

DISTRICTS 7 & 8 PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES

January 27, 2014

- PRESENT: Mr. Brenden Sommerhalder, Chair  
Ms. Katherine Kitching, Vice Chair  
Mr. Michael Bradfield  
Ms. Sunday Miller  
Mr. Michael Haddad  
Councillor Wayne Mason  
Councillor Jennifer Watts
- REGRETS: Mr. David Fleming  
Mr. Adam Conter  
Ms. Jennifer Powley
- STAFF: Mr. Mitch Dickey, Planner, Community & Recreation Services  
Ms. Jillian MacLellan, Planner, HRM Development Approvals  
Ms. Jane Cooper, Operations Manager  
Mr. Richard Harvey, Major Projects Planner  
Ms. Melissa Eavis, Legislative Support

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall.

**2. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councilor Watts announced that a public engagement session will be held Wednesday, January 29, 2014 in the Maritime Hall, Halifax Forum on the North Park Intersection Redesign.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 20, 2013 Public Information Meeting & November 25, 2013**

Mr. Bradfield noted receipt of staff's response to his inquiry of November 4, 2013 respecting the accuracy of the amount of amenity space per unit for Case 18547 and 18548, and requested the response be forwarded to the Committee for their information.

**MOVED by Councilor Watts, seconded by Mr. Bradfield that the minutes of the November 20, 2013 Public Information Meeting and the November 25, 2013 meeting be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

Additions:

9.1 Discussion re: Housekeeping Items

9.2 Discussion re: Public Information Meeting Procedures

The Committee agreed to address Item 9.1 prior to Item 7.1.

**MOVED by Ms. Kitching, seconded by Mr. Haddad that the agenda be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – None**

**6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – None**

Item 9.1 was addressed at this time.

**9.1 Discussion re: Housekeeping Items**

Discussion was held on the following:

- Committee members unable to attend a meeting but wanting to provide input on an application, can provide written submission(s) for the record prior to the meeting
- Clarification requested on planning practices and principles

- The Chair receiving draft agendas for review prior to distribution to the Committee/public
- Process for requesting added items to agendas

It was noted that housekeeping matters would be addressed at a special meeting (originally scheduled for January 22<sup>nd</sup> but cancelled due to inclement weather) with the date to be determined.

## 7. MEMORANDUMS

### 7.1 **Case 18565 - Request by Dino Capital Ltd to amend the South End Area Plan of the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy to redesignate properties located at 1034, 1042, 1050 and 1056 Wellington Street from Medium Density Residential to High Density Residential and to amend the height precinct, in order to allow consideration of a 58 unit building by development agreement**

The following was before the Committee:

- A staff memorandum dated December 11, 2013
- Correspondence from Peter McCurdy, Nancy Smithers, Janet Shotwell, Jean Cameron and Chris and Kirk Annand

Mr. Mitch Dickey made a presentation to the Committee outlining Case 18565 including the planning process, the as-of-right development option, the current proposal, and the requested amendments. He discussed the site context, surrounding uses, applicable policies and zone restrictions.

Councillor Watts and Councillor Mason declared a conflict of interest and excused themselves from the discussion/vote.

In response to Committee questions, Mr. Dickey outlined the Development Agreement process and stated that if approved, the process would allow staff and Community Council to negotiate the design characteristics of the development. Mr. Dickey clarified that the height of the proposed building is 130 feet. He also clarified that there are no density restrictions in the R-2 zone.

Members of the Committee expressed concern with the development's height and maintaining the character of the neighborhood. It was suggested the buildings across the street be used as a guideline for future proposals on this site.

In response to questions regarding which aspects of the proposal the Committee should be focusing on, Ms. Jane Cooper, Operations Manager clarified that the Committee should be addressing the density, height, and the aesthetics of the proposal.

In response to Committee questions, Mr. Dickey clarified that there is a two storey height difference between the two proposed towers. Mr. Napier, Project Architect,

clarified that the height difference between the towers of the proposed development acts as a transition to the lower heights toward Inglis Street.

The Committee expressed concern regarding the number of bedrooms permitted in the as-of-right development. The Committee discussed the issue of student housing in the area and how the as-of-right development proposal could exacerbate this issue. The issue of family housing was also discussed and how the development should be geared toward families instead of students.

In response to questions regarding unit size and density, Mr. Richard Harvey, Major Projects Planner described the reasoning behind the R-2A zone and that its purpose was to allow additions thereby preventing existing buildings from being demolished.

The Committee discussed the aesthetics of the building and it was noted that the building design and materials used should be in keeping with character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Traffic issues were also discussed and Mr. Dickey stated that the applicant has submitted a traffic study but staff has not considered it at this stage of the process. Ms. Cooper and Mr. Harvey clarified that this proposal was brought to the Committee at an early stage in the process.

Mr. Michael Moore spoke on behalf of the Applicant and clarified that development permits have been issued for 23 units with 117 bedrooms and this could be expanded to 201 bedrooms as-of-right.

**MOVED by Mr. Sommerhalder, seconded by Mr. Haddad that the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Halifax and West Community Council that the application to amend the South End Area Plan of the Municipal Planning Strategy not be approved as the height, massing and setbacks are not appropriate. Further, that the buildings across the street be used as a guideline for future proposals on this site. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

## **7.2 Case 18270 – Application by Genivar for the lands of 5885 Spring Garden Road to develop a mixed-use building through a development agreement**

The following was before the committee:

- Staff Memorandum dated January 27, 2013
- Correspondence from Colin Stuttard dated January 27, 2014

Mr. Haddad declared a conflict of interest and excused himself from the discussion/vote.

Ms. Jill MacLellan, Planner, HRM Development Approvals made a presentation to the Committee outlining Case 18270. She described the current site including the location, the existing building, current land-uses, and applicable policies. She also provided information on the surrounding uses, heights and the character of the neighborhood.

She advised the Committee that staff is seeking input on the height, density and design elements of the current proposal.

Mr. Jeffry Haggett, with Genivar Consulting gave a presentation on behalf of the Applicant. He discussed the height, width, amenity space, shadowing and design characteristics of the proposed tower. He also distributed a copy of the presentation that was presented at the Public Information Meeting held on September 11, 2013. This document can be found at the following web address:

<http://www.halifax.ca/planning/applications/documents/18270PresentationbyApplicant.pdf>

Councillor Mason and Mr. Haddad exited the meeting at this time.

In response to Committee questions, Ms. MacLellan stated that staff was still analyzing the shadow impacts of the development. The Committee expressed concern regarding potential negative effects of shadowing on the surrounding urban forest.

Members of the Committee expressed concern regarding the height of the proposed building. In response to committee questions regarding open space, Mr. Napier, Project Architect clarified that the amenity space proposed would not be accessible to the public.

Members of the Committee also expressed some concern over the design of the roof and stated that it is very modern and glassy which is not in keeping with the character of the neighbourhood. Further discussion was held on the proposed commercial space along Spring Garden Road, with note being made that it was a valuable part of the design.

In response to Committee questions, Mr. Haggett and Ms. MacLellan clarified that the initial wind assessment was inconclusive and a second study is underway. Clarification was also provided that the traffic study submitted with the application showed no negative impacts. The Committee expressed concerns regarding parking in the area and Mr. Haggett stated that the provision of visitor parking is being studied.

The Committee agreed that the density of the proposed building is acceptable.

**MOVED by Ms. Kitching, seconded by Mr. Bradfield that the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Halifax and West Community Council that height is a concern and heights similar to that of Embassy Tower would be more appropriate for this proposal. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**MOVED by Mr. Bradfield, seconded by Ms. Miller that the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Halifax and West Community Council that there is concern regarding the surrounding urban forest and input from the Urban Forester should be sought. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**MOVED by Ms. Kitching, that the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Halifax and West Community Council that the roof of the proposed building is not in keeping with the character of the neighborhood and alternative designs should be considered. As there was no seconder, the motion was lost.**

**MOVED by Ms. Kitching, seconded by Mr. Bradfield that the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committees recommend to Halifax and West Community Council that the committee values the use of transparent and light colored glass. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**MOVED by Ms. Miller, seconded by Mr. Bradfield, that the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Halifax and West Community Council that committee values visitor parking and this should be addressed by staff. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**MOVED by Mr. Bradfield, seconded by Ms. Miller that the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Halifax and West Community Council that a wind assessment should be carried out and the results of the wind assessment should be taken into consideration by staff. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**MOVED by Mr. Bradfield, seconded by Ms. Kitching that the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Halifax and West Community Council that setbacks be considered for the single storey commercial building fronting on Spring Garden Road. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**MOVED by Ms. Kitching, seconded by Mr. Bradfield that the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee recommends to Halifax and West Community Council that the committee supports commercial space along Spring Garden Road. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

## **8. STATUS UPDATES**

### **8.1 Monthly status updates – planning applications**

The Committee agreed to defer this matter to their February 24, 2014 meeting.

## **9. ADDED ITEMS**

### **9.1 Discussion re: Housekeeping Items**

This matter was addressed earlier in the meeting, see page 3.

**9.2 Discussion re: Public Information Meeting Governance**

It was noted that this matter would be addressed at a special meeting (originally scheduled for January 22<sup>nd</sup> but cancelled due to inclement weather) with the date to be determined.

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - February 24, 2014**

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Melissa Eavis  
Legislative Support