

P.O. Box 1749 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3A5 Canada

> Design Review Committee July 14, 2011

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Chair and Members of the Design Review Committee

**SUBMITTED BY:** 

Austin French, Manager of Planning Services

DATE:

July 5, 2011

**SUBJECT:** 

Case 17033: Substantive Site Plan Approval – 1580 Queen Street,

Halifax

# **ORIGIN**

Application by Geoff Keddy Architect and Associates Ltd.

# **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Design Review Committee:

1. Approve the qualitative elements of the Site Plan Approval application for 1580 Queen Street, Halifax, as shown on Attachment A.

#### **BACKGROUND**

# **Project Description**

The proposed development includes an addition and renovations to an existing three storey building (Map 1, Attachment A). The proposed building will include a two-level commercial space on the main and second floor levels, while the two uppermost levels will contain one residential dwelling unit. The proposed addition to the north face and top of the building will provide a slightly larger floor area for the first three levels and a fourth level mezzanine above the existing roofline. A new staircase (fire exit) will be constructed of metal and perforated metal façade (non-combustible material) and will be open to the outdoors. This staircase will provide a separate access to the residential unit. Exterior materials, in addition to the perforated metal façade, include fibre cement panels and wooden slatted rain screen. The addition will replace an existing wooden deck/ staircase and vehicular parking space.

The building's roof will be sloped at a pitch of at least 1:12. Therefore, rooftop landscaping is not required. As more than 50% of the floor area will be commercial space, landscaped open space is not required. No parking for vehicles will be provided.

In addition to the building drawings provided in Attachments A and B, the applicant has also provided a Design Rationale (Attachment C). Further information on the proposed materials will be available to the Committee if requested.

# **Approval Process**

This proposal is subject to the substantive Site Plan Approval process set out in the Downtown Halifax Land Use By-law (LUB). Development proposals must conform to the land use and building envelope requirements of the LUB as well as meet the requirements of the Design Manual. The Design Review Committee (DRC) is established under the Downtown Halifax LUB as the body responsible to decide if a project complies with the requirements of the Design Manual. When a proposal satisfies both sets of requirements, the Development Officer approves the site plan and notifies property owners in the Downtown Halifax plan area by mail and newspaper advertisement, who may then appeal the approval to Regional Council.

#### Land Use and Built Form

The Development Officer has reviewed the application and determined it to be in conformance with the Downtown Halifax LUB's land use and built form requirements.

#### **Special Considerations**

The following specific conditions of the Land Use By-law and the Design Manual which apply to the subject property are highlighted for information purposes:

- the property is located within Precinct 3: Spring Garden Road Area;
- maximum pre and post-bonus building height of 16m;
- maximum streetwall height of 15.5m and streetwall setback of 0-4m;
- property has prominent civic/ cultural frontage (Map 1 and Section 3.4.1b), Design Manual);
- the property is subject to View Plane #10. However, the height of the view plane is well above the proposed building height.

# **DISCUSSION**

# **Design Manual Criteria Analysis**

Staff has evaluated the proposal against the guidelines of the Design Manual. A "checklist" of the project against the relevant criteria within the design guidelines is contained in Attachment D of this report. Where there is some question about how the project relates to the criteria and it is anticipated that discussion of a particular matter by the Committee will be necessary, this has been indicated in the checklist. Those matters are outlined in more detail as follows:

# Awnings/ canopies (Sections 2.3c, 3.2.3b, 3.3.3b)

There are no canopies or awnings proposed along the sidewalk. However, the main entrance to the commercial space is recessed from the sidewalk and is afforded a natural canopy provided by an existing coniferous tree which is proposed to be retained and which provides some weather protection.

# Building design/ materials (Sections 3.2.1e, 3.2.5b, 3.3.1d, 3.3.2a)

The proposal will bring the building closer to the sidewalk and replace an existing parking space with a new commercial/ retail space at grade. As a variety of exterior materials exists in the immediate area, the choice and combination of materials is appropriate.

# Prominent civic/ cultural frontage (Map 1 and Section 3.4.1b)

The property is located along a prominent street frontage, directly across from Royal Artillery Park, which contains low-rise historic buildings with wood siding and brick on the exterior. The Design Manual calls for developments with high quality design and materials. The applicant has indicated that the existing vinyl siding, which is a prohibited material, will be replaced with new, contemporary materials and design which are different from and which respect but do not attempt to mimic the buildings of RA Park.

#### Lighting (Section 3.5.4)

The applicant has indicated that the commercial/retail space will be lit at night. The perforated metal in the staircase area will act as a lantern, providing an interesting lighting feature that will enhance the street. Lighting will be relatively subtle.

#### Conclusion

Upon review of the proposal against the criteria of the Design Manual, staff recommend that the proposal meets the design guidelines.

# **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

The HRM costs associated with processing this planning application can be accommodated within the approved operating budget for C310.

# FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The community engagement process is consistent with the intent of the HRM Community Engagement Strategy and the requirements of the Downtown Halifax LUB regarding substantive site plan approvals. The level of engagement was information sharing, achieved through the HRM website, the developer's website, and a public open house held on April 25, 2011.

# **ALTERNATIVES**

- 1. The DRC may choose to approve the application for substantive Site Plan Approval, as submitted. This is the recommended course of action.
- 2. The DRC may choose to approve the application with conditions. This may necessitate further submissions by the applicant, as well as a supplementary report from staff.
- 3. The DRC may choose to deny the application. The Committee must provide reasons for this refusal, based on the specific guidelines of the Design Manual.

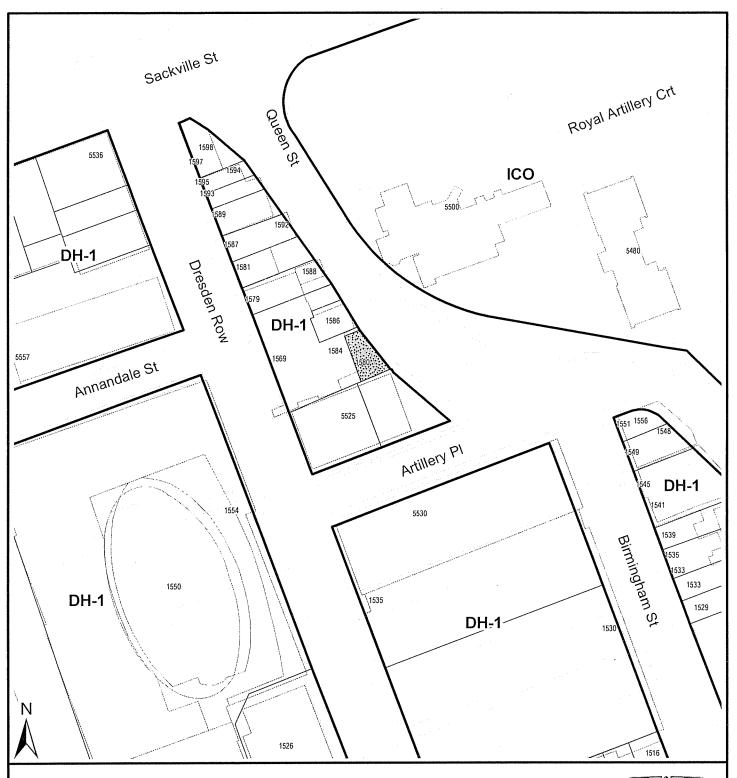
#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Map 1	Location and Zoning
Attachment A	Proposed Building – Site Plan and Elevations
Attachment B	Proposed Building – Rendering
Attachment C	Proposed Building – Design Rationale

Attachment D Design Manual Checklist

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <a href="http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/DesignReviewCommittee-HRM.html">http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/DesignReviewCommittee-HRM.html</a> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210 or fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Paul Sampson, Planner I, 490-6259



Map 1 - Location and Zoning

1580 Queen Street Halifax



Subject property

Zone

DH-1 Downtown Halifax

Downtown Halifax Secondary Plan Area

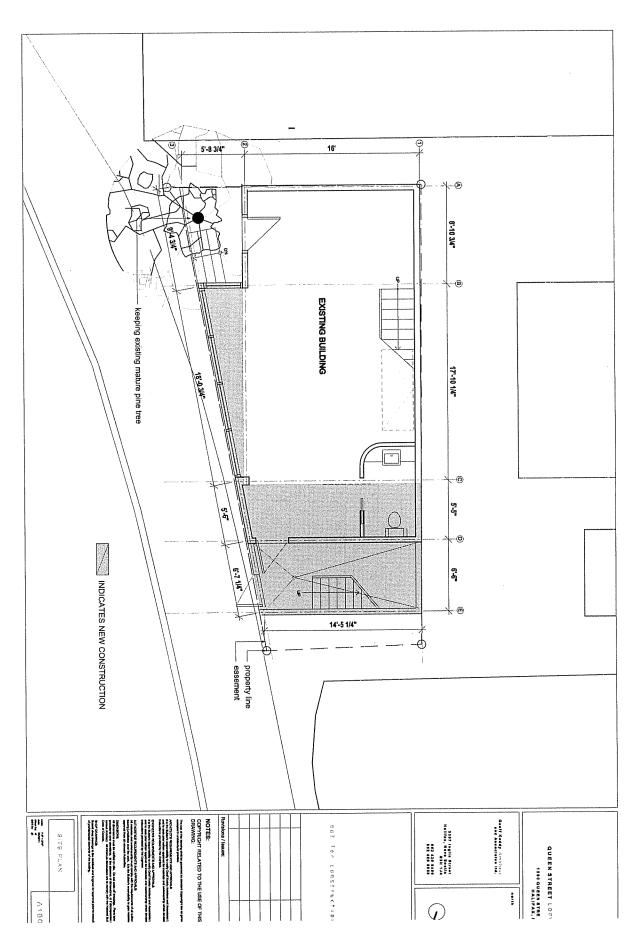
ICO Institutional, Cultural and Open Space

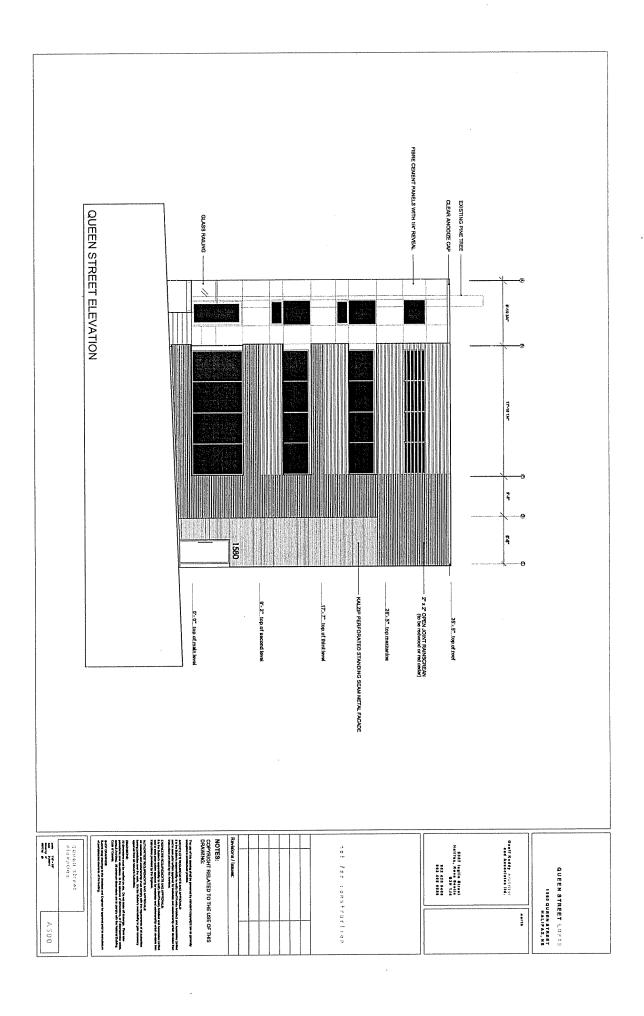
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANNING SERVICES

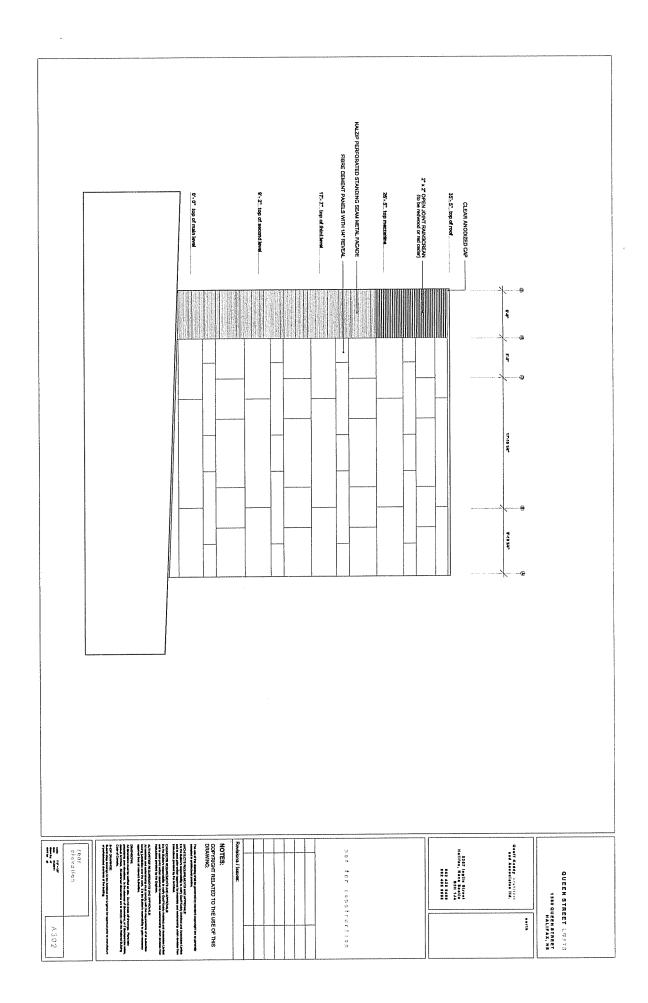
This map is an unofficial reproduction of a portion of the Zoning Map for the plan area indicated

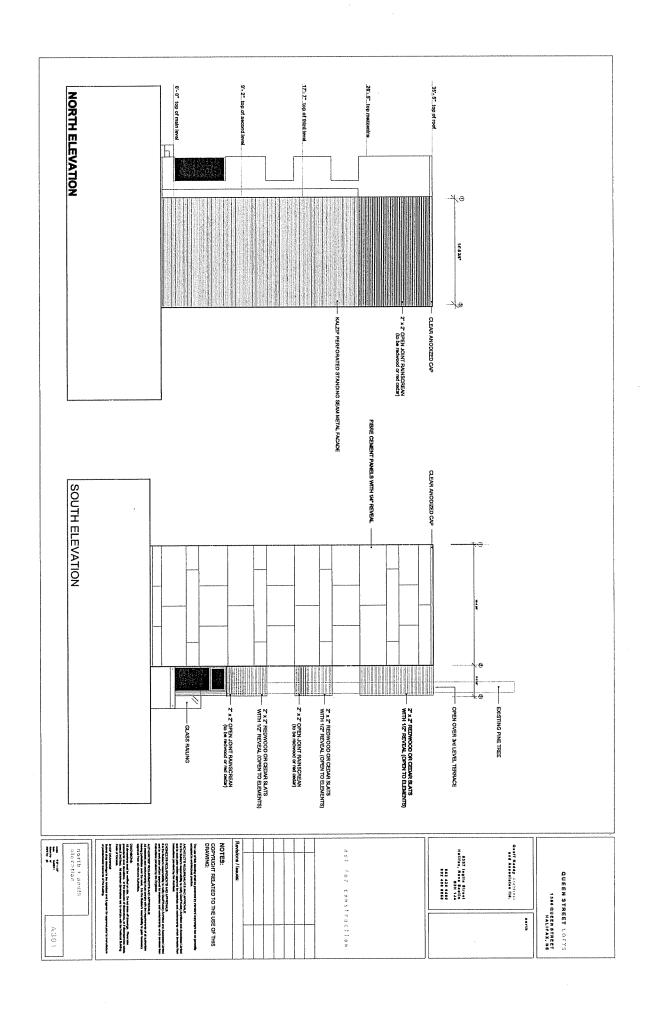
HRM does not guarantee the accuracy of any representation on this plan

Case 17033 Attachment A - Site Plan and Elevations

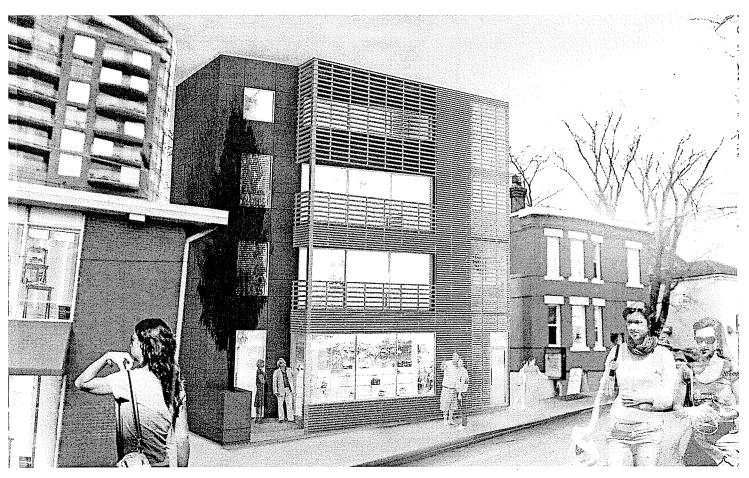








Case 17033: Attachment B - Rendering



# Attachment C: Proposed Building – Applicant's Design Rationale

# DESIGN RATIONALE 1580 QUEEN STREET

#### P3 – SPRING GARDEN ROAD AREA

The proposal fits with the vision of the precinct in which the proposal is located for the following reasons:

NOTE: The existing house has a small footprint of 445 sq.ft. and is less than 30 feet high. We are proposing to add a mezzanine level to the house, increasing the building height to 35 feet and adding two small adjacent aditions which includes a staircase. This is a very small renovation and does not have much of an impact on the Spring Garden Road area. This being said, we believe the project will have a positive impact on the area for the following reasons:

- The proposed program is mixed use with two levels of retail space at pedestrian level with a residential unit above.
- Project will increase density in the downtown area. Residential component will encourage people to live downtown.
- Retail at grade and close proximity of commercial component to the sidewalk will increase
   pedestrian activity and therefore enhance pedestrian environment.
- Proposed retail space at grade will replace existing parking space.
- Project provides a high level of transparency at sidewalk level.
- New street wall occupies 80 % of property frontage. 20% of property frontage will remain undeveloped in order to preserve existing mature pine tree.
- We are proposing to remove existing vinyl siding which does not conform to HRM by
   Design guidelines and replace with superior quality materials such as red cedar rain screen
   and a high quality perforated standing seam metal facade.
- New addition will provide balconies/outdoor space.

nstruction consis	sts of one additional lev	el and a common	exterior staircase.	
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# Attachment D Design Manual Checklist

Section	Guideline	Complies	Requires Discussion	N/A
2	Downtown Precinct Guide lines (refer to Map 2 for Precinct I	Boundaries)		
2.3	Precinct 3 - Spring Garden Road Area			
2.3a	Development shall appropriately frame Citadel Hill, the Public Gardens, and Victoria Park through the provision of consistent, animated streetwalls of superior quality and design.			✓
2.3b	Ensure that there continues to be adequate sunlight penetration on Spring Garden Road.			✓
2.3c	Focus pedestrian activities at sidewalk level through the provision of weather protected sidewalks using well-designed canopies and awnings.		<b>√</b>	
2.3d	Prohibit new surface parking lots of any kind.	✓		
2.3e	Improve the pedestrian environment in the public realm through a program of streetscape improvements as previously endorsed by Council (Capital District Streetscape Guidelines).			<b>✓</b>
2.3f	Development shall be in keeping with The Spring Garden Road/Queen Street Area Joint Public Lands Plan			✓
3	General Design Guidelines			
3.1	The Streetwall			
3.1.2	Streetwall Setback (refer to Map 6)			
3.1.2b	Setbacks vary (0-4m): Corresponds to streets where setbacks are not consistent and often associated with non-commercial and residential uses or house-form building types. New buildings should provide a setback that is no greater or lesser than the adjacent existing buildings.	<b>✓</b>		
3.1.3	Streetwall Height (refer to Map 7) To ensure a comfortable human-scaled street enclosure, streetwall height should generally be no less than 11 metres and generally no greater than a height proportional (1:1) to the width of the street as measured from building face to building face. Accordingly, maximum streetwall heights are	<b>✓</b>		

Section	Guideline	Complies	Requires Discussion	N/A
	defined and correspond to the varying widths of downtown streets – generally 15.5m, 17m or 18.5m. Consistent with the principle of creating strong edges to major public open spaces, a streetwall height of 21.5m is permitted around the perimeter of Cornwallis Park. Maximum Streetwall Heights are shown on Map 7 of the Land Use By-law.			
3.2	Pedestrian Streetscapes			
3.2.1	Design of the Streetwall		,	
3.2.1a	The streetwall should contribute to the 'fine grained' character of the streetscape by articulating the façade in a vertical rhythm that is consistent with the prevailing character of narrow buildings and storefronts.	<b>√</b>		
3.2.1b	The streetwall should generally be built to occupy 100% of a property's frontage along streets.	<b>√</b>		
3.2.1c	Generally, streetwall heights should be proportional to the width of the right of way, a 1:1 ratio between streetwall height and right of way width. Above the maximum streetwall height, further building heights are subject to upper storey stepbacks.	✓		
3.2.1d	In areas of contiguous heritage resources, streetwall height should be consistent with heritage buildings.			✓
3.2.1e	Streetwalls should be designed to have the highest possible material quality and detail.		<b>√</b>	
3.2.1f	Streetwalls should have many windows and doors to provide 'eyes on the street' and a sense of animation and engagement.	<b>√</b>		
3.2.1g	Along pedestrian frontages at grade level, blank walls shall not be permitted, nor shall any mechanical or utility functions (vents, trash vestibules, propane vestibules, etc.) be permitted.	<b>√</b>		
3.2.2	Building Orientation and Placement			
3.2.2a	All buildings should orient to, and be placed at, the street edge with clearly defined primary entry points that directly access the sidewalk.	✓		
3.2.2b	Alternatively, buildings may be sited to define the edge of an on-site public open space, for example, plazas, promenades, or eroded building corners resulting in the creation of public			<b>√</b>

Section	Guideline	Complies	Requires Discussion	N/A
	space (see diagram at right). Such treatments are also appropriate for Prominent Visual Terminus sites identified on Map 9 of the Land Use By-law.			
3.2.2c	Sideyard setbacks are not permitted in the Central Blocks defined on Map 8 of the Land Use Bylaw, except where required for through-block pedestrian connections or vehicular access.			<b>√</b>
3.2.3	Retail Uses	-		
3.2.3a	All mandatory retail frontages (Map 3 of Land Use By-law) should have retail uses at-grade with a minimum 75% glazing to achieve maximum visual transparency and animation.			✓
3.2.3b	Weather protection for pedestrians through the use of well-designed awnings and canopies is required along mandatory retail frontages (Map 3) and is strongly encouraged in all other areas.			✓
3.2.3c	Where retail uses are not currently viable, the grade-level condition should be designed to easily accommodate conversion to retail at a later date.			<b>√</b>
3.2.3d	Minimize the transition zone between retail and the public realm. Locate retail immediately adjacent to, and accessible from, the sidewalk.	✓		
3.2.3e	Avoid deep columns or large building projections that hide retail display and signage from view.	<b>✓</b>		
3.2.3f	Ensure retail entrances are located at or near grade. Avoid split level, raised or sunken retail entrances. Where a changing grade along a building frontage may result in exceedingly raised or sunken entries it may be necessary to step the elevation of the main floor slab to meet the grade changes.	<b>✓</b>		
3.2.3g	Commercial signage should be well designed and of high material quality to add diversity and interest to retail streets, while not being overwhelming.			<b>✓</b>
3.2.4	Residential Uses			
3.2.4a	Individually accessed residential units (i.e. town homes) should have front doors on the street, with appropriate front yard privacy measures such as setbacks and landscaping. Front entrances and first floor slabs should be raised above			<b>√</b>

Section	Guideline	Complies	Requires Discussion	N/A
Anna	grade level for privacy, and should be accessed through means such as steps, stoops and porches.			
3.2.4b	Residential units accessed by a common entrance and lobby may have the entrance and lobby elevated or located at grade-level, and the entrance should be clearly recognizable from the exterior through appropriate architectural treatment.			<b>√</b>
3.2.4c	Projects that feature a combination of individually accessed units in the building base with common entrance or lobby-accessed units in the upper building, are encouraged.			✓
3.2.4d	Units with multiple bedrooms (2 and 3 bedroom units) should be provided that have immediately accessible outdoor amenity space. The amenity space may be at-grade or on the landscaped roof of a podium.			<b>√</b>
3.2.4e	Units provided to meet housing affordability requirements shall be uniformly distributed throughout the development and shall be visually indistinguishable from market-rate units through the use of identical levels of design and material quality.			<b>√</b>
3.2.4f	Residential uses introduced adjacent to pre-existing or concurrently developed eating and drinking establishments should incorporate acoustic dampening building materials to mitigate unwanted sound transmission.			<b>✓</b>
3.2.5	Sloping Conditions			
3.2.5a	Maintain active uses at-grade, related to the sidewalk, stepping with the slope. Avoid levels that are distant from grade.	✓		
3.2.5b	Provide a high quality architectural expression along facades.  Consider additional detailing, ornamentation or public art to enhance the experience.		√ ·	
3.2.5c	Provide windows, doors and other design articulation along facades; blank walls are not permitted.	<b>✓</b>		
3.2.5d	Articulate the façade to express internal floor or ceiling lines; blank walls are not permitted.	<b>√</b>		,
3.2.5e	Wrap retail display windows a minimum of 4.5 metres around the corner along sloping streets, where retail is present on the sloping street.			~

Section	Guideline	Complies	Requires Discussion	N/A
3.2.5f	Wherever possible, provide pedestrian entrances on sloping streets. If buildings are fully accessible at other entrances, consider small flights of steps or ramps up or down internally to facilitate entrances on the slope.	<b>√</b>		
3.2.5g	Flexibility in streetwall heights is required in order to transition from facades at a lower elevations to facades at higher elevations on the intersecting streets. Vertical corner elements (corner towers) can facilitate such transitions, as can offset or "broken" cornice lines at the top of streetwalls on sloping streets.			<b>√</b>
3.3	Building Design			
3.3.1	Building Articulation		_	
3.3.1a	<ul> <li>To encourage continuity in the streetscape and to ensure vertical 'breaks' in the façade, buildings shall be designed to reinforce the following key elements through the use of setbacks, extrusions, textures, materials, detailing, etc.:</li> <li>Base: Within the first four storeys, a base should be clearly defined and positively contribute to the quality of the pedestrian environment through animation, transparency, articulation and material quality.</li> <li>Middle: The body of the building above the base should contribute to the physical and visual quality of the overall streetscape.</li> <li>Top: The roof condition should be distinguished from the rest of the building and designed to contribute to the visual quality of the skyline.</li> </ul>			√
3.3.1b	Buildings should seek to contribute to a mix and variety of high quality architecture while remaining respectful of downtown's context and tradition.	✓		
3.3.1c	To provide architectural variety and visual interest, other opportunities to articulate the massing should be encouraged, including vertical and horizontal recesses or projections, datum lines, and changes in material, texture or colour.			<b>✓</b>
3.3.1d	Street facing facades should have the highest design quality, however, all publicly viewed facades at the side and rear should have a consistent design expression.		✓	
3.3.2	Materials			
3.3.2a	Building materials should be chosen for their functional and			

Section	Guideline	Complies	Requires Discussion	N/A
10000	aesthetic quality, and exterior finishes should exhibit quality of workmanship, sustainability and ease of maintenance.		<b>√</b>	
3.3.2b	Too varied a range of building materials is discouraged in favour of achieving a unified building image.	<b>√</b>		
3.3.2c	Materials used for the front façade should be carried around the building where any facades are exposed to public view at the side or rear.	✓		
3.3.2d	Changes in material should generally not occur at building corners.	1		
3.3.2e	Building materials recommended for new construction include brick, stone, wood, glass, in-situ concrete and pre-cast concrete.	✓		
3.3.2f	In general, the appearance of building materials should be true to their nature and should not mimic other materials.	<b>√</b>		
3.3.2g	Stucco and stucco-like finishes shall not be used as a principle exterior wall material.	✓		
3.3.2h	Vinyl siding, plastic, plywood, concrete block, EIFS (exterior insulation and finish systems where stucco is applied to rigid insulation), and metal siding utilizing exposed fasteners are prohibited.	<b>✓</b>		
3.3.2i	Darkly tinted or mirrored glass is prohibited. Clear glass is preferable to light tints. Glare reduction coatings are preferred.	✓		
3.3.2j	Unpainted or unstained wood, including pressure treated wood, is prohibited as a building material for permanent decks, balconies, patios, verandas, porches, railings and other similar architectural embellishments, except that this guidelines shall not apply to seasonal sidewalk cafes.	✓		
3.3.3	Entrances			
3.3.3a	Emphasize entrances with such architectural expressions as height, massing, projection, shadow, punctuation, change in roof line, change in materials, etc.	<b>√</b>		
3.3.3b	Ensure main building entrances are covered with a canopy, awning, recess or similar device to provide pedestrian weather protection.		<b>√</b>	
3.3.3c	Modest exceptions to setback and stepback requirements are	1		1

Section	Guideline	Complies	Requires Discussion	N/A
	possible to achieve these goals.			produced by the second
3.3.4	Roof Line and Roofscapes			
3.3.4a	Buildings above six storeys (mid and high-rise) contribute more to the skyline of individual precincts and the entire downtown, so their roof massing and profile must include sculpting, towers, night lighting or other unique features.			<b>√</b>
3.3.4b	The expression of the building 'top' (see previous) and roof, while clearly distinguished from the building 'middle', should incorporate elements of the middle and base such as pilasters, materials, massing forms or datum lines.			<b>√</b>
3.3.4c	Landscaping treatment of all flat rooftops is required. Special attention shall be given to landscaping rooftops in precincts 3, 5, 6 and 9, which abut Citadel Hill and are therefore preeminently visible. The incorporation of living "green roofs" is strongly encouraged.			✓
3.3.4d	Ensure all rooftop mechanical equipment is screened from view by integrating it into the architectural design of the building and the expression of the building 'top'. Mechanical rooms and elevator and stairway head-houses should be incorporated into a single well-designed roof top structure. Sculptural and architectural elements are encouraged to add visual interest.			<b>√</b>
3.3.4e	Low-rise flat roofed buildings should provide screened mechanical equipment. Screening materials should be consistent with the main building design. Sculptural and architectural elements are encouraged for visual interest as the roofs of such structures have very high visibility.			✓
3.3.4f	The street-side design treatment of a parapet should be carried over to the back-side of the parapet for a complete, finished look where they will be visible from other buildings and other high vantage points.	1		
3.4	Civic Character			
3.4.1	Prominent Frontages and View Termini			
3.4.1b	Prominent Civic Frontage: These frontages identify highly visible building sites that front onto important public open spaces such as the Citadel and Cornwallis Park, as well as important symbolic or ceremonial visual and physical connections such as the waterfront boardwalks, the proposed		<b>√</b>	

Section	Guideline	Complies	Requires Discussion	N/A
	Grand Promenade linking the waterfront to the Town Clock, and other east-west streets that connect the downtown to the waterfront. Prominent Civic Frontages are shown on Map 1 in Appendix A of the Design Manual.			
3.5.4	Lighting			
3.5.4a	Attractive landscape and architectural features can be highlighted with spot-lighting or general lighting placement.		✓	
3.5.4b	Consider a variety of lighting opportunities inclusive of street lighting, pedestrian lighting, building up- or down-lighting, internal building lighting, internal and external signage illumination (including street addressing), and decorative or display lighting.		<b>✓</b>	
3.5.4c	Illuminate landmark buildings and elements, such as towers or distinctive roof profiles.			✓
3.5.4d	Encourage subtle night-lighting of retail display windows.	<b>✓</b>		
3.5.4e	Ensure there is no 'light trespass' onto adjacent residential areas by the use of shielded "full cut-off" fixtures.			✓
3.5.4f	Lighting shall not create glare for pedestrians or motorists by presenting unshielded lighting elements in view.			✓
3.5.5	Signs			
	Approvals for signage are considered by the Development Officer through the non-substantive site plan approval process; therefore, approval by the Design Review Committee is not required.			