

HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

February 22, 2012

PRESENT: Mr. Stephen Terauds, Chair
Mr. Mark Archibald, Vice Chair
Ms. Susan Carroll
Ms. Deborah Larter
Ms. Monica MacDonald
Ms. Emma Sampson
Mr. David Houlian
Mr. Anthony Hannaford
Ms. Andrea Fox
Councillor Robert Harvey

REGRETS: Councillor Sue Uteck
Mr. Thomas Dawson

STAFF: Mr. Bill Plaskett, Heritage Planner
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. in Halifax Hall.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED by Ms. MacDonald, seconded by Ms. Sampson that the minutes of January 25, 2012 be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

The Chair noted that copies of a letter from Heritage Trust e-mailed to the Committee members yesterday have been circulated; and that a letter from Starfish Properties received this morning has also been circulated.

The Chair advised that the architect for the Tip Top Tailors project was in attendance and has offered to provide a presentation if the Committee wished to have the additional information.

MOVED by Mr. Archibald, seconded by Ms. MacDonald that the architect for the project regarding 1592 Barrington Street provide a presentation to the Committee. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES/ STATUS SHEET: None

5. DEFERRED ITEMS: None

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

6.1 Correspondence: None

6.2 Petitions

6.3 Presentation:

6.3.1 Heritage Trust – Case H00364: Proposed Demolition of Former Tip Top Tailors

A presentation was submitted.

A letter dated February 20, 2012 was submitted from Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Peter Delefes and Mr. Phil Pacey, representing Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia provided a presentation on their concerns with the staff report recommendation to approve the demolition application of 1592 Barrington Street, the Tip Top Tailors Building. Their presentation outlined the heritage value of the building, providing background details on the original owner, David Dunkelman, and the architect for the project, Duffus and Romans and their unique design of the building.

Their presentation suggested that, although there have been alterations to the building, it could be restored and deserves to be retained and they recommended that the application be turned down. Key reasons provided for turning down the proposal were:

- the building is included in the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District and demolition is contrary to HRM Policy 6 of the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Revitalization Plan;
- The proposed building does not comply with provisions of the National Building Code with regard to snow load and may impact The Church of England Institute, Neptune Theatre or the Tramway Building; and the proposal would abut the Church of England Institute and the design would not comply with the Heritage Design Guidelines in the Downtown Halifax Land Use By-law.

In conclusion, it was noted that past practice has been to turn down demolition applications so negotiations to save the building could start; and once this application is turned down, the owners can consider the alternatives of retaining the present building in its current envelope, expanding it, or selling.

The Chair then invited the architect for the project to come forward at this time and provide his presentation.

Mr. Eugene Pieczonka, Principal with Lydon Lynch Architects circulated a computer-generated streetscape photograph illustrating their proposed building design at 1592 Barrington Street, and provided a brief overview of the design process and the architect's approach to this proposal.

In his presentation, Mr. Pieczonka provided background detail on the state of the building advising that a lot of original materials have been covered up and have fallen in disrepair, and noted that it would not meet today's building codes for structural design. Also, he pointed out that, previously, Neptune Theatre had easements and the building had been designed with an eight foot wide gap between it and the Tramway Building and a four foot wide gap between it and Neptune Theatre, but that these easements are no longer accessible.

With regard to the proposed building design, Mr. Pieczonka noted that the building will be a predominately glass curtain wall structure, with the offices situated to the front of the building to access as much daylight as possible. Some side elevation of the

building will have exposure to daylight because the building will be a bit taller than the surrounding buildings. Mr. Pieczonka added that he feels the building design is similar to the former Tip Top Tailor building, and that the proposed height provides a good transition to the buildings on either side.

At 3:40 p.m. Ms. Fox entered the meeting.

With respect to concern over snow loads, Mr. Pieczonka advised that the building codes speak to this and if it were deemed a concern, they would bring in an engineer to evaluate and, if necessary, they would ensure the roofs are reinforced. He pointed out that this occurred to the Khyber Building when Neptune Theatre was constructed, and that he would undertake the same methodology. Mr. Pieczonka also advised that they will ensure the Tramway Building light-well would remain.

The Chair advised that it has come to his attention that Mr. Morris Strug, owner of the Tramway Building was present and would like to briefly address the Committee in regard to the proposal for 1592 Barrington Street. The Chair suggested that if it were the wish of the Committee to hear Mr. Strug, that a motion be put forward.

MOVED by Mr. Archibald, seconded by Ms. Carroll that Mr. Morris Strug be provided the opportunity to address the Committee with regard to this matter. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Mr. Strug addressed the Committee and submitted a letter with regard to the alley next to 5212 Sackville Street. He advised that it has been a right-of-way for at least the last thirty years and requested that it be required to remain accessible as it has provided access for maintenance for 5212 Sackville Street.

6.4 Updates from HAC Member – HRM Committees/HAC Subcommittees:
None

7. REPORTS

7.1 Staff

7.1.1 Case H00364 – Proposed Demolition of Former Tip Top Tailors Building, 1592 Barrington Street, Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District.

A staff report dated February 7, 2012 was submitted.

Mr. Bill Plaskett provided the staff presentation on the application by Lydon Lynch Architects, on behalf of the owner, 2882 Gottingen Street Limited, to demolish the former Tip Top Tailors building at 1592 Barrington Street and replace it with a new building. In his remarks he advised that the property was in a heritage district, but it

was not a registered heritage property. He noted that the proposal will also go before the Design Review Committee, before going to Regional Council.

Mr. Plaskett provided background historical and design information on the building, and elaborated on its current state, pointing out that it has significant deterioration and the existing structure has numerous code deficiencies, and presents a reasonable case for demolition. He advised that with regard to the merits of replacing the building, staff evaluated the proposal against sections 4.1 and 4.2 of the Design Manual, pertaining to infill, and feel that the proposal meets the design guidelines. Mr. Plaskett suggested, however, there were some areas that the Committee and Council may wish to discuss with regard to how they are to be interpreted, which he noted as follows:

Guidelines encouraging:

- Visual consistency with prevailing character.
- Respect for traditional appearance & proportions of upper facades.
- Use of traditional materials.
- Similar relationships of solidity to transparency.

In conclusion, Mr. Plaskett advised that after considering the poor condition and diminished heritage value of the former Tip Top Tailors building, and the structural assessment which suggests that there is little potential for viable re-use, demolition and replacement is warranted and staff were recommending that the Committee recommend Regional Council approve the demolition. He added that, further, based upon its interpretation of the Design Manual staff conclude that the proposed replacement building meets the design guidelines, and therefore recommend that the application move forward for consideration by the Heritage Advisory Committee, Regional Council, and Design Review Committee.

The Chair asked if the Committee members had any questions of clarification.

In response to a question by Mr. Archibald, Mr. Plaskett advised that, if it is determined that work is required because of snow loading on adjacent buildings, permission is required from the adjacent property owner, but this process is carried out at the building permit stage.

At 4:22 p.m. Ms. Carroll retired from the meeting.

In response to a question by Ms. MacDonald regarding Heritage Trust's assertion that the report does not address section 4.5 of the Design Manual, Mr. Plaskett advised that staff's view is that section 4.5 does not apply, because staff view it as infill.

Mr. Pacey clarified that the Land Use Bylaw states that everything that happens in a heritage conservation district is subject to section 4.5 of the Design Manual and Heritage Trust feels that staff have not addressed this. He also suggested that the report does not discuss Policy 6 in the Plan which requires HRM to make every effort to retain this building.

Mr. Pieczonka pointed out that, up until a month ago, it was thought that the building was constructed in the early part of the 20th century; however it has been determined that it was built in the 1950's.

The Chair then opened the floor to debate.

MOVED by Mr. Archibald, seconded by Ms. MacDonald that the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend that Regional Council:

- 1. Set the date for a Public Hearing to consider the demolition application for 1592 Barrington Street, Halifax; and**
- 2. Approve the proposed demolition of the Former Tip Top Tailors building at 1592 Barrington Street, Halifax.**

Mr. Archibald advised that the present condition of building was reason for him to accept demolition. He noted that in regard to structural stability of the building, the Committee has not seen an assessment of the building and that it was difficult to discuss this without having the information. Mr. Archibald added that, if the Committee were to recommend a stay in demolition, it would only be delaying the demolition for one year.

In response to a question, Mr. Plaskett advised that there was nothing in the regulations that enable staff to demand a structural engineering report.

Mr. Pieczonka advised that they had a structural engineer assess the building and it was determined that the building could not support additional floors, and that it does not meet current codes.

Mr. Hanniford indicated that he supported the proposal, adding that he felt the property has been in a derelict condition for a long time, and that he did not think the proposal would denigrate the historical features of the Khyber building.

Discussion ensued in regard to the positioning of the building in a designated heritage conservation district and the heritage value of the building itself.

Ms. MacDonald advised that she had trouble seeing any heritage value in the present building.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

- 8. ADDED ITEMS: None**
- 9. NEXT MEETING DATE – March 28, 2012**

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:06 pm.

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant