



**DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
October 13, 2016**

PRESENT: Rick Buhr, Chair
Rob LeBlanc, Vice-Chair
Matt Neville
Anna Sampson
Malcolm Pinto
John Crace
Catherine Courtney

REGRETS: Noel Fowler
Kevin Conley
Emmitt Kelly

STAFF: Karen Brown, Senior Solicitor
Krista Vining, Legislative Assistant

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

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to the Design Review Committee are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/drc/160915drc-agenda.php>

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. and adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NONE

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

MOVED by Mr. Neville, seconded by Mr. Crace

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

Two-third majority vote required.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

Mr. Rob LeBlanc declared a conflict of interest for Item 8.1.1 – Case 20572 – Site Plan Application Approval - Benjamin Wier House and Item 9.1 – Hollis and Bishop Streets Development - Application #20296.

Mr. Malcolm Pinto declared a conflict of interest for Item 8.1.1 – Case 20572 – Site Plan Application Approval - Benjamin Wier House.

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence

Correspondence was received for Item 8.1.1. This correspondence was circulated to the Committee.

7.2 Petitions – None

8. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

8.1 STAFF

8.1.1 Case 20572 – Site Plan Application Approval - Benjamin Wier House

Having earlier declared a conflict of interest, Mr. LeBlanc and Mr. Pinto stepped away from the table at this time.

The following was before Committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated September 30, 2016
- Extract of Heritage Advisory Committee minutes dated September 23, 2016
- Correspondence from Elizabeth Pacey and Alan Ruffman
- Staff's presentation
- Applicant's presentation

The Chair asked Ms. Karen Brown, Senior Solicitor to provide clarification respecting Section 250(3) of the *Charter* which states: *A variance may not be granted if (a) the variance violates the intent of the development agreement or land-use by-law.* Ms. Brown explained that the confusion is around the use of the word “variance” pursuant to Section 250 of the Charter and the term used to grant a variance under the Design By-law. In this case, the Committee is reviewing a relaxation to the requirements which is permitted, provided it meets the requirements of the By-law.

Mr. Mitch Dickey, Planner II presented the application of W.M. Fares Group for a substantive site plan approval to enable the development of a seven storey addition to the rear of a registered heritage property known as Benjamin Wier House, 1459 Hollis Street, Halifax.

In response to a question raised on lighting the façade, Mr. Dickey advised that there would be no restoration to the House and it would be inappropriate to do night lighting on the addition as it would impact the heritage property.

Mr. Dickey further responded to questions of clarification respecting the variances per Section 8(10) and Section 10(4) of the Design By-law, speaking to what has been approved and proposed for the adjacent properties on the left and right hand side of the House.

The Chair invited the applicant to address the Committee. Mr. Jacob JeBailey, Principle Planner, W.M. Fares Group gave a brief overview of the historic timeline and character defining elements of the Benjamin Wier House. Mr. JeBailey showed diagrams and spoke to their architectural strategy for bringing the House and the proposed seven storey addition together. Mr. JeBailey noted that the addition is proposed to have approximately 50 percent commercial and 50 percent residential.

Members recognized the significant effort to preserve the heritage streetscape and how the proposed addition of a contemporary building ties in well with the Benjamin Wier House. Members expressed concern with illumination from the addition during the night, commenting on it being a large “light box”.

Mr. JeBailey responded to questions with the following clarification being provided:

- Proposing to remove the dormers and reinforce or bridge the existing development to address drainage and concerns with snow
- The use of the glass windows was to provide as much lighting as possible on a narrow lot
- The “zig zag” form of the addition was done to balance the two masses and create movement
- Consideration could be giving to exterior lighting of the House’s façade (e.g. similar lighting done on the Halifax Club)

MOVED by Mr. Neville, seconded by Ms. Courtney

THAT the Design Review Committee:

- 1. Approve the qualitative elements of the substantive site plan approval application for the mixed-use development at 1459 Hollis Street, Halifax, as shown on Attachment A of the staff report dated September 30, 2016;**
- 2. Approve the two requested variances to the Land Use By-law requirements regarding setbacks for rooftop features and for mid-rise side yard setbacks as shown in Attachment B of the staff report dated September 30, 2016; and**
- 3. Accept the findings of the qualitative Pedestrian Wind Assessment, as contained in Attachment C of the staff report dated September 30, 2016.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Mr. Pinto rejoined the meeting at this time.

9. PRELIMINARY PRESENTATIONS

9.1 Hollis and Bishop Streets Development - Application #20296

Having earlier declared a conflict of interest with regard to this matter, Mr. LeBlanc remained seated away from the table.

The following was before Committee:

- A presentation by DEXEL Developments, Hollis & Bishop Street Development

The Chair invited the proponent to address the Committee. Mr. Louie Lawen, President of DEXEL Developments gave an overview of the pre-application for a site-plan approval for a residential/commercial mixed-use development at 1363 Hollis Street and 5140 and 5134 Bishop Street. Mr. Lawen noted that the proposed project will occupy approximately 10,000 square feet and that the Government House was an influence for the use of limestone material. Mr. Lawen spoke to the commonalities between the proposed project and the neighbouring building (The Alexandria), reviewing features of the project, including approximately 100 square feet of corner retail space. He indicated that the proposed height for the project has been the biggest challenge and sought guidance from the Committee on what some of the variances might entail.

In response to questions and suggestions made, Mr. Lawen provided the following information:

- The plan for the precincts is to create some form of public art on the entrance wall of the building
- The building will include common amenity space with the use of a parapet and private terraces
- Neutral color tile is proposed for the infill material around the windows for texture but has not been finalized; the plan is to use natural limestone, if possible, but it may be necessary to source manmade limestone
- The intent is to have a minimalist upper section with enclosed French balconies so as to not overpower the front entrance and lower portion of the building, as well working within the setback rules
- Heat pumps will be installed for each unit to address temperature concerns (e.g. heating/cooling) with the proposed full glass façade
- Consideration will be given to having a solar wall
- Ways to accentuate the lines of the townhouses to address the slop of the lot will be considered

Further discussion was held around the proponent's options for requesting a variance for the height, with staff responding to questions around the pre-application stage and the planning process moving forward. Members commented on conducting a wind study and identifying impact areas in the renderings. Mr. Lawen spoke to the building's shape and creating a structural canopy to mitigate wind impact. In response to parking, Mr. Lawen indicated that parking would be shared between the proposed building and the Alexandria. He was confident that parking would not be an issue with 90 parking spaces for 120 units.

10. IN CAMERA (IN PRIVATE) – NONE

11. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Thursday, November 10, 2016

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Krista Vining
Legislative Assistant