

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

August 8, 2013

PRESENT: William Hyde, Vice-Chair
Sue Sirrs
Kevin Conley
Mary Black
Suzanne Saul
Jeff Pinhey
Cesar Saleh
Anne Sinclair
Ramzi Kavar
Roy McBride

REGRETS: Terry Smith-Lamothe, Chair
Anne Wilkie

STAFF: Karen Brown, Solicitor
Jillian MacLellan, Planner
Paul Sampson, Planner
Jane Crosby, Legislative Support
Sherryl Murphy, Deputy Clerk

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NONE

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

Ms. Sirrs expressed interest in discussing the Lunch and Learn meeting that occurred July 15th, 2013. The Deputy Clerk suggested deferring discussion on this item to the September 12th, 2013 meeting.

The agenda as presented was accepted.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES: None

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS: None

6. CORRESPONDENCE/PETITIONS/DELEGATIONS: None.

Ms. Sinclair entered the meeting at 6:05 pm.

7. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

7.1 Staff Report – Site Plan Approval – Case 18627: 1234 Barrington

A staff report dated July 19, 2013 was before the Committee.

The Vice Chair expressed concern with the floor to floor height. He added that he hopes the presentation and discussion address these dimensions.

Ms. Jillian MacLellan, Planner, gave a presentation outlining Case 18627. She noted that this site was previously presented to the Committee at the June 2013 meeting. She gave an overview of the proposal and noted the historic importance of the property and discussed the style of architecture of Gerard Lodge. The site's zoning and precinct were presented, as well as photos of the site and some of the surrounding Harvey Street properties.

Various orientations of the proposed addition were presented to the Committee. Ms. MacLellan noted the breezeway that would connect the addition to the rest of the building. The addition was given a three foot setback so as not to detract from Gerard

Lodge. An overview of the landscaping plan was presented. Several features of the addition were noted including the French balconies, garage door style and options for building cladding. Ms. MacLellan also presented the elevations and renderings of the proposed addition.

Recommendations made by the Heritage Advisory Committee were presented and include:

- The building cladding be wholly cedar shingles
- To move the common open space to the townhouse addition roof and not the roof of Gerard Lodge
- To keep the cornice of the townhouse addition uniform (not broken to match elevation of the street).

Ms. MacLellan also added that the Heritage Advisory Committee encouraged a simplified design and neutral colours which the Architect incorporated into his design.

Ms. Sinclair noted concern over not having the complete Heritage Advisory Committee report as this report is referenced in the staff report before the Design Review Committee. She noted that having the report allows the Design Review Committee to fully consider the application.

Ms. MacLellan explained the process regarding heritage properties and noted that the application will go to the Heritage Advisory Committee then the Design Review committee before it goes to Regional Council. She added that the reason for this is because decisions of the Design Review committee are appealable to Regional Council. Ms. Murphy, Deputy Clerk, added that the Heritage Advisory Committee report is a recommendation to Regional Council and it cannot be released until such time as it goes to Regional Council. Ms. MacLellan added that reference to the Heritage Advisory Committee report in the Staff Report was an error. She suggested that perhaps an excerpt of the minutes from the Heritage Advisory Committee meeting be included in the future.

The requested variance, section 3.6.15, was then presented and Ms. MacLellan responded to questions from the Committee. Ms. MacLellan clarified that the Committee does have the authority to go below 3.5 metres. The Committee entered into further discussion and Ms. MacLellan and Mr. Geoff Keddy, Architect, responded to questions from the Committee. Ms. Sinclair asked for clarification on the materiality of the building and expressed concern over lack of consistency and variety of building claddings.

Upon further discussion the following motion was put:

MOVED by Ms. Sinclair, seconded by Mr. Saleh, that the Design Review Committee approve the qualitative elements of the substantive site plan approval

application for the addition of 3 townhouse units to 1234 Barrington Street, with wooden cedar shingles as the primary building cladding, as shown in Attachments A and B of the July 19, 2013 staff report and a variance to the ground floor to floor height of 2.8 metres (11.48 feet), under the condition that the cladding on the south wall match the cladding found on the west wall.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.2 Staff Report – Case 18687: 1572 Barrington Street – National Film Board Building

Mr. McBride and Mr. Pinhey declared a Conflict of Interest due to employment and took a seat in the gallery.

A staff report dated July 16, 2013 was before the Committee.

Mr. Paul Sampson, Planner, delivered a presentation outlining the application for a Substantive Site Plan Approval for the former National Film Board building. He introduced the site context, and presented various photos. Various plans for the building were also presented to the Committee.

Mr. Sampson also noted the recommendations made by the Heritage Advisory Committee which include:

- Appropriate roof colour;
- Inscriptions on façade be reproduced
- Inscriptions, if removed, should be utilized on property/incorporated in design.

The requested variances to streetwall height & land uses at grade were also presented. The Committee entered into brief discussion and staff responded to questions. Ms. Sinclair asked if there have been any changes made to the plans which were previously presented to the Committee at the June 2013 meeting. Mr. Sampson responded that there has been information added to the drawings on building signage and lighting. Upon further discussion the following motion was put:

MOVED by Mr. Saleh, seconded by Mr. Kawar that the Design Review Committee:

- 1. Approve the qualitative elements of the substantive site plan approval application for a 5-storey mixed-use development at 1572 Barrington Street, Halifax, as shown in Attachment A of the July 16, 2013 staff report; and**
- 2. Approve the requested variances to the streetwall height and land uses at grade, as shown in Attachment A of the July 16, 2013 staff report.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Mr. McBride and Mr. Pinhey returned to their seats at the table.

7.3 Introduction to Development Proposal: - 1583 Hollis Street (Considered by Design Review Fall 2012)

A memo dated May 3, 2013 directed to Paul Sampson, Planner with supporting documentation and plans/renderings was before the Committee.

Mr. Eric Burchill, Vice President, Planning & Development, Southwest Properties, briefly introduced the development proposal. Mr. Jim Spatz thanked the Committee for the opportunity, and discussed the site. He noted some of the challenges of the proposal and indicated that this development, if permitted, would be the largest apartment building in the downtown. He added that there is an intention to have this development receive a Silver or Gold LEED status.

Mr. Burchill presented a description of the project and noted the building would be 21 storeys, roughly 270 residential units and approximately 26,000 square feet. He also presented the mechanism for the requested variances. Mr. Burchill noted that this building would have architectural merit and would be a prominent building on the Halifax skyline.

Mr. Mansoor Kazerouni, Director, IBI Group presented the architectural approach to the development. The following was noted:

- Location of commercial space
- Location of the parking and the main residential entrance including a feature art wall
- Location of a restaurant occupying the south end of the building at grade
- The 5.5 metre pull back at grade to facilitate the creation of the mid-block connection, as well as the 6.0 metre setback on the East face noting the resulting podium size and elements
- The anticipated animation of the building and the surrounding streetscape
- The streetwall height and how it responds to the neighbouring Ralston Building
- The angularity of the vertical elements on the building allowing South-East views towards the water to be facilitated
- The extension of the building's pool area as an interesting focal point
- The materiality of the balconies
- Solid wall parking entrance modified to be more open based on previous Design Review Committee comments.

Mr. Kazerouni noted that the building has four fronts and there really isn't a back to the building. He also presented the mechanical penthouse and noted that effort has been made to integrate it into the built form. The result is that it has been made into an architectural feature by surrounding it with a glass screen that would include up-lighting.

Potential materials were briefly presented however it was noted that no final decisions have been made.

The Committee discussed some of the elements of the building and the presenters responded to questions. Mr. Pinhey commented that he is pleased with the mechanical treatment to which Mr. Conely agreed. Ms. Saul added that she is very happy with the design and asked about the shadow analysis to which Mr. Burchill responded that there is no negligible impact on the adjacent streets.

Mr. Kazarouni asked about the colour of the masonry being used on the lower level of the building. Mr. Kazarouni responded that they are looking for contrast and are therefore seeking darker options.

Ms. Sirrs asked for clarification on a new property line noted on one of the options for the Open Space drawings. Mr. Burchill explained that a 20 foot strip of land will be purchased from the province that would facilitate the pedestrian connection.

Ms. Sinclair expressed that she feels the variances are justified given the arguments presented. She added that she believes this building has a design that people will not tire of in the future. She noted that it is an excellent use of space with an elegant design. Ms. Sinclair also commented that she feels a lot of careful design work went into designing the outdoor private space and she believes it is a good design however she would like to see Universal Design applied to this space as it is not accessible to everyone. She noted that Halifax is lagging behind in Universal Design Standards, but she feels with a new development these standards should be incorporated

Mr. Kazarouni commented on the bowed element of the building and explained the architectural rationale. He believes the building takes a series of elements with varied proportions and brings them together in an elegant composition creating visual interest.

Mr. McBride asked if it was possible for the bowed feature to have a purpose. The Committee briefly discussed this idea and Mr. Kazarouni commented on buildings terminating in an interesting manner. Ms. Saul suggested that perhaps there could be some sort of lighting feature to create some interest. Mr. Kazarouni commented that there are plans for lighting this architectural feature.

Mr. Spatz, Mr. Burchill and Mr. Kazarouni thanked the Committee for their time.

7.4 Introduction to Development Proposal: - Cunard Block Development (Waterfront Development Corporation Limited and Southwest Properties)

Mr. Andy Fillmore, Vice President of Planning and Development with Waterfront Development Corporation, introduced the Cunard Block development. He noted that this project is a partnership between a Crown Corporation (Waterfront Development)

and a private business (Southwest Properties). He indicated that an Open House had recently been held with regards to the development.

Trevor McIntyre, Landscape Architect, IBI Group presented the Public Space design for the Cunard Block development. He noted the feedback received from the public at the Open House and the importance of having the Halifax waterfront maintain continuity. Mr. McIntyre then presented the various features and design elements within the Public Space.

Mr. Kazerouni then presented various renderings of the building and discussed the built form. He noted the significant drop in grade and pointed out the location of a restaurant and the commercial office space. He presented various entrances to the building, the outdoor terrace and rooftop pool. He discussed some of the architectural elements and noted the objective of creating fully animated frontages.

The Committee entered into brief discussion and the presenters responded to questions. The Vice-Chair thanked the developers for their presentation.

8. ADDED ITEMS: NONE

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – September 12, 2013

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Jane Crosby
Legislative Support