

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES

March 14, 2013

PRESENT: Terry Smith-Lamothe, Chair  
Sue Sirrs  
Kevin Conley  
Mary Black  
Ramzi Kawar  
Roy McBride  
Suzanne Saul  
Jeff Pinhey  
Anne Sinclair  
Ann Wilkie

REGRETS: William Hyde, Vice Chair  
Cesar Saleh

STAFF: Karen Brown, Solicitor  
Richard Harvey, Acting Urban Design Project Manager  
Paul Sampson, Planner  
Luc Ouellet, Senior Planner  
Jane Crosby, Legislative Support

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street.

**1.1 Election of Vice-Chair**

This item was deferred to the April 11, 2013 Meeting.

The Chair introduced Ms. Ann Wilkie, a new member of the Design Review Committee, and roundtable introductions were given.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 14, 2013**

The following corrections to the minutes were noted:

Page 4, second paragraph from the bottom should read, "...Mr. Pinhey reminded Mr. Banelis that the Committee has requested a detailed landscape plan with final applications."

Page 4, bottom paragraph should read, "Mr. Peter Connell, Managing Director with DSRA Architects presented the Barrington Expansion project identifying it as a sister project to the Westhill on Duke project."

Page 5, third paragraph, Mr. Banelis shall be replaced with Mr. Connell.

**MOVED by Ms. Saul, seconded by Ms. Sirrs that the minutes of February 14, 2013 be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

**MOVED by Mr. Kavar, seconded by Ms. Sirrs that the agenda as presented be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES: None**

**5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS: None**

**6. CORRESPONDENCE/PETITIONS/DELEGATIONS: None**

**7. REPORTS/DISCUSSION**

**7.1 Case 18354: Substantive Site Plan Approval – Addition to Scotia Square, corner of Duke and Albemarle Streets, Halifax**

A staff report dated March 1, 2013 was before the Committee.

Mr. Paul Sampson, Planner, gave a presentation on the application by Crombie Developments Ltd. For a substantive site plan approval. Mr. Sampson reviewed the site context as well as the site elevations from various vantage points. He pointed out existing set-back and the proposed set-back variance.

With reference to the Design Manual Checklist, the Committee reviewed the checklist with Mr. Sampson responding to questions from the Committee.

Ms. Saul noted that it might be worthwhile to look at section 3.5.4 of the checklist with regards to lighting. She added that a lighting feature of some kind along the wall could be beneficial not only for aesthetics, but also for security purposes. It was noted that this could be considered as a condition of approval.

The developer was asked whether this was considered as an option. Mr. Connell, DSRA Architects, responded that this hadn't really been considered because it was felt that there would be light spillage from the office spaces. Mr. Pinhey observed that the addition of lighting would be useful for pedestrian safety in the area. Ms. Saul added that it may also help discourage graffiti.

Mr. Connell stated that there would be a number of different ways to handle the lighting. Mr. Driscoll, Crombie Developments Ltd., believes that adding lighting is a good idea and is something that will be considered for the development.

Following further discussion on the benefits of added lighting to the building the following motion was put:

**MOVED by Ms. Saul, seconded by Mr. Pinhey that the Design Review Committee:**

- 1. Approve the qualitative elements of the substantive site plan approval application for a 3-storey office addition to the Scotia Square complex at the corner of Duke and Albemarle Streets, Halifax, as shown on attachment A, of the March 1, 2013 staff report, with the condition that pursuant to the Design Manual section 3.5.4b with respect to pedestrian safety, that lighting will be installed at regular intervals so as to provide lighting along the lengths of the Albemarle sidewalk and within the identified courtyard area; and**
- 2. Approve the requested streetwall variance along Duke Street as shown on Attachment A of the March 1, 2013 staff report.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

## **7.2 Case 17000: Amendments Barrington Street South Precinct**

A staff report dated February 15, 2013 was before the Committee.

Mr. Luc Ouellet, Senior Planner, gave a presentation of the proposed amendments to Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land-Use Bylaw (LUB) – Barrington Street South Precinct. He noted that the heights in this area are currently calculated differently than the rest of downtown Halifax under the old planning regime.

Mr. Ouellet also presented Policy 86 and 87 as the Policy Context before the Committee. He responded to questions from Committee members.

With reference to Policy 87, Mr. Ouellet explained that staff do not consider the proposed amendments substantive for a variety of reasons including:

- the original recommendation to Council falling out of the Urban Task Force public consultation was 22 metres
- the existing form of calculation allows for an additional 3-4 metres increasing the 10-13 metre guideline to as much as 14-17, with the latter being quite close to 22 metres
- the 10-13 metre requirement is inconsistent with the Plan

In response to a question from Ms. Wilkie with regards to the status of the Heritage Conservation District in the area, Mr. Ouellet noted that the study has been initiated. He added that the boundary of the potential district is something under consideration in the study.

Ms. Sinclair expressed concern about height consistencies. She suggested that the amendments could create greater inconsistencies in the area. Mr. Ouellet explained that staff was asked only to consider the properties before the Committee.

The Committee discussed the recommendation before them. Ms. Saul observed that perhaps keeping the heights as is may discourage development, creating another empty lot in the downtown area. Mr. Kavar noted that Cornwallis Park is an important public space and whoever is designing the building should respond to the nature of the site and consider that this is a significant space in Downtown Halifax.

Ms. Sirrs expressed concern over the current extent of surface parking lots and the lands surrounding Cornwallis Park. She noted that future development could occur in an area such as the Superstore parking lot, or perhaps the Via Rail site.

Following a discussion of the rationale behind the recommendation before the Committee, the following motion was put:

**MOVED by Mr. Kavar, seconded by Ms. Wilkie that the Design Review Committee recommends that Halifax Regional Council delay a decision on the proposed amendments to the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and the Downtown Halifax Land Use By-Law, as contained in Attachments A and B of the February 15, 2013 staff report until the results of the South Barrington Street Heritage Conservation District study is complete and approved.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

- 8. ADDED ITEMS - None**
- 9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – April 11, 2013**
- 10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17pm.

Jane Crosby  
Legislative Support