressed concern regarding disruption during the construction phase. They questioned what the developer would offer to offset the impact to business owners. Estey-Willick concluded by noting an insufficient allotment of parking spaces and requesting the committee to keep the scale of the development small and respect the feedback they hear.

Andrew Bone stated the question would be addressed in a staff report.

Stephen Feist, Chebucto Road commented that Elm Street has increasing numbers of young families and expressed concern that the project, with 40 parking spaces will worsen the existing traffic on Chebucto Road and Elm Street. Feist raised concerns around winter snowfall, removal and parking resulting in a one-way road. They also stated that the scale of the development, five or six storeys, is too high given single dwellings surrounding the area.

Susan Tooke, Elm Street shared concerns about the sound of construction given they illustrate books for children and do audio work from home, so their work will be impacted by the sound. Tooke also commented on the increased traffic and the potential danger to children in the area. They questioned whether there was a traffic study completed and commented that parking is already at a premium. They also questioned the sewer implications and questions regarding run-off and the wind impacts on snow patterns. Tooke stated that the proposed exit of the garage is too close to the street corner and spoke against the proposed five storeys.

Richard Rudnicki, Elm Street expressed support for developments in Halifax and noted they could be proud of this proposal. Rudnicki takes issue with the transition to the neighbourhood with five storeys to two storeys and noted that utilities will add to height. Rudnicki asked for additional information on power poles and waste removal on Elm Street.

Isabel Fearon, Swaine Street commented that with the proposed building right to the edge of the property, the transition to the community would be harsher. Fearon questioned the impact the building would have on water run-off in the area, and questioned if there are any proposed exchanges being offered by the developers. Fearon raised the concern of pedestrian safety on the sidewalk given the screened in porches are so close to the sidewalk, and they questioned the lack of commercial parking and where the trucks and commercial vehicles will park when delivering.

Jacob JeBailey clarified that the developer is tasked with the design of the building and that the building owners would be able to answer logistical questions. JeBailey suggested that the trucks would likely tuck into the parkade and move into the driveway of the garage to unload.

Mike Smith, Connolly Street expressed support of the development and believes the development will not add to the traffic in and out of the city. Smith stated that the project, if approved, should stay on schedule and questioned whether there would be penalties if the project was delayed.

Joan Fraser, Seaforth Street stated that a low residential development would fit nicely on the site and that the development should be kept to three or four storeys. Fraser commented that it is important to remember that the Centre Plan is still in progress and that a transition into the communities will be difficult with five storey buildings and four storeys should become the model for upcoming developments.

Lara Hazelton, Halifax shared concerns that annexing the residential property will set a precedent and that the proposed building is too large. Hazelton does not believe the development will fit with the community and the context of the surrounding area. They stated that traffic is already an issue and that additional persons will not help with that.

Steve Parcell, Duncan Street commented that 148 people will be on this site with one or two bedrooms, the site area is less than half an acre, so the density is 320 persons per acre which is quite high. Parcell inquired as to the floor area ratio and questioned the origins of the 3.5 FAR maximum. Parcell also stated that there is a 125 persons per acre maximum in the area, and 250 downtown according to bylaws. Therefore the proposed density would exceed that bylaw provision. Parcell commented that the current height limit on the property is 35 feet, and the proposal is 54 feet; under the current law it is too high by 19 feet. They concluded by noting that the maximum number of storeys for a corridor is four unless there is suitable depth underneath, however the lot is less than 100 feet deep, so anything more than four storeys should not be permitted.

Andrew Bone stated that more research is necessary.

Jacob JeBailey stated that the floor area ratio is 3.59, it was completed before the Centre Plan and the developer is open to reducing the footprint.

Katie Standage, Kline Street stated that the area currently has single family dwellings, with children walking to school. Standage is concerned that children's safety will be at risk with increased traffic and the high density will not blend with the young community.

Mark Buckrell, Beech Street stated there is already a parking problem on Beech Street that will be exacerbated by the proposed development. Buckrell questioned what variances were needed to build the building, what needs to be rezoned and what is still being considered. Buckrell expressed appreciation for the aesthetic of the Beech Street side, but suggested moving the building back from the sidewalk because the sidewalk is currently too small to pass another person. They stated that the proposed Chebucto corridor will only be four blocks so the development will seem out of character in the community.

Andrew Bone noted that there is a planning policy in commercial areas that allow for the consideration of buildings of this scale.

Jean Kimber, Elm Street is concerned by the increased traffic effects on the safety of children playing on the streets. Kimber stated that the European deli across from the proposed development parkade will result in people stopping on both sides, and commented that there will not be enough parking spaces for the number of apartments.

Luke Williams, Elm Street stated that the building is not attractive, the development will add to the current traffic issues and that the logistics regarding deliveries should be considered further.

Morgen Grandy, Timberlea questioned whether there was any consideration for the environmental assessment from the gas station that previously occupied the site. Grandy commented that the building will be aimed towards housing university students and not families. Grandy questioned why there are no windows on one side of the building and whether there will be 10 to 13 feet between the buildings.

Jacob JeBailey stated that the development aligns with the footprints of the adjacent residences. JeBailey also clarified that it is a fire code requirement to have one side of the building windowless.

Andrew Bone commented that there was a former gas station, however Nova Scotia environment had strict rules regarding the gas station cleanup and they require a cleanup if there are any further issues.

The Chair clarified contact information and comment cards for feedback and thanked the community for attending the Public Information Meeting.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Hannah Forsyth
Legislative Support