



**DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
March 12, 2015**

PRESENT: Kourosh Rad, Chair  
Steve Murphy, Vice Chair  
Rick Buhr  
Kevin Conley  
Jared Dalziel  
Andy Fillmore  
Noel Fowler  
Louis Lemoine  
Malcolm Pinto

REGRETS: Catherine Courtney

STAFF: Richard Harvey, Major Projects Planner  
Paul Sampson, Planner  
Karen Brown, Solicitor  
Sherryl Murphy, Deputy Clerk  
Cailin MacDonald, Legislative Support

*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: <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/drc/150312drc-agenda.php>*

*The meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m. and adjourned at 5:25 p.m.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 12, 2015**

**MOVED by Mr. Lemoine, seconded by Mr. Murphy that the minutes of February 12, 2015 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. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE**

**6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS**

**6.1 Correspondence – None**

**6.2 Petitions – None**

**6.3 Presentation – None**

**7. REPORTS**

**7.1 STAFF**

**7.1.1 Case 19516: Rezoning and LUB Amendments – St. David’s Church Hall (1537 Brunswick Street) and portion of the former Halifax Memorial Library site, Halifax – Recommendation to Halifax Regional Council**

The following was before the Committee:

- *A staff recommendation report dated February 2, 2015*

Mr. Fowler declared a Conflict of Interest and took a seat in the gallery.

Mr. Paul Sampson, Planner, gave a presentation outlining 3278915 Nova Scotia Limited’s application, on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of St. David, for proposed amendments to rezone the western portion of the St. David’s Church property at 1537 Brunswick Street and 1544 Grafton Street, from an ICO (Institutional, Cultural and Open Space) Zone to a DH-1 (Downtown Halifax) Zone; and amend the streetwall setback requirement along 1537 Brunswick Street from ‘a minimum of 4 metres’ to ‘between 0 to 1.5 metres.’ Mr. Sampson briefly reviewed the purpose of the application, provided a description of the site as well as explained the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (DHSMP), zoning and heritage context. He also provided details on the next steps planned for this project following the meeting.

A copy of the presentation is on file.

The Chair asked for clarification on what was being required of the Committee. Mr. Sampson clarified that the Committee is asked to make a direct recommendation to Halifax Regional Council on the proposed amendments to the Downtown Halifax Land Use By-law outlined in Attachment A.

Mr. Pinto arrived at 4:35 p.m.

Mr. Sampson responded to questions from the Committee. Mr. Buhr inquired whether there are intentions to rezone the Church property in the future. Mr. Sampson responded that the proposal specifically indicated the intent to maintain the ICO zoning for this portion of the property. The Chair inquired whether the proposed amendment to the streetwall setback requirement is consistent with DH-1. Mr. Sampson confirmed that it was indeed consistent and described the allowances. Mr. Lemoine asked whether the Provinces' intentions for the former library site are known. Mr. Sampson responded that it is unknown at this time. The Chair asked for clarification on the ownership of the church property. Mr. Sampson explained that St. David's Church does not have legal easement and that it is currently owned by HRM and that the city's real estate department is presently negotiating its transfer to the province. The Committee further commented that they had previously reviewed the site plan for this project.

**MOVED by Mr. Fillmore, seconded by Mr. Conley that the Design Review Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council approve of the proposed amendments to the Downtown Halifax Land Use By-law as contained in Attachment A. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Mr. Fowler rejoined the meeting.

**7.1.2 Case 19725: Substantive Site Plan Approval, Mixed-use Development, 5161-5175 South Street, Halifax.**

The following was before the Committee:

- *A staff recommendation report dated February 17, 2015*

Mr. Pinto declared a Conflict of Interest and took a seat in the gallery.

Mr. Harvey provided a brief presentation by reviewing the existing context, project description and overview of the matters for discussion under the Design Manual Guidelines. He reiterated to the Committee that the staff report provides an overview of how this proposal, from a staff perspective, relates to the guidelines found in the Design Manual, and noted that staff has identified several areas which may warrant further discussion by the Committee.

Mr. Harvey outlined the role of the Heritage Advisory Committee for this application. He shared that the Heritage Advisory Committee has reviewed the proposal and while they noted some concerns, the Committee has passed a motion to advise the Design Review Committee that this project does meet the Heritage Guidelines as outlined in the Design Manual.

Mr. Harvey continued by presenting the three variances that are being sought to the quantitative requirements of the Downtown Halifax Land Use By-law (DHLUB). Staff has reviewed these variances and felt that they were in keeping with the Design Manual. He also discussed the findings of the qualitative wind assessment, and shared that staff has reviewed this study and they have found these conditions to be acceptable.

Mr. Harvey explained that the staff recommendation to the Committee is approval of the qualitative elements of the substantive site plan approval application; approval of the requested variances; and acceptance of the findings of the qualitative wind assessment.

A copy of the presentation is on file.

Mr. Harvey responded to questions from the Committee. Mr. Buhr asked how much latitude is provided for when a proposal refers to key building components and specific materials as '*or similar.*' Mr. Harvey acknowledged that there is some latitude afforded to Development Officers in these types of scenarios. He further commented that most often projects are built with the materials stated in the proposal and he cited that any major changes would be required to cycle back through the Committee.

Mr. Lemoine inquired about the proposed widening of the sidewalk along Hollis Street, illustrated in the proposal. Mr. Harvey clarified that this component is not part of the substantive site plan approval;

however he further cited that the Developer has proposed acquiring some of Hollis Street for the purpose of widening the sidewalk. He noted that while this cannot be part of the approval, as it is not something that is controlled by the Developer, it can be part of the Committee's recommendation which will be shared with the Developer as well as staff for them to pursue collectively.

Mr. Fillmore asked Mr. Harvey to comment on the proposed landscape elements, specifically the inconsistency in the 3D renderings, one which depicts trees along South Street although not along Hollis Street and a sightline drawing showing trees in neither location. Mr. Harvey acknowledged that the landscape elements are outside of the substantive site plan approval; however he encouraged the Committee to discuss and provide a recommendation for this as well.

The Chair asked whether the proposed design has changed since the Committee's Preliminary Presentation. Mr. Harvey did not believe there had been any changes to the proposal.

**MOVED by Mr. Fillmore, seconded by Mr. Dalziel that the Design Review Committee approve the qualitative elements of the Substantive Site Plan Approval Application for Mixed-use Development on the lands identified as 5161-5175 South Street, Halifax, as shown in Attachment A; approve the requested variances to the Streetwall Height, Landscaped Open Space and Land Uses at Grade (ground floor height), as shown in Attachment A; and accept the findings of the qualitative wind assessment found in Attachment D.**

The Chair inquired whether there was further information available about the heritage easement of the property, particularly as it relates to balconies. Mr. Harvey noted that as it stands, this feature would not be a Design Manual feature rather an allowance within the built form made within the Land Use By-law and is a matter for the Development Officer. He continued to explain that there are few setback requirements at ground level, and going up to a height of 18.5 metres or higher, which is a reflection of its downtown urban context.

Mr. Fowler commented on the penthouse landscape elements. Mr. Harvey noted that Mr. Fowler's comment referred to A5. He went on to further discuss the areas which are part of the Landscaped Open Space, including the sidewalk patios as well as the rooftop terrace, as indicated in the staff recommendation.

The Chair commented that he would like to see the applicant review, and make an effort to incorporate, the Committee's initial recommendations made during the August 12 Preliminary Presentation. Mr. Harvey noted that he does not know with certainty whether or not the Developer has already taken their initial recommendations into consideration.

Mr. Dalziel commented on the underground parking entrance (overhead door), depicted in A8, and suggested that it be transparent. The Committee discussed this suggestion and agreed that the underground parking entrance (overhead door) be translucent as a condition of approval.

Mr. Dalziel commented on the landscaping elements depicted in A5. The Committee further discussed these elements and agreed that the landscaping be consistent with the existing landscape elements along the street.

Mr. Buhr inquired whether the mechanical elements emitting noise and exhaust are generally considered as part of the Design Review process. Mr. Harvey affirmed that generally it would be a consideration especially when it relates to the street itself. Mr. Buhr clarified that in this proposal these elements are assumed to be on the backside of the property or in less visible locations. Mr. Harvey affirmed this notion.

Mr. Harvey asked the Committee to clarify their discussions relating to the underground parking entrance. The Committee discussed this condition as well as their formal recommendations.

- The Committee recommends that HRM build the curved sidewalk as shown in Attachment B, 2.2(f) to create a wider sidewalk along Hollis Street.

- The Committee recommends, in reference to proposed landscape elements, that the Developer include landscaping and street trees along South and Hollis Streets.

The Committee briefly explained, for the benefit of new members, that the checklist is no longer discussed in detail at every meeting, but that it is normally included as part of Committee packages for reference while reviewing materials.

Mr. Fowler asked about the section in the Design Manual which refers to lighting and commented that as a Committee it is rarely discussed. Mr. Harvey indicated that staff did not spend a great deal of time considering the proposed lighting for this staff report. He continued by referencing the proposed lighting indicated on the elevations so the Committee could glean a sense of what is envisioned for the site. Mr. Fillmore asked whether staff could request that future applicants provide a nighttime rendering. Mr. Harvey stated it was something staff can look to operationalize.

**MOVED by Mr. Fowler, seconded by Mr. Dalziel that the Design Review Committee amend the motion to approve the qualitative elements of the Substantive Site Plan Approval Application for Mixed-use Development on the lands identified as 5161-5175 South Street, Halifax as shown in Attachment A with the following condition:**

- **The Developer must make the underground parking entrance (overhead door) translucent.**

**MOTION TO AMEND WAS PUT AND PASSED**

*The Motion now reads:*

**MOVED by Mr. Fillmore, seconded by Mr. Dalziel that the Design Review Committee approve the qualitative elements of the Substantive Site Plan Approval Application for Mixed-use Development on the lands identified as 5161-5175 South Street, Halifax as shown in Attachment A with the following condition: The Developer must make the underground parking entrance (overhead door) translucent; approve the requested variances to the Streetwall Height, Landscaped Open Space and Land Uses at Grade (ground floor height), as shown in Attachment A; and accept the findings of the qualitative Wind Assessment found in Attachment D. MOTION WAS PUT AND PASSED**

8. **ADDED ITEMS – NONE**
9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING – April 9, 2015**
10. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Cailin MacDonald  
Legislative Support