



**COMMUNITY DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
October 24, 2018**

PRESENT: Fred Morley, Chair
William Book
Eric Burchill
Dale Godsoe
Rima Thomeh
Councillor Sam Austin
Councillor Lindell Smith
Councillor Richard Zurawski
Deputy Mayor Wayne Mason

REGRETS: Gaynor Watson-Creed, Vice Chair
Christopher Daly
Jenna Khoury
Reg Manzer
Councillor Shawn Cleary

STAFF: Eric Lucic, Manager of Regional Planning
Kasia Tota, Principal Planner, Regional Planning
Phoebe Rai, Legislative Assistant
Simon Ross-Siegel, Legislative Support

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 11:38 a.m., and the Committee adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:38 a.m. in Halifax Hall, 2nd Floor City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 25, 2018

MOVED by William Book, seconded by Councillor Lindell Smith

THAT the minutes of July 25, 2018 be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

The agenda was accepted as distributed.

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

7.1 Correspondence

The Chair noted that the Clerk's office had received correspondence from Peter Ewert, Danuta Snyder, and John Lindsay, and the correspondence has been circulated to the Committee members.

The Chair suggested that a letter of acknowledgement be sent to Jacob Ritchie in recognition of substantial contributions to the Committee.

8. REPORTS

8.1 STAFF

8.1.1 Update: Center Plan Package A – Downtown Dartmouth

The following was before the Community Design Advisory Committee:

- A staff memorandum dated October 17, 2018
- A staff presentation dated October 24, 2018

Eric Lucic, Manager of Regional Planning, spoke before the Committee. Staff outlined changes to the Draft Centre Plan Package A relating to downtown Dartmouth. Staff expressed that the downtown Dartmouth planning policy is consistent with planning policy in draft Package A of the Centre Plan.

Several members asked staff if Dartmouth Cove is included in the present draft. Staff stated that they have deferred inclusion of planning policy for Dartmouth Cove until the next draft of the Centre Plan because as of this time staff does not have enough background information. Staff plans to ensure that drafts of Packages A and B will be released in 2019 so that they may be reviewed concurrently

Regarding Committee feedback, staff stated that they recognized that having both height and Gross Floor Area Ratio (GFAR) together may lead to unwanted restrictions. Staff took this into consideration in drafting the current building height and floor area ratios for downtown Dartmouth. Staff also noted that in several areas heritage conservation district rules will further restrict height limits. Staff also clarified that

they decided to adopt the use of Floor Area Ratios over Gross Floor Area Ratios due to the greater accuracy granted by the former, as was discussed at the July 25, 2018 meeting of the Committee.

Some members asked if staff had further information regarding planning policy for the possible CN Rail presence on the Dartmouth waterfront. Staff replied that these lands all fall under industrial designation, and therefore further details will become available with the release of Package B. There are no changes as of now, and current zoning rules will continue to apply to any planning decisions.

Staff identified changes to the development approval process as it relates to precinct areas. Staff expressed that they are contemplating three future heritage conservation districts in downtown Dartmouth. In response to questions, staff identified that a 22,000 square meter development, the limit for which development in excess of this size would necessitate a development agreement, is roughly equivalent to a 4 story building or a building with twenty units. Regarding opportunity sites, staff stated that under the current downtown Dartmouth plan, staff has identified fifteen sites, all of which are proceeding by development agreements. Staff currently plans in the spirit of the Centre Plan, to designate these as higher order residential, which would assign maximum heights to the developments. So far, staff has not received feedback or comments expressing concern with this approach.

Some members asked if there were other changes to the draft plan which do not relate to the downtown Dartmouth. Staff replied that there were some other built form additions and changes for higher order residential designations.

8.1.2 Update: Staff response to the Committee motion from July 25, 2018 regarding Draft Center Plan Direction Review

The following was before the Community Design Advisory Committee:

- A staff presentation dated October 24, 2018

Kasia Tota, Principal Planner, Regional Planning, spoke before the Committee regarding the motion discussed and passed by the Committee on July 25, 2018.

Regarding the Committee's recommendation for further consultation with other municipal departments regarding cross-referencing other regional and municipal plans, staff stated that it is continuing to engage with staff across the municipality, particularly regarding the heritage conservation districts as of this time. Staff also stated they have engaged with finance staff to further discuss special tax provisions for commercial properties. Staff does not have the capacity to generate a harbour plan as harbour planning is managed by a separate planning document.

Some members asked for further information regarding scenarios which would engage a review or amendment of the plan, and some members inquired if proposals for a container port expansion in the south end of Halifax would engage a Centre Plan interaction. Staff replied that there may be circumstances which could engage a plan amendment, but as of this time it is too early to consider opening the plan to consider new regional growth scenarios.

Some members asked about greenspaces and open spaces in the new growth areas.. Staff replied that they have conducted workshops with parks and recreation staff, who have assisted Centre Plan staff in drafting policy. While staff noted that there are some challenges such as access to green spaces, there is also interest in addressing additional pressure on existing parks and quality of open spaces as municipality grows. For an example of a way in which the Centre Plan helps address these challenges, the plan provides that all multiunit dwellings will be required to provide some amenity space which will help ensure availability of open spaces as the regional centre grows.

In response to concerns that the Centre Plan will require future investment to achieve its objectives, staff clarified that under the HRM Charter planning documents cannot commit council to financial expenditures. Some members suggested that it would still be valuable to draft non-binding directions,

even if staff is unable to provide a number. In some cases, language like this already used in the Centre Plan in the opening section and for streetscaping.

Some members requested the ability to see some of the diagram images in the slides in a larger print size, particularly the height and floor area ratio maps for downtown Dartmouth. Staff expressed that these are available on the centreplan.ca website as part of the recently released Package A draft, and staff had intended to print and circulate these to the Committee members but did not have time to do so prior to the meeting. Staff stated it would circulate printed versions to members should they wish.

Staff and Committee members discussed the updated schedule and timeline for the Centre Plan review, particularly as it relates to the Committee. Staff stated that the current review must go before CPED, and feedback to the current draft will remain open until November 6th. There are also several engagement sessions scheduled to begin on November 2nd. Staff's plan is to continue to work internally on the Centre Plan draft review and circulate materials within the municipality with the hope to present before CPED in February of 2019. Staff also anticipates returning to the Committee in February with the expectation that the Committee might finish its review by March of 2019. Under this timeframe, staff anticipates a completion date for the final version of Package A in Fall of 2019. Staff undertook to plan to lay out more detailed schedule at next meeting of the Committee. Recognizing that there will be a great deal of review necessary, staff suggested it may be valuable if the Committee would consider scheduling additional meetings.

9. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, November 28, 2018

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

Simon Ross-Siegel
Legislative Support