

**HALIFAX**

# **Proposed Changes to Downtown Halifax Plan and LUB**

Presentation to Design Review Committee

June 11, 2015

# Downtown Halifax



# Site Plan Approval

Currently there are three types of approvals:

- (i) Exempt;
- (ii) Non-substantive site plan approval; and
- (iii) Substantive site plan approval.

# Exempt

- A change in size of windows and doors that do not face streetlines;
- Building repairs;
- Window and door replacement in existing openings;
- Installation, replacement or repair of minor building features;
- Change of use or tenancy;
- Interior renovations;
- Commemorative structures on public lands;
- Commemorative plaques on public lands; and
- Commemorative monuments on public lands.

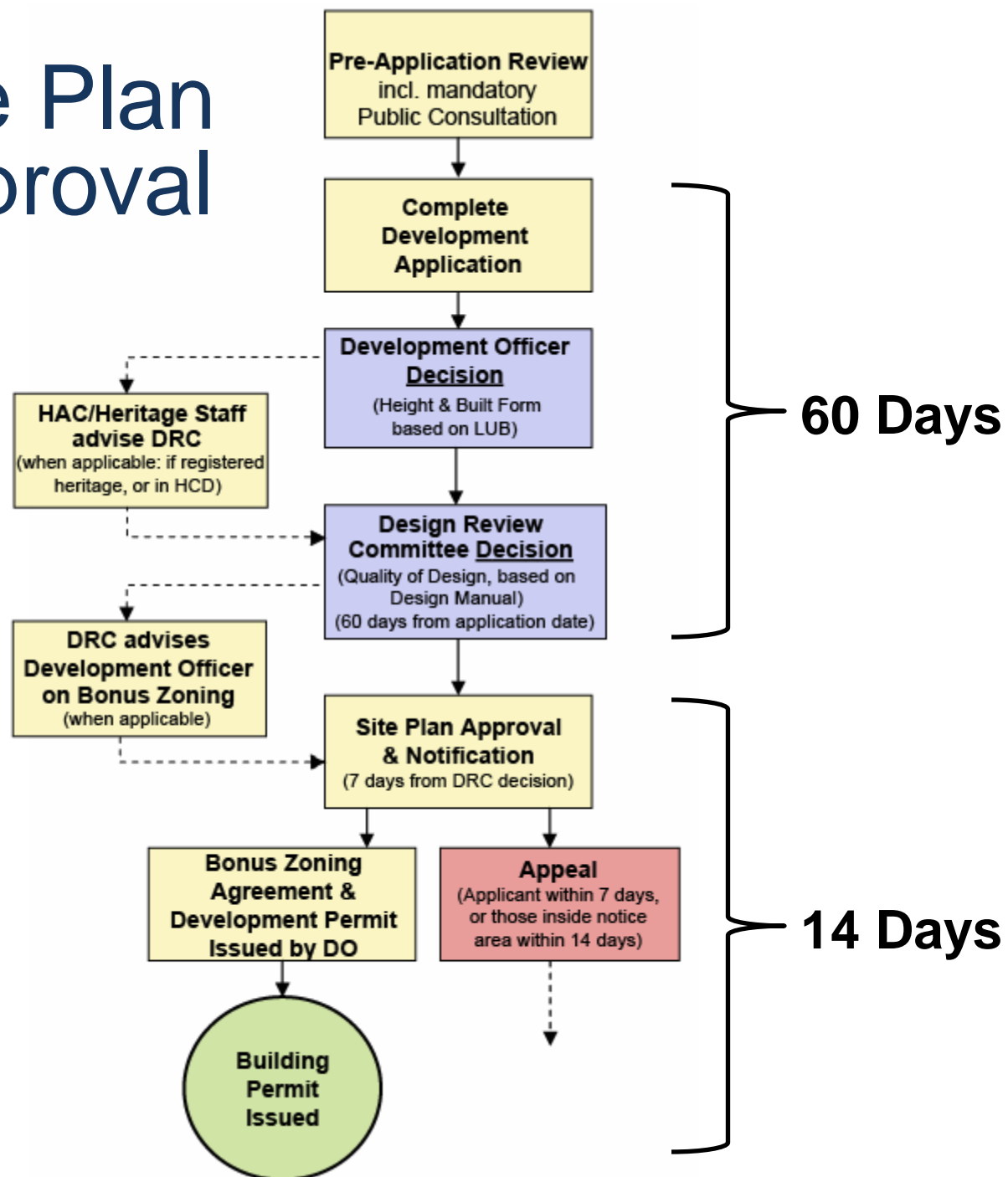
# Non-substantive Site Plan Approval

- Accessory buildings and structures;
- Development that does not materially change the external appearance of a building facing streetlines;
- New window and door openings or alterations to existing window and door openings abutting streetlines;
- Alteration of external cladding material that does not affect the external appearance of a building facing streetlines;
- Signs;
- Decks, patios, and similar unenclosed features; and
- Steps, stairs and other entryways.

# Substantive Site Plan Approval

- Everything not currently listed as “exempt” or “non-substantive site plan approval”.

# Site Plan Approval



# Refining Site Plan Approval

- Proposal to create a two-tier system of substantive site plan approval:

Level I site plan approval

Level II site plan approval

- Would differentiate between small and bigger projects.

# Level I Site Plan Approval

- Would apply to smaller projects (e.g. new buildings and additions less than 2000 square metres in area).
- Would solely be processed by staff.
- Would no longer require a public engagement process.
- Staff estimates that timelines would be reduced from 4 months to 1 month.
- The right to appeal would be preserved, but likely with a reduced notification area.

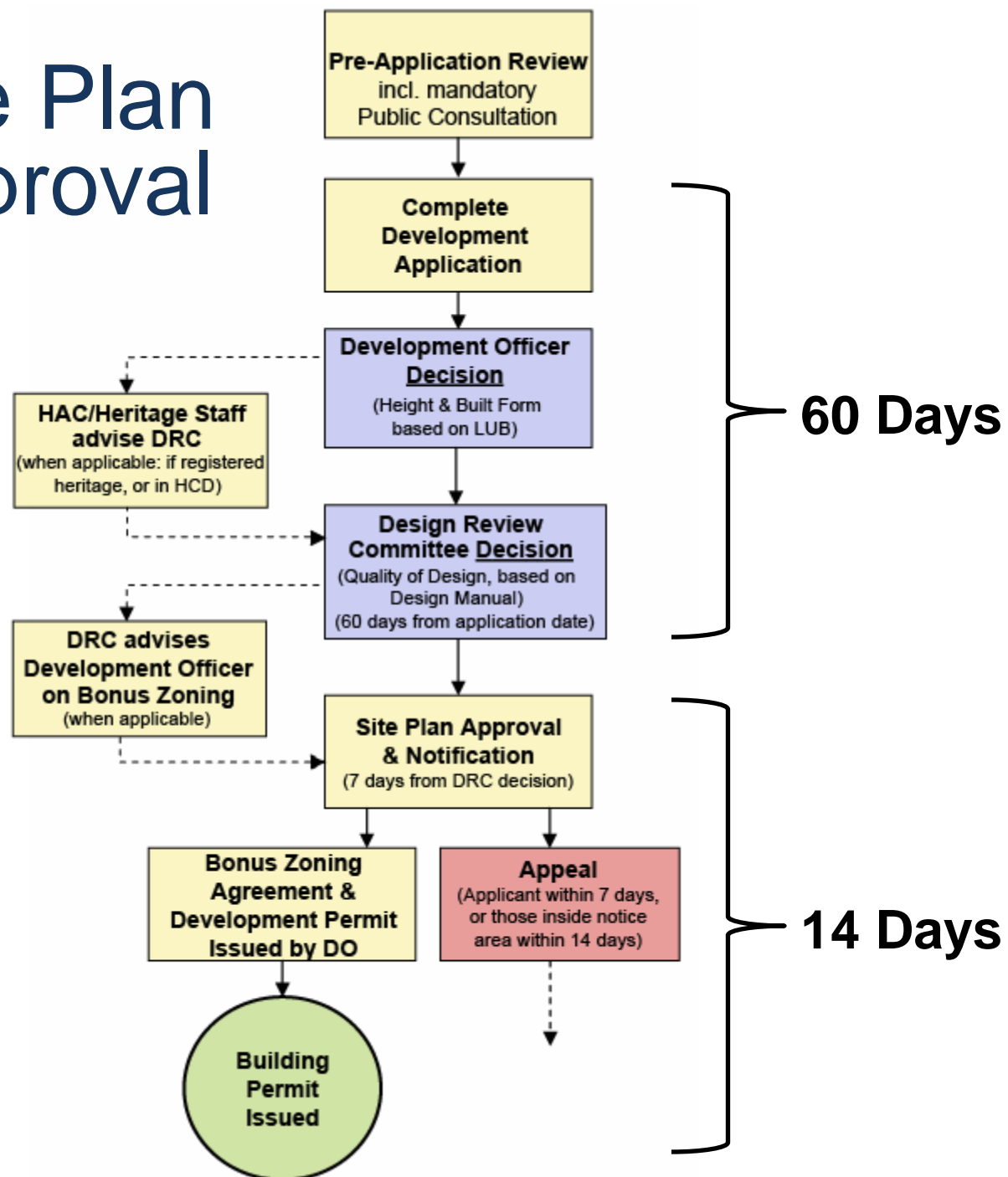
# Level II Site Plan Approval

- Large projects would continue to have full DRC oversight.
- DRC membership requirements would be tightened.
- DRC would be solely be composed of design professionals.
- The right to appeal would be preserved, but likely with a reduced notification area.

# Other Process Improvements

- Clearer public engagement process detailed in LUB.
- New language on pre-application process.
- HAC will no longer advise DRC on site plan approval applications. Instead, applications involving heritage resources will be dealt with through two parallel, but independent processes.
- The above will reduce the risk of not meeting statutory timelines.

# Site Plan Approval



# Bonus Zoning

- Bonus zoning has been problematic.
- A study is currently underway to determine what we should be Bonusing for and by how much (per square metre charge).
- Will be developing a list of potential public benefits that better matches community needs.
- May be eliminating “the provision of exemplary sustainable building practices” as a potential public benefit.

# Improved Heritage Protection

- Will seek to introduce a floor on demolition of registered heritage properties, where a density bonus is being sought.
- Work is progressing on the second heritage conservation districts (Barrington Street South).
- This work will be integrated into the Plan and LUB as it becomes available.

# Urban Agriculture

- The LUB will clearly articulate that urban agriculture uses are permitted throughout Downtown Halifax.
- Rooftop agriculture will be incentivized by allowing rooftop greenhouses to exceed the overall maximum rooftop coverage and height.
- Beekeeping will only be permitted on rooftops.



# Rooftop Treatment

- Currently there is a requirement that all flat rooftops be landscaped.
- This requirement will be relaxed for rooftops exceeding a height of 50 m. Instead, developers will have the option of installing a reflective roof treatment to minimize the heat island effect.



# Wind Assessment Performance Standards

- The minimum height that triggers a wind assessment will be raised from 20 to 22 metres.
- This will reduce the financial burden for the developers of sites that have no ability to achieve a bonus zoning (sites that are limited to a maximum height of 22 metres).

# Waterfront View Corridors

- The corridors will be better defined (e.g. surveyed).
- New built form requirements will be developed to treat the corridors in a similar fashion that we treat streets (e.g. stepback above a certain height).
- More flexibility with the uses that can be established on the ground floor abutting a corridor.
- Conflicts with interior lot lines will be specifically addressed.

# Schedule W: Waterfront Development

- Looking at allowing buildings on piers.
- Setbacks of buildings on the waterfront will be determined from the edge of the Harbourwalk, instead of the OHWM.
- Permitted tower widths will be increased within Schedule W to closely match what is permitted elsewhere in Downtown Halifax.

# Landscaped Open Space

- Landscaped Open Space (LOS) is required to be provided on the site of projects supplying residential units.
- This requirement applies to 3 of the 9 precincts in Downtown Halifax.
- Staff will recommend removal of the LOS requirement in the precincts where it applies.