



**DISTRICTS 7 & 8 PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
September 22, 2016**

**PRESENT:** Ms. Sunday Miller, Chair  
Mr. Michael Bradfield  
Mr. Grant Cooke  
Ms. Amy Siciliano  
Councillor Waye Mason  
Councillor Jennifer Watts

**REGRETS:** Ms. Katherine Kitching  
Ms. Sarah MacDonald  
Mr. Joe Metlege  
Mr. Ashley Morton, Vice Chair

**STAFF:** Mr. Tyson Simms, Planner  
Ms. Leah Perrin, Planner  
Ms. Cailin MacDonald, Legislative Support

*The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.*

*The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to the Districts 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/D78PAC/160922d78pac-agenda.php>*

*The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. and adjourned at 8:12 p.m.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. at Saint Mary's University (Courtside Lounge), Halifax and introduced the Planning Advisory Committee and its purpose in hosting the public meeting.

**2. PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING**

**2.1 Case 20405 – Application by Armour Group Limited, on behalf of Halifax Grammar School, to amend the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law to enable the rezoning of 915, 921 and 967 Tower Road and a portion of 945 Tower Road, Halifax from R-1 (Single Family Residential) Zone to the P (Park and Institutional) Zone.**

The Chair invited Mr. Tyson Simms, Planner, to present Case 20405 – Application by Armour Group Limited, on behalf of Halifax Grammar School, to amend the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law to enable the rezoning of 915, 921 and 967 Tower Road and a portion of 945 Tower Road, Halifax from R-1 (Single Family Residential) Zone to the P (Park and Institutional) Zone.

Mr. Simms outlined the purpose of the meeting, noting that staff will provide background information on the application process as well as explain existing policy and regulations that apply in the area.

Mr. Simms explained that the application by Armour Group Limited on behalf of the Halifax Grammar School is to amend the Halifax Peninsula Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and the Land Use By-law (LUB) to permit an expansion to the Halifax Grammar School located at 945 Tower Road. He went on to explain that the application is to amend the designation of the subject site from Medium Density Residential (MDR) to Institutional (INS) and amend the zoning from Single Family Dwelling (R-1) to Park and Institutional (P). He also noted that the application includes amending the definition of height, as defined in the MPS and LUB, as it applies to 967 Tower Road so that it is consistent with the existing school property.

Mr. Simms provided the context surrounding the proposed site and the existing campus. He outlined that as part of the MPS designation the proposal is to re-designate the subject properties, 915, 921, 967 and a portion of 945, to Institutional. Mr. Simms continued to explain that under the LUB zoning the proposal is to re-zone the subject properties to a Park and Institutional Zone.

Mr. Simms explained that the MPS and LUB regulate building height through established height precincts. He commented that the proposal is to amend the definition of height for 967 Tower Road to reflect the same height currently permitted on the Halifax Grammar School site which is 45-50 feet.

Mr. Simms explained criteria outlined in the Park and Institutional (P) Zone. He further explained the uses permitted in this zone as well as specific building requirements, noting that the P Zone shall comply with the requirement of the R-3 (multiple dwelling) Zone. Mr. Simms explained that this zone requires: side and rear setbacks at a minimum of 10 feet; front yard setback at a minimum of 20 feet; and angular controls to regulate the size of the building.

Mr. Simms noted that the Halifax Grammar School is a registered heritage property and that any addition to the property is deemed to be a substantial alteration. He further explained that applications for substantial alteration are: reviewed by heritage staff, the Heritage Advisory Committee and Regional Council.

Mr. Simms reviewed the initial steps of the process as well as outlined the next steps for the application. He then invited the applicant, Mr. Steven Laffoley, Headmaster for the Halifax Grammar School, to speak on behalf of the Halifax Grammar School.

Mr. Laffoley, spoke briefly about the history and evolution of the school, its relationship with the neighbourhood and the heritage-influenced design aesthetic. Mr. Laffoley invited Mr. Joe Zareski to speak further about the project.

Mr. Zareski, Architect with Architecture 49, described that their firm completed a heritage impact assessment to determine which areas of the site had heritage value.

Mr. Zareski stated that they looked at the sites' setbacks and angular controls. He shared that the proposed design illustrates a courtyard and new entrance to the school. He also commented on the amount of greenspace planned for the site.

Mr. Zareski showed the proposed front elevation, commenting that they chose a modern use of traditional materials, textures and patterns to mimic the existing building. He also commented that the rationale to amend the height is to help mirror the existing building and to line up the interior floors where possible.

Mr. Zareski ended his presentation by presenting prospective renderings from different angles as well as materials planned to be used.

The Chair opened the floor to comments from the public.

**Ms. Alison Boyd, Halifax** inquired about the budget for the project as well as how the project will enhance student learning.

Mr. Laffoley responded by sharing that Halifax Grammar School has engaged in a capital campaign to and explained that the school provides greater learning opportunities for students and spaces to collaborate.

**Mr. Shanchun Li, Tower Road** inquired why there would be no opportunity to repeal this case, citing that generally the process for rezoning includes a repeal period. He expressed concerns as an immediate neighbour to the site and outlined the following concerns with the proposed placement of the parking lot: increase in traffic, increase in pollution and dust, elimination of greenspace, lack of sufficient area for snow removal, potential flooding and potential reduction in property value. He commented that he would prefer to see the location of the parking lot be greenspace or a playground. Mr. Li further outlined potential concerns should the school expand including increase in noise levels and vandalism. He concluded by stating that he opposes amending 915 and 921 Tower Road to a P Zone.

Mr. Simms explained that in this case since the proposed decision is to amend the MPS and LUB that an appeal would not be permitted and that he would confer with the municipality's legal staff and provide a response directly to Mr. Li at a later date.

**Mr. David Richardson, Tower Road** echoed Mr. Li's comments. Mr. Richardson expressed concerns that should the development move forward; neighbouring residents may decide to sell their properties and inquired whether this would enable the applicant to purchase the land and facilitate approval of further expansion. He also expressed concerns related to the location of the parking lot and the potential increased traffic in the area considering drop-offs for students of SMU and the Halifax Grammar School as well as the nearby bus stop.

Mr. Simms responded by providing clarification about the process, noting that should the applicant acquire more properties, these lands would be subject to the same application process .

**Mr. John Mullin, representing Saint Mary's University** expressed concern with the potential increase in traffic and expressed the need for a proper traffic study for the area to prevent further congestion.

Mr. Simms responded that a traffic impact statement has been submitted as part of this application and is being reviewed by transportation and planning staff. He commented that it will be reviewed by staff and will inform part of the staff report to Regional Council.

**Ms. Terri Chisholm, parent of Halifax Grammar School** expressed support for the project and echoed desires to complete a traffic study.

**Ms. Henrietta Mann, Bridges Street** expressed challenges with parking on Bridges Street and commented that she would like parking to be only allowable on one side of the street.

Mr. Simms noted that the LUB does not require a minimum number of parking spaces and referred the question to the applicant to clarify the number of spaces being proposed. Mr. Zareski commented that the number of parking spaces for the school remains the same and that they are exploring ways to minimize the parking lot in favour of greenspace. He also commented that the design incorporates a drop off zone to help ease traffic flow.

**Mr. David Richardson, Tower Road** inquired about the entrances to the parking lot.

Mr. Zareski responded that there is one entrance and one exit off of Tower Road.

**Ms. Carolyn Maxwell, Ivanhoe Street** shared concerns about the backside of the building, citing concerns related to lighting, garbage removal, exits, noise as well as fencing.

Mr. Simms responded that setbacks would be regulated by the LUB and that noise would be regulated by the municipality's existing noise by-law. He commented that municipal by-laws require a designated area for refuse collection and that the location is not known and would be determined during the permitting process.

**Ms. Li and Mr. Li, Tower Road** requested further clarification related to the property setback as well as by-law amendments.

Mr. Simms responded that the LUB outline permitted land uses as well as guidance on site design. He commented that staff can explore by-law requirements for buffering and that he is unaware of any set distance required for institutional development.

In response to a by-law amendment, Mr. Simms acknowledged Mr. and Ms. Li's concerns and commented that there is an ability to consider amendments to the zone. He commented that as part of the review process staff will look at requirements related to setbacks, buffering and fencing to address some of their concerns.

### **3. ADJOURNMENT**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Cailin MacDonald,  
Legislative Support