



PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chair and Members of Districts 7 and 8 Planning Advisory Committee
FROM: Paul Sampson, Planner, Development Approvals
DATE: April 16, 2015

SUBJECT: Case 18464 - Application by W.M. Fares Group to amend the Halifax MPS and Halifax Peninsula LUB to allow for a 6-storey multiple-unit residential development at 3631 and 3639 Bright Place, 6100 Normandy Drive and a portion of the former Bright Place street right-of-way off Lady Hammond Road, Halifax, by development agreement

Background

An application has been submitted by W. M. Fares Group, on behalf of Amani Developments Limited and Bay Rock Developments Limited, for a site-specific amendment to the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law (LUB) to allow for a multi-unit residential building, by development agreement, at 3631 & 3639 Bright Place, 6100 Normandy Drive, and a portion of the Bright Place street right-of-way (Maps 1 and 2).

Three of the existing parcels, those being civic # 3631 & 3639 Bright Place and 6100 Normandy Drive, are owned by the developer while the remaining two parcels are currently owned by HRM and comprise the Bright Place street right-of-way. On September 25, 2012, Regional Council passed a motion to close a portion of the street right-of-way in order to facilitate the market disposal of the land parcel to the developer. As part of the land transaction, a 20-foot wide portion of the right-of-way along the southwest boundary, between Lady Hammond Road and the Bright Street/Normandy Drive intersection, will be retained by HRM for pedestrian access and the developer will be required to construct a pedestrian walkway within this area to facilitate pedestrian movement between the two streets.

Location and Surrounding Area

The subject lands are situated between and have street frontage on Lady Hammond Road and the intersection of Normandy Drive and Bright Street in the north end of the Halifax peninsula. An existing 4-unit apartment building is located on Civic # 3639 Bright Place. Two other residential buildings at 3631 Bright Place and 6100 Normandy Drive were previously demolished.

The surrounding area contains a mix of land uses, including:

- low-density residential development and apartments (Sisters of Charity) to the north;
- an abutting commercial motel to the west;

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Tel: 902.490.6259 Fax: 902.490.4406
Email: sampsop@halifax.ca halifax.ca

- apartment and commercial (retail and office) uses on the south side of Lady Hammond Road; and
- low-density residential uses to the east.

The site is designated Residential Environments in the Municipal Planning Strategy for Halifax (Map 1) and is zoned R-2 (General Residential) under the Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law (Map 2), excepting the street right-of-way, which is not zoned.

Proposal

The original proposal was for a 7-storey apartment building. Following the public meeting (noted below), the applicant revised the proposal by eliminating one residential floor from the “tower” portion of the building and altering the Normandy Drive street-level units. The revised proposal is a 6-storey building with below-grade parking and townhouse-style units facing Normandy Drive and the pedestrian walkway. Details of the revised proposal are as follows:

- exterior landscaping details provided which illustrate extensive tree planting and other soft landscape materials (shrubs, flower beds and sodded areas) and various hard landscape materials (planters, paving stone, retaining walls, fencing);
- details on the exterior appearance of the building, including:
 - the use of varying material types (cement board siding, composite panels, ceramic tiles, brick, clear glass, metal rails);
 - the use of varying colour tones to provide visual interest; and
 - townhouse-style design details depicting finished grade level with numerous entrances off Normandy Drive and the pedestrian walkway (south elevation).

The applicant has also provided a shadow analysis depicting the impacts during the solstices and equinoxes.

Existing MPS and LUB Context

The subject lands are governed by the Residential Environments objectives and policies found in Section II (City-Wide Objectives and Policies) of the Halifax MPS which encourages residential growth on the Peninsula and contains a significant focus on encouraging development which is compatible with the scale and character of existing stable residential neighbourhoods (attached). The privately-owned lands are zoned R-2 (General Residential) zone by the LUB while the Bright Place right-of-way is not currently zoned but will take on the R-2 zoning upon the closure of the street and land transaction.

Public Meeting

The Committee hosted a public meeting on May 5, 2014 regarding the proposal (the minutes of which are attached).

Input Sought from the Committee

Pursuant to the Committee’s Terms of Reference, feedback is sought from the Committee regarding the creation of new site-specific MPS policies and the details of the development proposal in relation to existing MPS policies (attached). The recommendation will be included in the staff report to Halifax and West Community Council and Regional Council. Specific items which the committee may wish to address include the following:

- the proposed building’s height, massing and elements of human scale in relation to surrounding properties, streets and sidewalks/ walkway;

- land use and the adequacy of building setbacks from residential properties, especially the “tower” portion;
- architectural design and building materials;
- site landscaping; and
- elements which could be included in MPS policy and within provisions of the development agreement

Attachments

- Maps 1 and 2 (Generalized Future Land Use, Zoning)
- Plans, Elevations and Shadow Analysis
- Rendering
- MPS Policy Excerpts
- Public Meeting Minutes