

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

November 14, 2013

PRESENT: Terry Smith-Lamothe, Chair
William Hyde, Vice-Chair
Mary Black
Jeff Pinhey
Ramzi Kawar
Roy McBride
Sue Sirrs
Cesar Saleh
Anne Sinclair

REGRETS: Ann Wilkie
Mary Black
Suzanne Saul
Kevin Conley

STAFF: Dali Salih, Planner
Jillian MacLellan, Planner
Jane Crosby, Legislative Support

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1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 10, 2013

The following correction to the minutes was noted:

On Page 6, the last sentence in the second paragraph should read;

“The Chair also expressed concern regarding the use of the term “back” for the Market Street side of the building. He indicated that the building shouldn’t have a backside. In addition he felt it was unfortunate that there was a crossing between pedestrian and automobile traffic in the interior plaza.”

MOVED by Mr. Hyde, seconded by Mr. McBride, that the minutes of October 10th 2013, be approved as amended

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

The Chair requested to add a final letter from himself to the Committee as an item.

MOVED by Mr. McBride, seconded by Ms. Sirrs, that the agenda, as amended be approved.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES: None

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS: None

6. CORRESPONDENCE/PETITIONS/DELEGATIONS:

6.1 Submissions re Nova Centre (See listing attached)

7. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

7.1 Revised Preliminary Presentation – Case 18660 – Mixed Use Development at 5445 Rainnie Drive

Information relative to the proposed mixed use development at 5445 Rainnie Drive including a Wind Impact Qualitative Assessment, a Traffic Impact Statement and drawings and plans were before the Committee.

Mr. Saleh declared a conflict of interest and took a seat in the gallery.

Mr. Roberto Menendez, Director of Design and Development with WM Fares Group delivered a presentation to the Committee outlining the changes made to the mixed use development at 5445 Rainnie Drive. These changes were made following the preliminary presentation to the Committee in July 2013.

Mr. Menendez summarized some of the comments and concerns expressed by the Committee in July 2013. He then presented the location and indicated that the view planes from the Citadel do not apply to this proposal. A revised rendering was presented to the Committee and Mr. Menendez noted the defined base and the crown of the upper section, as well as some aspects of the materiality. Project Information was also presented and it was noted that the building would have 68 residential units with the possibility to increase to 74.

Mr. Menendez presented various elevations, plans and sections of the building describing the changes made to the proposal. He described the modifications made to the entrance at the parkade and noted compliance with pedestrian access. The floor plans for each storey were presented to the Committee, as was the rooftop landscaping plan. Mr. Menendez provided the Committee with a new drawing for the landscaping plan which supersedes the drawing provided in the agenda package (Drawing L101). Mr. Menendez noted that the building meets all requirements; however he indicated that it is likely that a minor variance would be requested where the handrails encroach. An architectural rendering was then presented and Mr. Menendez described the materiality of the building and some of the colours that would be used. Mr. Menendez concluded his presentation and the Committee entered into discussion.

Mr. Hyde asked about the windows in the building and their proximity to the property line in the case of a fire. Mr. Menendez responded that two solutions have been considered; window shutters and a water wall. The Chair asked about the patio which was presented on the previous design in July 2013. It was clarified that the patio has since been removed because it would have required a variance.

Mr. Pinhey expressed concern regarding the amount of traffic that could potentially be stopped in front of the building. Mr. Menendez noted that the developer was hoping to get a lay-back, however HRM was concerned that a lay-back would interfere with pedestrian traffic. Mr. Pinhey asked about the archaeological component of the site

because of its proximity to the Citadel. Mr. Menendez indicated that the developer is aware of this and will be following due diligence.

Ms. Sirrs asked for clarification on the east side of the site. She noted that it appears there is lighting on the south end; however it appears that the lighting ends part way across the wall. She expressed safety concerns with this arrangement. Mr. Menendez clarified that the lighting would continue along the wall. Ms. Sirrs also asked for clarification on the door located on the east wall. Mr. Menendez indicated that residents with a key pass would be able to enter and exit through that door. Ms. Sirrs suggested that the door would be an important door for residents and could perhaps be more than a plain metal door. Ms. Sinclair agreed with Ms. Sirrs comments. Mr. Kawar asked about the materials used on the building and Mr. Menendez clarified that a type of composite board would be used. He clarified that the colour of this composite board would be neutral.

The Chair asked if the developer considered using one solid colour on the balconies rather than three. Mr. Menendez explained that a solid colour was considered, however they were looking to add more colour and take advantage of the light in the area. The Chair also asked about the energy efficiency given the amount of glass used in the building. Mr. Menendez explained that Solarban 70 would be used. The Chair and Mr. Kawar expressed concern that the calculation for energy efficiency has yet to be determined.

Ms. Sinclair suggested that barrier free access be incorporated where there are steps on the east wall of the building. She also asked for clarification on why the rooftop landscape plan had changed. Mr. Menendez explained that they were forced to remove the pergola because it exceeded the 30% coverage. He also clarified that the pool will have a 5ft maximum height. Ms. Sirrs asked if the material used on the landscape plan could be modified to be wheelchair accessible. Mr. McBride asked what material would be used on the curved part of the roof. Mr. Menendez indicated that it would be treated concrete. It is not intended to be plant material; however it is something they may consider.

The Committee concluded their discussion and Mr. Menendez thanked the Committee for their time.

Mr. Saleh rejoined the meeting from the gallery.

7.2 Preliminary Presentation – 8 Storey Building – Corner of Market and Sackville Streets – 5362 and 5268 Sackville St.

Information from Paul Skerry Associates Limited for a proposed commercial apartment building including renderings and plans was before the Committee.

Mr. Greg Johnston, Intern Architect with Skerry Associates delivered a presentation on the proposal to the Committee. Mr. Johnston provided the Committee with information on the context of the design and noted that the project was about opportunity. He introduced the location of the site, noting that it is within Precinct 6. A history and overview of the site was described and Mr. Johnston noted that the current building is not a historic property, but it does represent some of the older architecture within Halifax.

Mr. Johnston introduced a rendering of the design and explained that the new design will retain the façade of the existing building and will incorporate high quality materials. It will be a modern contrast to the older building but will respect the original façade's identity. He noted the use of barrier free entrances and indicated that the corner entrance will be maintained. Mr. Johnston indicated that the storefront would be set back from the street to maximize the storefront.

Plans and elevations were presented to the Committee. Mr. Johnston described the residential units and the roof deck, describing some of the features of the deck. He noted that this design is a celebration of the architecture of yesterday and today. Mr. Johnston concluded his presentation.

The Committee entered into discussion. Mr. Johnston and Mr. Paul Skerry responded to questions from Committee members. Mr. Pinhey asked how much of the original building will remain intact. Mr. Johnston noted that the façade and floor structure would be retained. Mr. Saleh asked if the building was pre-bonus or post-bonus height. Mr. Johnston indicated that it is post-bonus and that the retention of the existing building as being a public benefit. He noted that at pre-bonus height the design would be one floor below the current proposal. Mr. Saleh also asked if any variances would be requested. Mr. Skerry responded that where there is an indentation for the entrance to the new part of the building a variance would have to be requested as the building does not meet the street face. The indentation was incorporated to meet the building code to allow for wheelchair access.

The Chair asked if there is a canopy above the arcade. Mr. Skerry indicated that there would be. The Chair also suggested that the chamfer on the corner of the roof be cut off to match the older building and solidify the relationship. Ms. Sinclair commented that the top portion of the new design may take away from the older building. She indicated that it appears superfluous and suggested it be removed. Mr. Pinhey and Mr. Saleh agreed with Ms. Sinclair's comments.

Mr. Kavar commented that the building feels too busy and does not feel there is a continuation between the left and the right. Ms. Sirrs commented that from a pedestrian perspective, the variation in the building is agreeable and likes the design. Mr. Kavar agreed that at the pedestrian level the building looks great, but he expressed that the design as a whole, may have too many languages. The Chair indicated that he likes the

design of the building noting that he likes that the curtain wall doesn't just end at the sky.

The Committee concluded their discussion and thanked Mr. Skerry and Mr. Johnston for their presentation.

7.3 2014 Meeting Schedule

The Committee unanimously agreed that the 2014 Meeting Schedule was acceptable.

7.4 Lunch and Learn Outcomes (July 15, 2013) – Next Steps

The Committee entered into a discussion with regards to the Lunch and Learn that occurred July 15, 2013. The process for seeing proposals and applications was discussed. It was noted that this process could be addressed at a future meeting in which HRM Planning staff could be present to respond to questions.

8.0 ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Letter from Mr. Terry Smith-Lamothe

The Chair discussed his final letter as Outgoing Chair. He thanked the members of the Committee for working with him over the last two years. The members of the Design Review Committee thanked The Chair for his time with the Committee.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – December 12, 2013

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

Jane Crosby
Legislative Support