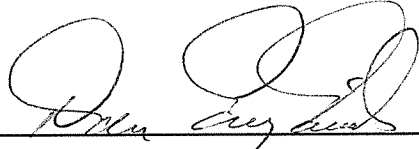


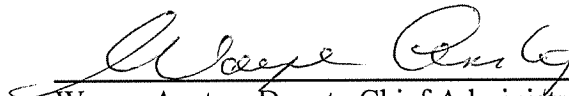
**Halifax Regional Council
September 11, 2007**

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:



Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer



Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

DATE: September 4, 2007

SUBJECT: **Case 01048: Amendment to the Bedford West Secondary Planning Strategy**

ORIGIN

Application by West Bedford Holdings Ltd.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Authorize staff to initiate a review process to consider amending the Bedford West Secondary Planning Strategy minimum lot frontage requirements for single unit dwellings requirements from 40 feet to 34 feet and minimum lot size requirements from 4,000 to 3,400 square feet; and
2. Instruct that the MPS amendment process include a public participation program in accordance with the Public Participation Resolution, adopted by Regional Council on February 25, 1997.

BACKGROUND

Last year, Regional Council approved the Bedford West Secondary Planning Strategy which provided guidance for the development of a new community on the west side of the Bicentennial Highway in the vicinity of the Hammonds Plains and Kearney Lake Roads. The strategy included objectives and policies pertaining to environmental protection, municipal services and land use.

At the time, the major land holder in this secondary plan area was Annapolis Group Inc. These lands have since been sold to West Bedford Holdings Ltd., a joint venture between Cresco Developments Ltd. and Clayton Developments Ltd. This company has submitted two development agreement applications for approval - the first for sub-area 2 of the secondary plan area and the second for sub-areas 3 and 4. This second application has included a request to amend the minimum lot size requirements for single unit dwellings established by the secondary plan.

Under the land use section of the Secondary Planning Strategy, policy criteria are specified for the design of residential neighbourhoods. One specifically requires a minimum street frontage of 40 feet, a minimum lot size of 4,000 square feet, a minimum side yard of 4 feet and a minimum 12 foot separation between buildings. West Bedford Holding has requested that the minimum required street frontage be reduced to 34 feet and the minimum lot size requirement reduced to 3,400 square feet.

DISCUSSION

In support of this request, the applicant provided the following rationale in a submission:

“In today’s market place, it is challenging to provide an affordable single family home. Those people who cannot afford a single family only have an option of a less expensive townhouse or condominium. We believe there is a gap in the marketplace between the townhouse homes and the single family homes. We see the need to bring on a more affordable single family home, on a smaller lot. In order to achieve this, we need to be able to provide a smaller lot.

Although the Bedford West Secondary Planning Strategy minimum allowable lot size is forty feet, we are proposing to develop a 34 foot wide lot with a 22 foot wide unit and twelve foot side yards. As Schedule “H” illustrates (presented as Attachment A to this report), we are essentially taking the same unit from the townhouses and placing it on its own single lot.

With proper attention to detail, this could be an attractive product. Each unit would have an enclosed garage, underground secondary electrical and additionally, the home would be setback twenty-five feet from the right of way. In our opinion, these measures would alleviate a congested feel that are sometimes present in small lot developments. We would like to further discuss this

with staff to determine the merit of amending the Bedford West Secondary Planning Strategy to allow for a limited number of 34' lots."

The following objectives, established for the residential neighbourhoods under the Bedford West Secondary Planning Strategy, may have bearing on this request:

- to support and integrate housing opportunities for a variety of income levels, lifestyles and age groups.
- to foster individual neighbourhood identities with attractive streetscapes with distinctive architectural and landscaping themes.
- to encourage innovative design with clearly defined performance criteria.
- to provide an effective integration with established neighbourhoods and to provide for adequate buffers from abutting commercial and residential developments.

In the opinion of staff, the applicant's request could potentially further the objective of supporting affordable housing without compromising any others. Integration with established neighbourhoods is not an issue as there are none within close proximity to the applicant's lands and design standards could potentially be established to support innovative design and distinctive neighbourhoods.

Staff would therefore recommend that a public participation program be initiated in conformity with the February 25, 2007 resolution of Regional Council. This format should allow for a development agreement application for sub-areas 3 and 4 and this plan amendment request to be reviewed concurrently at a public meeting and by the North West Planning Advisory Committee.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

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

ALTERNATIVES

1. Regional Council could authorize staff to initiate the Secondary Plan review process as requested by West Bedford Holdings Ltd. This is the option recommended by staff.


2. Regional Council could refuse the request for the amendment. As Regional Council is under no obligation consider this request, any development agreement application submitted to a community council for approval would have to conform with the current lot size requirements. Staff is of the opinion that there is sufficient merit in the argument put forward by the applicant to proceed with the procedures required to consider this request.

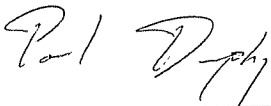
ATTACHMENTS

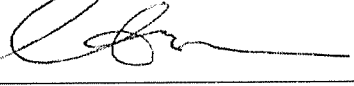
- A Proposed Small Lots presented in June 11, 2007 submission by Kevin Neatt of West Bedford Holdings Ltd. for a Development Agreement Application for Sub-areas 3 and 4 of Bedford West

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> 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 Morgan, Planner, 490-4482

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Financial Approval by: 
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THE PARKS
OF WEST BEDFORD
SPREADING MAKING... ENJOYING LIFE

Proposed
Small Lot Singles
(34' Wide Lots)

Attachment A

