

HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

January 29, 2014

- PRESENT: Mr. Brent Ronayne
Ms. Pascale van der Leest
Ms. Emma Sampson, Vice Chair
Ms. Janet Morris
Mr. Jason Cooke
Mr. Adam Matheson
Mr. Chris Kingston
Councillor David Hendsbee
- REGRETS: Mr. Nelson Brison
Ms. Sarah Levy
Mr. Richard White
Councillor Matt Whitman
- STAFF: Ms. Maggie Holm, Heritage Planner
Mr. Seamus McGreal, Heritage Planner
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant
Mr. Lachlan Barber, Legislative Support

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Sampson, Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. in the Halifax Hall, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

1.1 Introduction of new members

The members of the Committee were introduced.

1.2 Election of Chair

In the interest of time, the election of a new Chair was deferred to the next meeting.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 11, 2013

MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Ms. Morris, that the minutes of December 11, 2013 be approved.

Ms. Morris asked if votes that are not unanimous could reflect dissent. Ms. Edmonds noted that the views of committee members are usually reflected in the discussion, but that if someone wished to have their vote recognized for a specific motion they could request that it be included in the record.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

The Chair noted the addition of three requests for presentations in relation to Case 000395. She stated that these would be dealt with in the order of business.

MOVED by Ms. van der Leest, seconded by Mr. Matheson, 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 Correspondence

6.1.1 Letter dated January 16, 2014 from Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia – Request to provide presentation regarding Case H00395

A letter dated January 16, 2014, regarding Case H00395, was received from the Heritage Trust. The committee acknowledged the receipt of the correspondence. The letter included a request to speak before the committee which was agreed to be granted at the present meeting.

6.1.2 Correspondence dated January 16, 2014 from Paul MacKinnon, Executive Director, Downtown Halifax Business Commission, regarding Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Financial Incentives Program

A letter dated January 16, 2014, regarding the possibility of extending the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Financial Incentives Program, was received from Mr. Paul MacKinnon, Executive Director of the Downtown Halifax Business Commission. The committee acknowledged the receipt of the correspondence.

6.2 Presentation

6.2.1 Heritage Property Program – Staff Presentation

Mr. McGreal, Heritage Planner and Ms. Holm, Heritage Planner provided an overview of HRM's heritage property programme for the benefit of the new members of the HAC. The presentation focused on the role of the HAC, the relevant provincial and municipal legislation, and the place of heritage in the planning and development approvals process.

7. REPORTS

7.1 Staff

7.1.1 Case H00395: Substantial alterations to 5171 George Street (Bank of Commerce building); 1813 Granville Street (Hayes Insurance building); 1819 Granville Street (Merchants Bank of Canada building); 1824 Hollis Street (Champlain building); and 1820 Hollis Street (Flinn building) – 5 municipally registered heritage properties.

A staff report dated January 14, 2014 was submitted

Ms. Maggie Holm, Heritage Planner, provided a high level overview of the proposal and staff's assessment and recommendations. The following points were highlighted:

- The project is unusual in its magnitude. The proposal includes substantial alterations to five municipally registered heritage properties. These are treated together in one report but broken down into five different recommendations for the HAC.

- The proposal involves the removal of the majority of four heritage structures (Merchant's Bank of Canada, Champlain building, Flinn building, Hayes building) with the retention and restoration of their street-facing facades. A fifth building (Bank of Commerce) would remain intact, with substantial alterations to a rear addition. The proposal includes the construction of two twenty-two storey towers and three levels of underground parking. The design includes a variety of elements explained in detail in the report.
- The staff recommendation is to approve the proposal as presented, with modifications to the substantial alterations to two of the buildings: the Champlain building and the Bank of Commerce. For the Champlain building staff recommend approval of the proposed substantial alteration subject to the reinstatement of the fifth and sixth floors of the façade. The proposal includes the removal of the top two storeys which were an addition to the original building. For the Bank of Commerce building staff recommend approval of the proposed substantial alteration subject to the integration of the rear bank addition into the new development. This assessment is based on the view that the proposed substantial alterations would not comply with HRM standard 2 which states that "The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize the property shall be avoided." The staff assessment is that the other proposed alterations are generally in agreement with the standards and guidelines.
- The staff recommendation is based on the conservation standards, which speak to changes to heritage buildings, and design guidelines, which speak to the integration of heritage buildings with contemporary architecture. It is also based upon an interpretation of the Heritage Property Act, upheld in two recent decisions at the URB, that the municipality may only regulate alterations to the exteriors of municipally registered heritage buildings.
- There was some discussion among staff as to whether the accordion feature that forms the base of the south tower conforms with Section 4.1.3 of the design guidelines manual which states that "new work in heritage contexts should not be aggressively idiosyncratic." Ms. Holm stated that possible modifications could be pursued by the Design Review Committee through the site plan approval process.

Councillor Hendsbee asked who would own the pedway connecting the proposed development to the TD building. Ms. Holm replied that both buildings have the same owner.

Ms. van der Leest asked for clarification regarding the extent to which the cantilever protrudes over the Bank building and the extent of the setback of the existing addition to the Merchant's Bank of Canada. Ms. Holm presented a rendering that shows the cantilever in detail. The measurements of the setback were not available but a rendering was shown.

Ms. van der Leest also asked if a study had been done regarding the potential for solar energy in the location for the proposed placement of the photovoltaic cells on the accordion portion of the building. Ms. Holm indicated that this information wasn't included in the proposal.

As there were no more questions the Chair moved on to the presentations of the guests.

The Chair invited Ms. Kelsey McLaren, lawyer for Pink and Larkin, representing the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, to provide a brief presentation. Ms. McLaren's presentation provided a summary of the following arguments that were presented in a letter written by Ronald Pink.

- It is the view of Pink Larkin that the proposal does not conform to the conservation standards or design guidelines in two ways for each of the five buildings:
 - It involves the destruction of historical materials and character defining elements (standard 2).
 - The proposed new additions would not be compatible with the heritage buildings (standard 9).
- Pink Larkin supports the Heritage Trust's recommendation that the HAC refuse the proposals based on a disagreement with the staff assessment with regards to conservation standards 1, 2, 5, 9, 10.
- The 2009 decision of URB in regards to the Waterside Centre was based on different policies and predated the adoption of the guidelines. This decision cannot be relied upon in this case.

The Chair invited Mr. Phil Pacey, Chair of the HRM committee of the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, to provide a brief presentation. Mr. Pacey's presentation reiterated and provided additional detail to support the points made by Ms. McLaren. The following remarks were introduced:

- The Waterside Centre URB predated the introduction of the heritage conservation standards in the H-200 by-law.

- The proposal does not meet the HRM heritage policy for each of the municipally registered structures with respect to the character defining element of “height” which was historically 4 to 6 storeys. Other elements mentioned include:
 - The Champlain Building is 3 dimensional building and includes 2 facades with exterior historical materials on the rear of the building which would be removed in the proposal.
 - The pitched roof of the Hayes building is visible from the street and would be removed in the proposal.
 - The cantilever element will negatively impact the character defining elements of the Bank of Commerce Building and historical materials will be removed at its rear.
 - The truncated pitched roof of the Flinn Building is rare in the city and would be removed in the proposal.

The Chair invited Mr. Eugene Pieczonka, partner at Lydon Lynch Architecture, to provide a brief presentation. Mr. Pieczonka emphasized the following points.

- The scale and complexity of the proposal, due to the number of land uses and special features, is unique in downtown Halifax.
- The client has a strong respect for heritage and has committed to conservation and restoration costs of 15 million dollars. The design proposal has included collaboration with a number of heritage conservation experts and a meeting with the Heritage Trust. The resulting heritage retention strategy attempts to strike a balance between conservation and evolution.

Mr. Pieczonka provided an explanation and justification for the elements of the Bank of Commerce building and Champlain building elements that the staff report had taken issue with.

The Chair invited for the motion to be placed on the floor and then the committee would discuss the proposal.

MOVED by Mr. Matheson, seconded by Mr. Kingston that the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend Halifax Regional Council:

1. **Approve the proposed substantial alteration to 5171 George Street (Bank of Commerce building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report, subject to the integration of the rear bank addition into the new development;**

- 2. Approve the proposed substantial alteration to 1813 Granville Street (Hayes Insurance building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report;**
- 3. Approve the proposed substantial alteration to 1819 Granville Street (Merchants Bank of Canada building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report;**
- 4. Approve the proposed substantial alteration to 1824 Hollis Street (Champlain building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report, subject to the reinstatement of the fifth and sixth floors;**
- 5. Approve the proposed substantial alteration to 1820 Hollis Street (Flinn building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report;**

The ensuing discussion highlighted the following points:

Councillor Hendsbee applauded the uniqueness of the buildings and the effort to retain heritage elements. He went on to ask why the architect had decided to retain a space between the two proposed towers. Mr. Pieczonka explained that the opening provides a space for a public plaza and that it reflects an effort to include benefits for the community in the development. Councillor Hendsbee next asked if a wind study had been carried out. Mr. Pieczonka explained that the wind study was favourable.

Ms. van der Leest pointed out that the proposed location of the solar panels does not receive full sunlight and she questioned their potential to generate energy. She also pointed out that the most important heritage building in the proposal is juxtaposed with the most asymmetrical element of new construction. She went on to suggest that if the glass in the accordion was a different colour it might be less conspicuous.

Ms. Morris stated that the historical context of the area, with Province House, one of the best preserved examples of Georgian architecture in North America, to the south, and with Granville Street mall to the north. She noted that these are both well-recognized and well-loved heritage places and that the proposed development is not in keeping with the scale of their streetscapes. Ms. Morris also expressed a concern that the proposed development did not include enough retail but it was clarified that the proposal would introduce additional retail spaces at street level.

Ms. Morris next expressed concern about of the proposed structures and their effect on sunlight, compounding the effects of neighbouring buildings. It was noted that the proposal does not extend to the maximum permissible building envelope and that it includes public open spaces. Ms. Morris reiterated that she does not believe that the proposed buildings are compatible with the heritage structures on the block.

Mr. Cooke indicated that he does not believe that the proposal meets the requirements of standard number 9. He read the standard and noted that its wording is mandatory, not permissive. He stated that if the committee finds that the proposal results in the destruction of historical materials, the wording of standard 2 would require that the committee refuse to adopt the staff recommendation. With respect to compatibility, he noted difficulties with the scale, massing and scale of the proposed new construction. Some elements appear more compatible than others.

Ms. Holm clarified that staff's interpretation is that the proportions of the elements of the new construction, divided into lower, middle and upper, are compatible with the heritage structures.

Ms. van der Leest stated her view that the treatment of the Champlain building in the proposal is quite well done and asked for the perspectives of other committee members.

Mr. Kingston suggested that although the proposal is attractive, it will not have the longevity of the heritage structures. He also suggested that the treatment of the facades suggests a level of tokenism.

Councillor Hendsbee asked if it would be possible to introduce heritage plaques providing images and information about the original appearance of the area. Ms. Holm responded that this would be possible but not required.

Ms. Holm stated that the character defining elements do not necessarily need to remain intact; an appropriate balance must include retention of these elements with practical considerations.

The Chair invited a motion to suspend discussion.

MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee moved, seconded by Ms. van der Leest, that discussion be suspended and resumed following the joint meeting with the Design Review Committee. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

At this point in the meeting the Design Review Committee joined the meeting to consider item 7.1.3.

When the discussion resumed, the Committee decided to consider the positive and negative merits of the proposed substantial alteration of each structure individually. The following summarizes the views expressed.

With respect to the Bank of Commerce building, members were especially concerned about the proposed alterations to this building due to its high levels of monumentality and significance. The members were in general agreement that the cantilever element and the accordion are not compatible with the heritage elements of the Bank of Commerce and were in agreement with staff that the new construction displays

idiosyncratic elements that are discouraged in the conservation standards. While some concern was expressed regarding the removal of the rear addition, the cantilever was of greater concern to the committee.

With respect to the Flinn and Hayes buildings, committee members agreed that the removal of the truncated roofs is problematic.

With respect to the Champlain building, some members of the committee felt that the return to the original four storey façade presented in the proposal was more desirable than the staff recommendation to reinstate the fifth and sixth storeys. Other members expressed concern about the loss of historical materials on the top two floors.

The height of the proposed towers with respect to the scale of the heritage structures and the loss of the historic streetscapes was of concern to some, but not all members.

At this point in the meeting there was no more discussion and the Chair advised that each recommendation would be voted on separately, as follows:

Recommendation 1

MOVED by Mr. Matheson, seconded by Mr. Kingston that the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend Halifax Regional Council approve the proposed substantial alteration to 5171 George Street (Bank of Commerce building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report, subject to the integration of the rear bank addition into the new development. MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.

Recommendation 2

MOVED by Mr. Matheson, seconded by Mr. Kingston that the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend Halifax Regional Council approve the proposed substantial alteration to 1813 Granville Street (Hayes Insurance building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report. MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED (as a result of a tie vote).

Recommendation 3

MOVED by Mr. Matheson, seconded by Mr. Kingston that the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend Halifax Regional Council approve the proposed substantial alteration to 1819 Granville Street (Merchants Bank of Canada building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report. MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.

Recommendation 4

MOVED by Mr. Matheson, seconded by Mr. Kingston that the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend Halifax Regional Council approve the proposed

substantial alteration to 1824 Hollis Street (Champlain building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report, subject to the reinstatement of the fifth and sixth floors. MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.

Since there was some discussion as to whether to follow staff's recommendation for this item, the committee voted on an amended motion from Councillor Hendsbee as follows:

MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Ms. van der Leest to approve the proposed substantial alteration to 1824 Hollis Street (Champlain building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report. MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.

Recommendation 5

MOVED by Mr. Matheson, seconded by Mr. Kingston that the Heritage Advisory Committee recommend Halifax Regional Council Approve the proposed substantial alteration to 1820 Hollis Street (Flinn building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report. MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.

Councillor Hendsbee asked for clarification regarding the next steps following HAC's recommendation for council. Staff indicated that the proposal could be approved, subject to a three year wait under the site approvals process, even if HAC recommends against it. The DRC could also approve the proposal.

Ms. Holm suggested that the committee provide advice for council to consider in their deliberations on the proposal. Ms. van der Leest asked if the advice provided by the Committee must reflect a consensus of opinion. Ms. Holm and the Chair explained that the advice must reflect a consensus of opinion, but that it may reflect the nuances of discussion.

Staff pointed out that the substantial alteration to the heritage component of the TD Tower project was unanimously approved by the HAC and is similar to the present proposal.

The Chair invited members of the committee to propose an alternate motion.

MOVED by Mr. Matheson, seconded by Mr. Kingston, that while the Heritage Advisory Committee commends the developer and architect for their positive attitude toward the preservation and integration of heritage properties, the Heritage Advisory Committee recommends that the Halifax Regional Council reject the proposed substantial alterations for the following reasons:

The Heritage Advisory Committee recommends Halifax Regional Council refuse approval of the substantial alteration to 5171 George Street (Bank of Commerce building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report, subject to the integration of the rear bank addition into the new development, because elements

including the cantilever and accordion do not conform to standard 9 in terms of compatibility;

The Heritage Advisory Committee recommends Halifax Regional Council refuse approval of the substantial alteration 1813 Granville Street (Hayes Insurance building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report, due to the removal of the roof, a character-defining element;

The Heritage Advisory Committee recommends Halifax Regional Council refuse approval of the substantial alteration to 1819 Granville Street (Merchants Bank of Canada building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report, because the committee finds it contrary to standard 9 in terms of compatibility and massing;

The Heritage Advisory Committee recommends Halifax Regional Council refuse approval of the substantial alteration to 1824 Hollis Street (Champlain building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report, subject to the reinstatement of the fifth and sixth floors. (The Committee noted that while the return to a four storey building was largely viewed more favourably than staff's recommendation of retaining the fifth and sixth floors, the prevailing view of the Committee was to refuse the application for substantial alteration, outright).

The Heritage Advisory Committee recommends Halifax Regional Council refuse approval of the substantial alteration to 1820 Hollis Street (Flinn building) as outlined in Attachments A-Y of the staff report because it fails to comply with Standard 2 due to the removal of the truncated roof, a character defining element.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

7.1.2 Case 19028: Non-substantive amendments to an existing development agreement and substantial alteration to Keith Hall, 1475 Hollis Street, Halifax

A staff report dated January 9, 2014 was submitted.

In the interest of time Ms. Holm, Heritage Planner, provided a brief presentation on the proposal. She noted that the alteration is a small change to the drawings on Keith Hall, a municipally registered heritage property which has already undergone substantial restoration. Ms. Holm explained that the proposed alteration is at the rear of the building and involves the removal of balconies and a recess on the proposed mansard roof to create a roof balcony. Ms. Holm noted that the mansard roof was an original feature of the building which was removed; hence the alteration consists of a change to the architectural plans, not the building as it exists. She noted also that it would not be visible from the street. The amendment allows for conversion of commercial uses to residential.

Given the straightforward nature of the proposal there were no questions or discussion and the question was called.

MOVED by Mr. Cooke, seconded by Ms. Morris, that Halifax Regional Council:

- 1. Approve the proposed substantial alteration to 1473 Hollis Street, Halifax, as outlined in Attachment A of the staff report, to permit exterior changes to Keith Hall, a municipally registered heritage property;**
- 2. Approve the proposed amending development agreement, as contained in Attachment A of the staff report, to allow for an internal change of use and exterior alterations to Keith Hall and the proposed Halkirk House buildings located at 1475 Hollis Street, Halifax; and**
- 3. Require that the proposed amending development agreement be signed by the property owner within 120 days, or any extension therefor granted by Council on request of the property owner, from the date of final approval by Council and any other bodies as necessary, including applicable appeal periods, whichever is later; otherwise this approval will be void and obligations arising hereunder shall be at an end.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.1.3 RP+5 – Staff Report and Presentation

This item was addressed jointly with the Design Review Committee. The reason for the joint meeting was to allow the DRC to hear the recommendation made by the HAC and listen to its discussion about the changes to standards and guidelines.

A staff report dated January 14, 2014 was submitted. Additional amendments were circulated to the Committee.

Mr. Austin French, Manager, Planning Services, Planning and Infrastructure, presented the staff report and recommendations. His presentation included the following elements.

- An overview of the recommendations before the committee and an explanation of the policy advisory role of the HAC.
- A review of the regional planning process and framework, the scope of the RP+5 review, and an explanation that altering the Regional Plan affects various pieces of heritage legislation that, as a result, require amendment.
- Changes in legislation will be grandfathered into appropriate by-laws and plans.
- The members were reminded that the HAC provided a memo in July 2013 supporting the proposed changes to Standards and Guidelines in principle.
- The key changes that will result from updating the Conservation Standards and Guidelines in line with the Parks Canada approach which follows international best practice. The changes will provide greater clarity and predictability.

- New powers provided to the municipality under changes to the Heritage Property Act, including the ability to designate cultural landscapes and public building interiors and changing the demolition delay for heritage properties from one to three years.
- The HAC will have an ongoing role in the development of a Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan which will involve an extensive inventory of heritage assets.
- The revised regional plan will provide HRM the ability to designate new Heritage Conservation districts.

Mr. French concluded his presentation and invited members of the HAC to consider the staff recommendation.

The Chair invited questions and discussion.

A member of the DRC asked for a definition of the notice of intention and its place in the process of public hearing. Staff responded that a notice of intention is a public notice issued in the newspaper. Once it is issued there is a period in which no development can be approved under the old rules.

Ms. van der Leest asked about the status of the debate on heritage conservation district boundaries. Mr. French clarified that this will come to the HAC as a separate report.

There was discussion among members regarding what would happen in the event that a new edition of the Standards and Guidelines is introduced, and if changes should be immediately reflected in HRM policy. Staff clarified that the 3rd edition isn't expected before new review of the Regional Plan.

Councillor Hendsbee asked for clarification regarding the scope of heritage assets to be included in the inventory. Mr. French replied that it would include provincial and national heritage assets located in HRM, as well as municipally registered heritage buildings and that the process will include extensive public consultation.

MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Mr. Cooke, the Heritage Advisory Committee recommends Halifax Regional Council give First Reading and schedule a public hearing to consider:

- 1. repealing the existing HRM *Regional Municipal Planning Strategy*;**
- 2. adopting the proposed HRM *Regional Municipal Planning Strategy* as contained in Attachment A of the January 14, 2014 staff report;**
- 3. adopting the amendments to the *Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy* as contained in Attachment C of the January 14, 2014 staff report;**
- 4. adopting the amendments to By-law H-200, the *Heritage Property By-Law*, as contained in Attachment F of the January 14, 2014 staff report;**

5. adopting the amendments to the *Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Revitalization Plan*, as contained in Attachment G of the January 14, 2014 staff report; and
6. adopting the amendments to By-law H-500, the *Heritage Conservation District (Barrington Street) By-law*, as contained in Attachment H of the January 14, 2014 staff report.

The Heritage Advisory Committee further recommends that Halifax Regional Council:

1. a) amend the proposed amendments to By-laws H-200 and H-500 to allow consideration of applications to substantially alter a heritage property which were on file on or before the date of the first publication of the notice of intention to adopt the amendments and which were being considered subject to the Heritage Building Conservation Standards that were in effect at the time the complete application was received; and
b) that where any application is withdrawn, significantly altered, or rejected by Council, any new development proposal shall be subject to all applicable requirements;
2. a) amend the proposed amendments to the Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District Plan and the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy to allow consideration of applications to substantially alter a heritage property which were on file on or before the date of the first publication of the notice of intention to adopt the amendments and which were being considered subject to the Heritage Building Conservation Standards that were in effect at the time the complete application was received; and
b) that where any application is withdrawn, significantly altered, or rejected by Council, any new development proposal shall be subject to all applicable requirements.
3. amend the *Downtown Halifax Land Use By-law*, Schedule S-1, Design Manual, section 4.5.6 to replace the name "*Federal Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Historic Buildings in Canada*" with the "*Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, 2nd Edition*".

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

8. ADDED ITEMS: None

9. NEXT MEETING DATE – February 26, 2014

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Lachlan Barber
Legislative Support