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**November 06, 2014**

**Attention:** Mr. Paul Sampson, Planner Development Approvals  
Community and Recreational Services  
Developments Approvals  
Halifax Regional Municipality  
7071 Bayers Road, Halifax NS

**Re: Saint Joseph Square Development- Application for Non-Substantive Amendments to Development Agreement (Case N°. 01325) PID: 40850463**

Dear Mr. Sampson,

Please consider this application for a non-substantive amendment to the Development Agreement (DA) for the proposed Saint Joseph Square development on the east side of Gottingen Street between Kaye Street and Russell Street, Halifax, NS.

Since the registering of the DA in 2012 and acquisition of the property by GTL Investments (a Lawen Group Company), Dixel has made considerable progress in developing the DA for construction. We had several meetings and discussions with HRM staff regarding minor changes regarding the moving of the main residential entry, the relocation of the stained glass windows, and the re-articulation of the commercial front. To assure the fulfillment of all critical aspects of the DA the following have been conducted: a detailed topographic survey locating trees and all significant site details; inspection, quantification, palletisation and storage of the reclaimed St. Joseph's sandstone; the inspection and measuring of the salvaged stained glass window panels from St. Joseph's church; and a study of the architectural qualities which characterize the Hydrostone district and surrounding neighborhood. These inputs have informed and stimulated the development of this proposal which intends to bringing the project into the "here and now" in response changes in the residential apartment market, new building technologies and an evolving appetite for urbanism and distinctive building design. The drawings and documents herein submitted constitute part of the first draft of construction drawings.

This application substantially conforms to the original DA and conscientiously adheres to the historical significance of the Hydrostone neighborhood. While all the principle aspects and intents of the current DA have been maintained, the proposed amendments have been carefully weighed in compliance with current land use by-laws and building codes and are now being brought forward with the intent to produce a viable project that will enhance the neighborhood fabric.



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**The following is a summary of the proposed non-substantive amendments to the existing DA as defined in items (c), (d) and (f) of part 6.1 of the agreement:**

**6.1 (c) Changes to the landscape requirements as indicated DA schedule “O”**

The survey boundaries vary slightly from the DA which was based on a lot consolidation survey showing only boundary lines dated May 11, 1999. All minimum setbacks from the boundary corners have been maintained as set out in the DA’s Schedule “B”.

The actual existing tree locations vary somewhat from that shown in DA’s Schedule 1 and the two most eastward trees along the Kaye Street boundary actually do not exist – see appendix 1. Along with the absence of two trees noted, please note that the three trees within the property lines at the Gottingen corners with Kaye and Russell Streets trees cannot be retained due to their proximity to the building foundations – see appendix 1.

The propose landscape plan respects the DA’s intend. Planters with sod and shrubs follow along the townhouse fronts and the east podium is landscaped with shrubs, sod paved areas and a gazebo. The layout has been revised due to the relocation of the residential main entry and stained glass windows, the location of the transformer pad and adjacent maintenance parking and relationship to the revised 1<sup>st</sup> floor plan.

**6.1 (d) An increase in the number of dwelling units from 83 to 105**

The proposed density of 199 persons remains below the maximum permitted population of 200 persons. The maximum height of the building of 32.86m height above the mean grade remains below the 33m limit set in the DA.

The proposed amended development has increased the number of residential units per floor to achieve smaller, more marketable units. Therefore the proposed building’s size has not changed and only minor changes have been made to the exterior as described below.

The increase in number of sought after units sizes and population density lends to higher use of the communal spaces, helps support the commercial tenants and makes the proposed development a more viable and vibrant place to call home.



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### **6.1 (f) Minor changes to the exterior architectural appearance of the building, including, materials, architectural treatments and fenestration pattern**

The proposed architectural character and materials achieve high standards of livability. Along with the changes mentioned above, the proposed massing respects the original DA's intent while a more contemporary and linear aesthetic has been adopted.

#### **Minor changes to the architectural treatment - commercial streetscape**

The architectural appearance of the first floor commercial level has been revised to allow for an architectural look that is in harmony with the architectural rhythm scale and massing of the historic Hydrostone market.

The commercial Hydrostone streetscape along Young street has an in-and-out rhythm with stepped-out "bookends" – see photo 1. Similarly, the residential Hydrostone blocks have 2 storey entirely "stone" clad single family house "bookends" – see photo 2. These historic neighborhood examples have influenced the proposed treatment of the commercial front which incorporates slightly projecting "bookends" to punctuate the commercial facade. As a consequence, the plan at the corner of Gottingen and Kaye streets steps slightly forward rather than recedes and thus avoids eroding the block's corner. The recent "Garden Stone Place" opposite the Hydrostone market also demonstrates this formal approach see photo 3.

To further reinforce this commercial frontage, the main residential pedestrian entrance has been moved from Gottingen Street to Kaye Street to prevent its competition with the commercial streetscape and functionally separates them.

A single 3.68 m high commercial 1<sup>st</sup> floor area has been opted over a 2-storey high space which is more in keeping with the neighborhood's commercial fabric consisting of small shops, restaurants and services. Accordingly, the portion of the second floor over the commercial level has been dedicated to residential units.

#### **Minor changes in the architectural treatment - townhouse entry articulation**

The townhouse's projecting entry volumes have been maintained and have been further articulated: the residential entry verandas and porticos typical in the neighborhood (see photo 4) have been translated into a 2nd floor volume projection to provide cover for the entry doors. This volume is punctuated by a corner window to allow more daylight and provide oblique views along walkways which are animated by the nearby schools, churches and shops. The continuous 2 storey glazing is maintained between the entry projections.

Due to the elder residential market's preference for accessible single floor dwellings, some townhouse units have been replaced with separate residential units on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors. This has not altered the external 2 storey townhouse look.



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### **Minor changes in the architectural treatment - tower façade articulation**

The 7 storey tower block portion has retained its symmetry. The original DA's add-on curved vertical volumes articulating the main 6 storey volume are interpreted by projecting facades planes and so reducing the verticality of the elevations. These façade planes are punctured at the balconies which retain a similar distribution to the DA's and effectively lighten the massing. The penthouse has been simplified into a single storey rectangular volume rather than a 2 storey and a curtain wall cladding differentiates it to further reduce the apparent vertical massing.

While not illustrated in the DA, the proposal shows a mechanical penthouse volume containing a mechanical room, access stair & elevator overhead. It will be finished with an architectural ventilated panelized cladding. This mechanical penthouse is within the maximum allowable height established in the DA.

### **Minor changes to the fenestration pattern**

The aluminum storefronts along Gottingen Street have been revised to interpret the rhythm of the Hydrostone market including the recessed and bevelled shop windows. The windows above the shop fronts also interpret the rhythm of the residential level above the Hydrostone shops – see photo 1.

Fenestration in the tower portion maintains the DA's number of openings and single format window sizes while adopting a contemporary subdivision without transom divisions at eye level. High thermal performance triple-glazed windows will be used for the tower portion and the punched residential windows on 2 storey base, while aluminum windows, curtain wall/window wall will be used for the shop fronts and the balance of the townhouse fenestration as in the DA. The partial curtain wall treatments of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> floors has been reallocated to clad the entire 9th floor to provide more continuous glazing for the views.

### **Relocation and more monumental exposition of the salvaged St. Joseph's church's stained glass windows**

The stained glass windows have been relocated from being engaged on the commercial frontage about a third of the way along the Gottingen Street façade to Kaye Street very near to the corner for a better exposure to the Hydrostone park and vehicular viewing while at the stops at this very busy corner. The relocation had to be considered because the salvaged stained glass church windows composition shown on the original DA are significantly smaller than actual size (2 windows 2710x780mm and one 3910x780mm versus 3 identical 2285x800mm windows).



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Due to their significant size, their commemorative significance of not only the St. Joseph's Church, but also the Halifax explosion which they depict (see photo 5), the proposal exhibits the stained glass windows on a free standing dynamical inclined concrete wall creating a public commemorative art sculpture. This sculpture draws attention to the stained glass windows, ties it to the nearby Halifax Explosion Memorial Bell Tower (photo 6) and the memorial in the Hydrostone Park (photo 7) and highlights the importance of the site while distinguishing the windows from the building usage to avoid ambiguity. A free standing plaque in a planter area in front of this wall will recall St. Joseph's church for the community and commemorate the 1917 explosion while climbing ivy on the wall will evoke a sentimental reflection of the site's significant heritage.

#### **Minor changes to the exterior materials and their allocation**

The reuse of approximately 235 m<sup>2</sup> reclaimed sandstone from the St. Joseph's Church plays a major role in the proposed townhouse architectural look. Rather than being applied only up to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor sill levels between the townhouse entries, it replaces the precast concrete at the projecting entry volumes in the original DA and extends higher to the underside of the second floor. It is also used as a back-drop to the free-standing stained glass window wall. Together these reclaimed stone features add a more visible and touchable texture to the streetscapes: standing "fragments" giving greater power to evoke the memory of St. Joseph's Church.

For the main tower body, the mix of masonry veneer and tinted pre-cast concrete has been interpreted as a 2 color scheme in architectural ventilated panelized cladding. More energy efficient vinyl windows are proposed in place of aluminum windows in the residential tower.

Above 1<sup>st</sup> floor townhouse entries, a ventilated wood finished architectural cladding with horizontal reveals compliments the warmth of the sandstone below and recalls the small scale residential neighborhood context in a newer format. A ventilated wood finished architectural cladding is also used over the commercial shop fronts along Gottingen in place of the commercial window wall to articulate the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor as in the Hydrostone Market – see photo 1. Wood finish horizontal spandrel panels at the 9<sup>th</sup> floor penthouse will visually connect to the wood finished features along the streetscape facades.

Architectural concrete block has been chosen for the "secondary" cladding noted on the DA for the main body of the townhouse portions to connect with the neighboring Hydrostone district. At the commercial "bookends" this becomes a "salt & pepper" granite block to maintain the Hydrostone reference but differentiate them from the residential facades.



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The proposed amendments are a result of our desire to continually contribute positively to the city's fabric. It is in our opinion that the proposed non-substantive amendments will provide a high quality building that will serve its residents and commercial tenants well, recognize and support the community's desire to recognize and commemorate St. Joseph's Church's and the Halifax Explosion, respect the Hydrostone district's important historic role in characterizing and stimulating the neighborhood and provide a vibrant new contribution to the urban fabric as it did in its time.

This project is to be another example of Dexel's commitment to the greater Halifax community in designing / constructing a successful mixed use projects. We kindly request that this application be processed as promptly as possible. Site works will begin before the end of 2014.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,

Marianne Abboud, NSAA, LEED AP BD+C  
Project Architect.



**DEXEL**  
ARCHITECTURE

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Photo 1 – Hydrostone Market commercial streetscape



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Photo 2 – Hydrostone townhouse & block 2 storey “bookends”





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Photo 3 – The “Garden Stone Place” streetscape projecting corner treatment



Photo 4 – Typical entry verandas & porticos



Photo 5 – Salvaged stained glass windows from St. Joseph’s Church depicting the 1917 Halifax Explosion



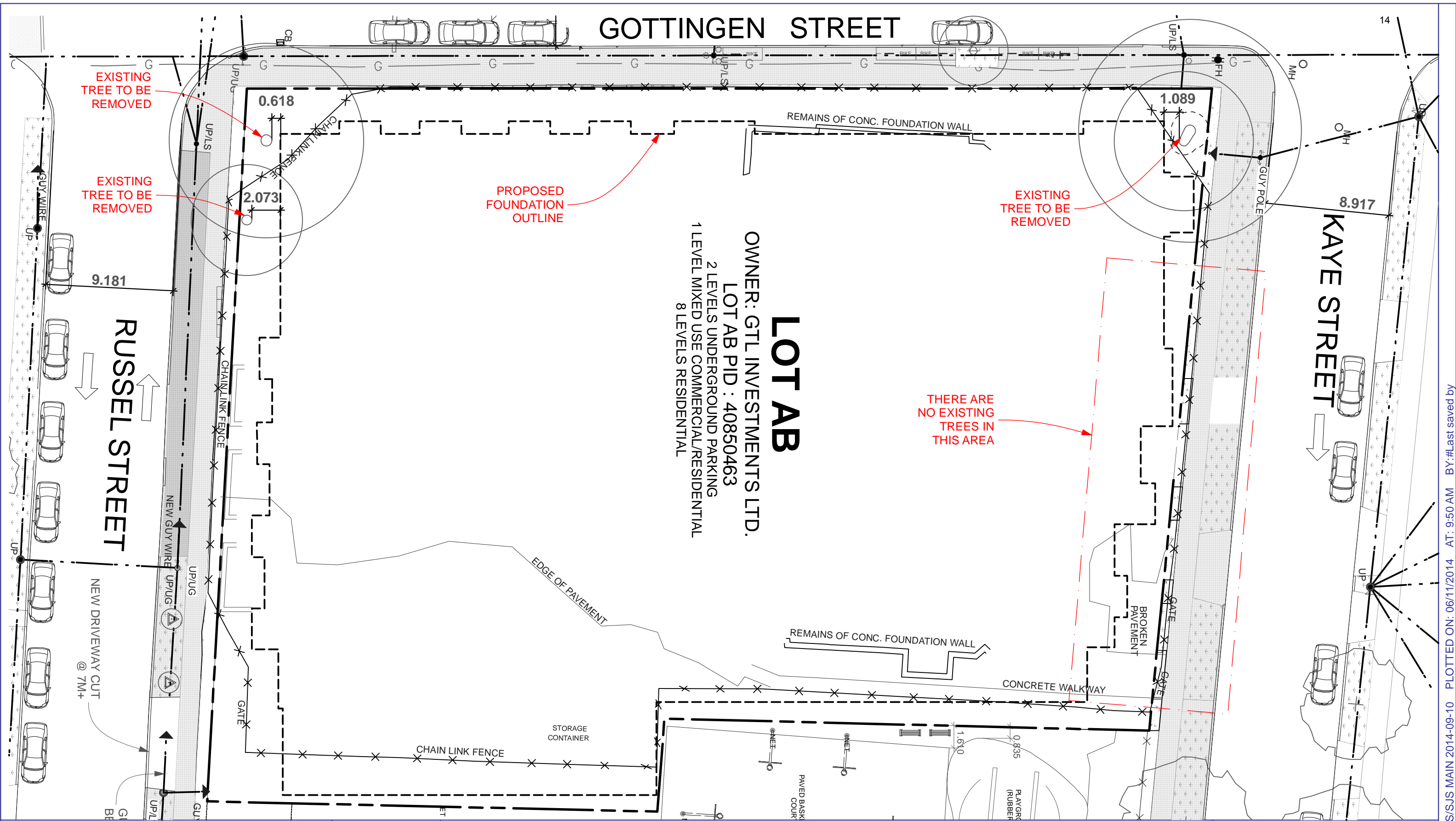
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Photo 6 – The Halifax Explosion Bell Tower Memorial



Photo 7 – The Hydrostone Park Halifax Explosion Memorial



**LOT AB**  
 OWNER: GTL INVESTMENTS LTD.  
 LOT AB PID : 40850463  
 2 LEVELS UNDERGROUND PARKING  
 1 LEVEL MIXED USE COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL  
 8 LEVELS RESIDENTIAL

THERE ARE NO EXISTING TREES IN THIS AREA



PROJECT  
**ST. JOSEPH SQUARE**  
 KAYE ST. HALIFAX NOVA  
 SCOTIA CANADA

SCALE  
 1:250  
 DATE  
 06/11/2014

TITLE **SITE PLAN - EXISTING TREES & PROPOSED FOUNDATION OUTLINE**

**Appendix 1**