



PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chair and Members of District 7 and 8 Planning Advisory Committee
FROM: Jill MacLellan, Planner, HRM Planning & Development
DATE: February 17, 2016

SUBJECT: Case 19858: Application by WM Fares to amend the Halifax MPS and the Halifax Peninsula LUB to allow for the development of a multiple unit residential dwelling at 6345 Coburg Road, Halifax.

As noted in the subject description, this case will consider the application to amend the Municipal Planning Strategy for Halifax and Land Use By-law for Halifax Peninsula to allow for the development of a multiple unit dwelling at 6345 Coburg Road, Halifax. The subject lands are located at the corner of Coburg Road and Larch Street in Halifax. The applicant's submission materials are attached to this memo (Attachment A).

Location

The subject property is:

- located at the northeast intersection of Coburg Road and Larch Street in Halifax;
- comprised of single property, which contains a 2 storey building (this building is to be removed); and
- approximately 10,566 square feet in area with 85 feet of frontage along Coburg Road and 90.5 feet of frontage along Larch Street;

The surrounding area is comprised of residential and institutional uses and some smaller scale commercial uses, which include:

- University of Kings College and Dalhousie University across Coburg Road to the south;
- Coburg Place, a 17 storey mixed residential and commercial building across Larch Street to the west;
- a 3-1/2 storey multi-unit residential building abutting the property to the east;
- commercial uses along Coburg Road, further to the east; and
- low rise residential neighbourhood to the north.

Please refer to the maps in the Initiation Report (Attachment B).

Planning & Development

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halifax.ca

Designation and Zoning

The subject property is:

- designated Medium Density Residential (MDR) in the Peninsula Centre Secondary Plan of the Municipal Planning Strategy for Halifax (Map 1 of Attachment B);
- zoned R-2 (General Residential) Zone by the Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law (Map 2 of Attachment B); and
- within a height precinct of 35 feet (Map 3 of Attachment B).

Initiation from Regional Council

This application was initiated by Regional Council on June 23, 2015. The initiation report, presented to Council (see Attachment B) did not include specific drawings for Council to consider, but instead including proposed design criteria for the proposed building as follows:

- building height of 4-5 storeys along Coburg Road and transitions to 3 storeys at the rear of the property;
- appropriate setbacks from residential properties to the north and east

Public Meeting

A public meeting chaired by the District 7 and 8 Planning Advisory Committee was held on December 3, 2015. At the public meeting the applicant presented their proposed drawings and renderings of the building which was 6 to 5 stories along Coburg Road and stepped down to 3 stories at the rear of the property. A copy of the renderings that were presented are included as Attachment C to this report. Minutes from the public meeting are further included in Attachment D of this report.

Current Proposal

Since the public meeting, the applicant has revised their plans. A copy of the current plans are included as Attachment A of this report.

Features of the proposed building are as follows:

- 28 residential units including a mix of bachelor/studio, 1 bedroom and 2 bedroom units;
- Main residential entrance off of Coburg Road with individual unit access from Coburg Road, Larch Street and the rear of the property;
- 20 parking spaces located underground with vehicular access from Coburg Road;
- Recessed balconies facing Coburg Road, Larch Street and the rear of the property;
- Setbacks ranging from 10 feet to 10.67 feet from shared property lines;
- Setbacks ranging from 3.75 feet to 6.3 feet from Coburg Road and Larch Street; and
- Landscaping along Coburg Road, Larch Street and the rear of the property.

Input Sought from the Committee

Pursuant to the Committee's Terms of Reference, feedback is sought from the Committee relative to the proposed development. The recommendation will be included in the staff report to Regional Council and Halifax and West Community Council. Specific items that the Committee may wish to address include the following:

- the proposed amendment to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to allow for the consideration of a multiple unit dwelling;

- the design and built form of the building;
- the relationship to neighbouring properties; and
- the proposed landscaping.

Attachments

Attachment A: Current Proposal

Attachment B: Initiation Report

Attachment C: Renderings Presented at December 3, 2015 Public Meeting

Attachment D: December 3, 2015 Public Meeting Minutes

[illegible]

UNITS:	STUDIO:	5
	1 BED:	5
	1 BED + DEN:	8
	2 BED:	10
TOTAL:		28 UNITS

PARKING: +/- 20 SPACES

8345 COSBURG ROAD HALIFAX, NS

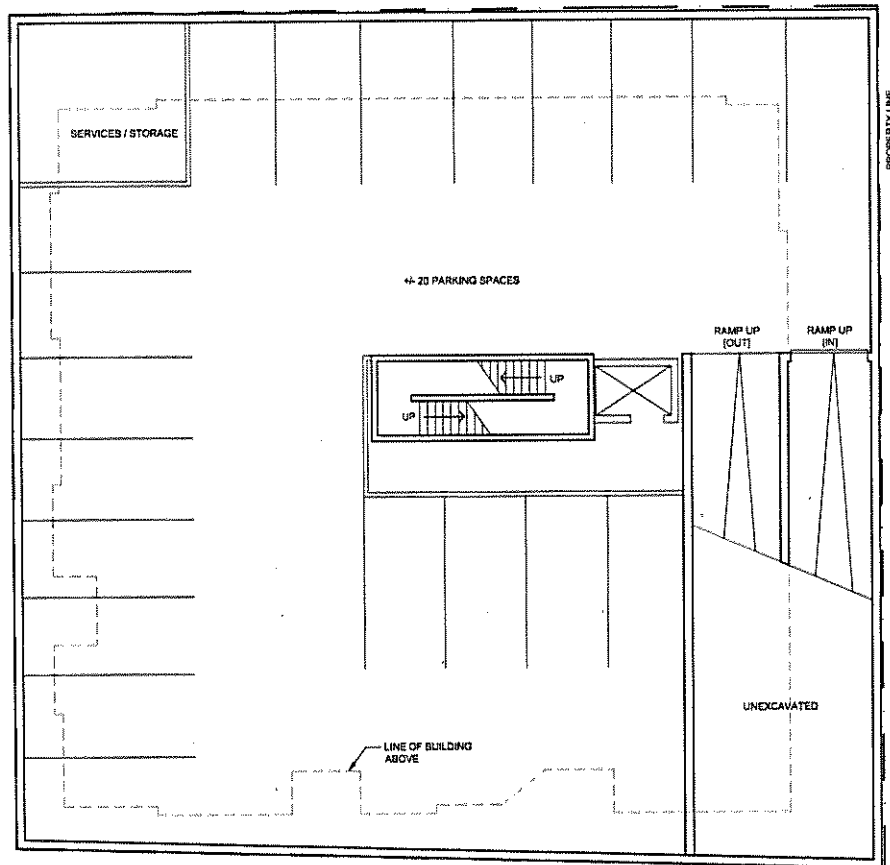
SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Project No.:	P2015.05
Scale:	1" = 20'
Date:	10 Feb 2016



WM FARES
ARCHITECTS

SDP



PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

6345 COBURG ROAD HALIFAX, NS

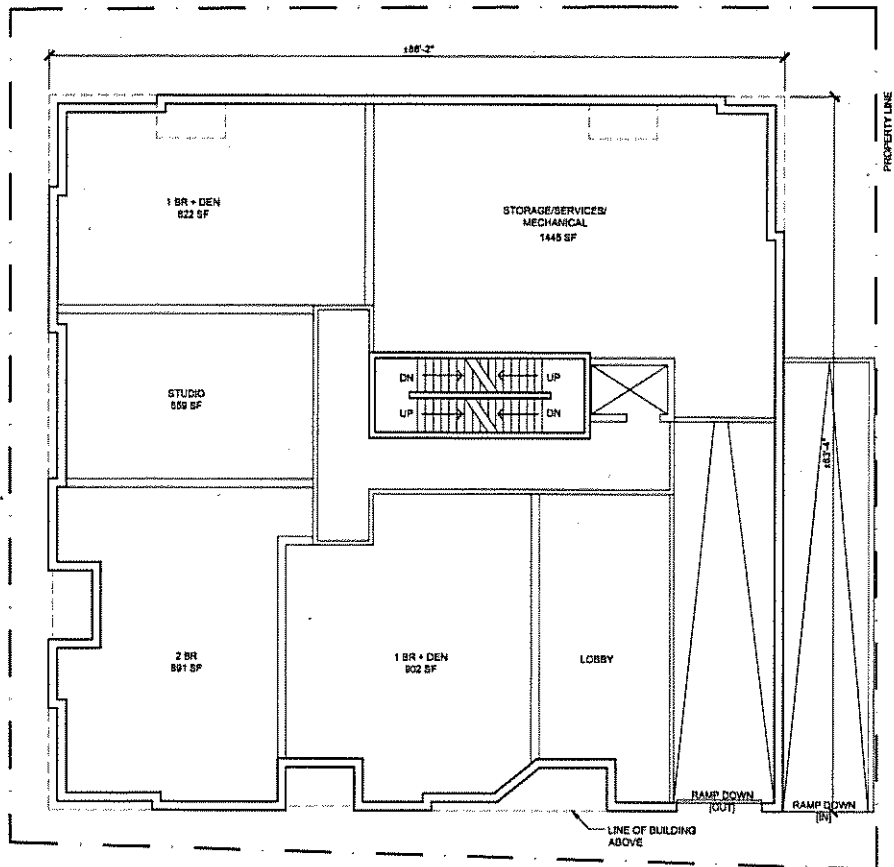
PARKING LEVEL
FLOOR PLAN

Project No.: P2015.05
Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"
Date: 10 Feb 2016



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PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
8345 COBURG ROAD HALIFAX, NS

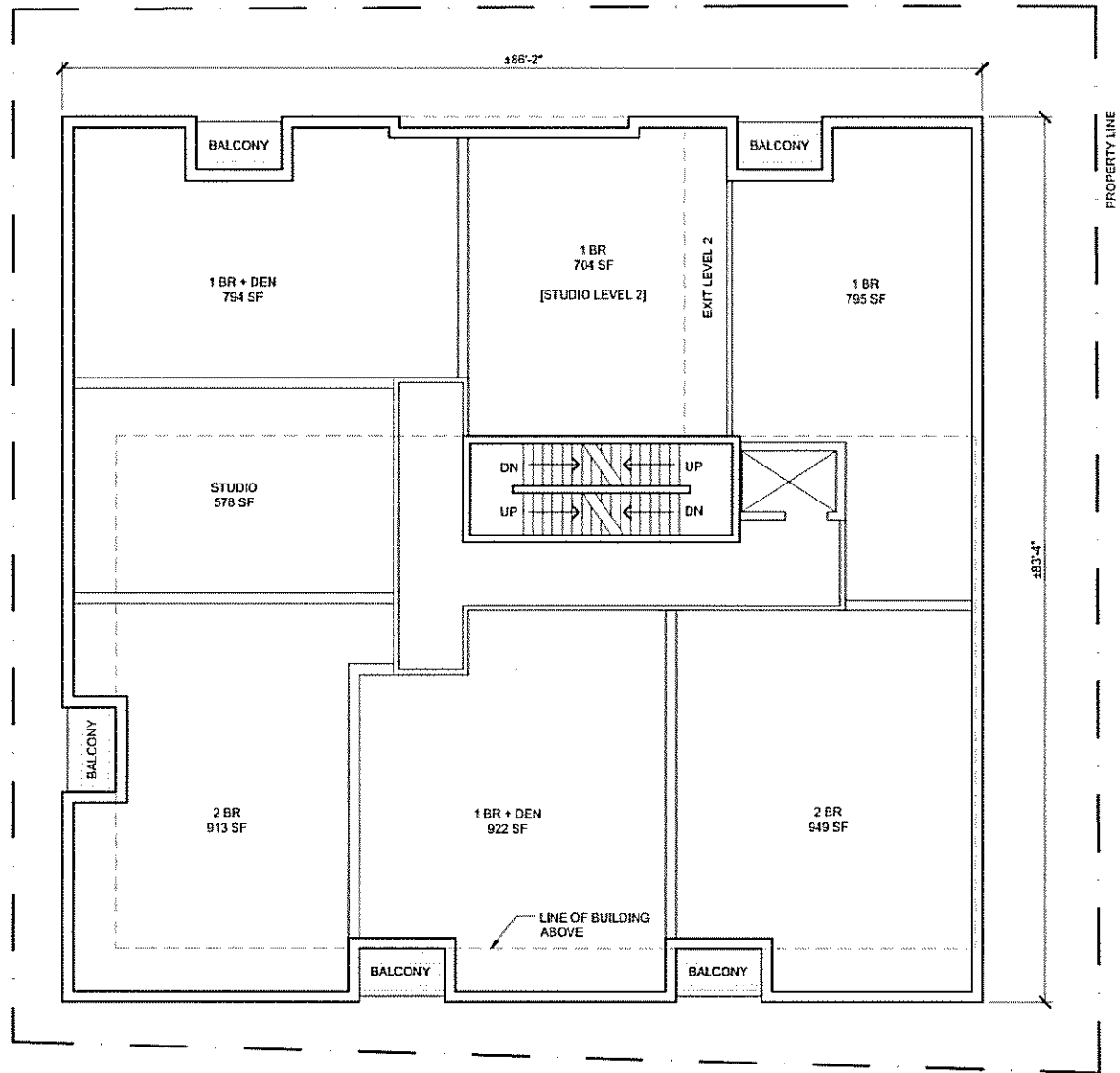
GROUND LEVEL
FLOOR PLAN

Project No.: P2015.05
Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"
Date: 10 Feb 2016



WM FARES
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PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

6345 COBURG ROAD HALIFAX, NS

LEVELS 200-400

FLOOR PLANS

Project No.:

P2015.05

Scale:

3/32" = 1'-0"

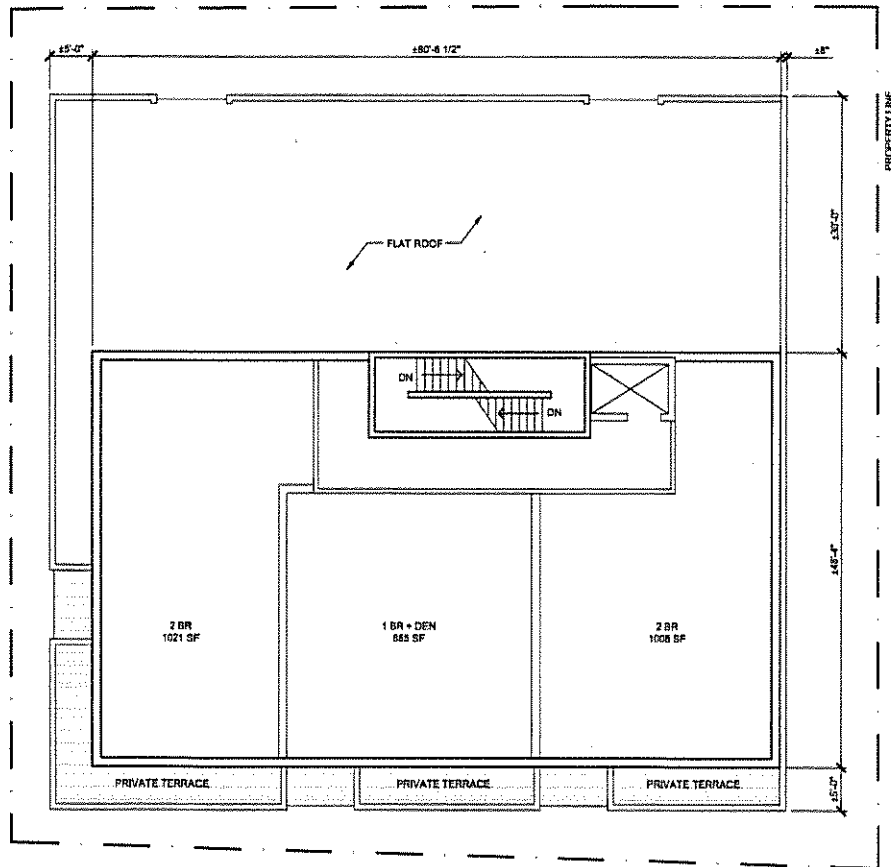
Date:

11 Feb 2016



WM FARES
ARCHITECTS

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PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
6345 COBURG ROAD HALIFAX, NS

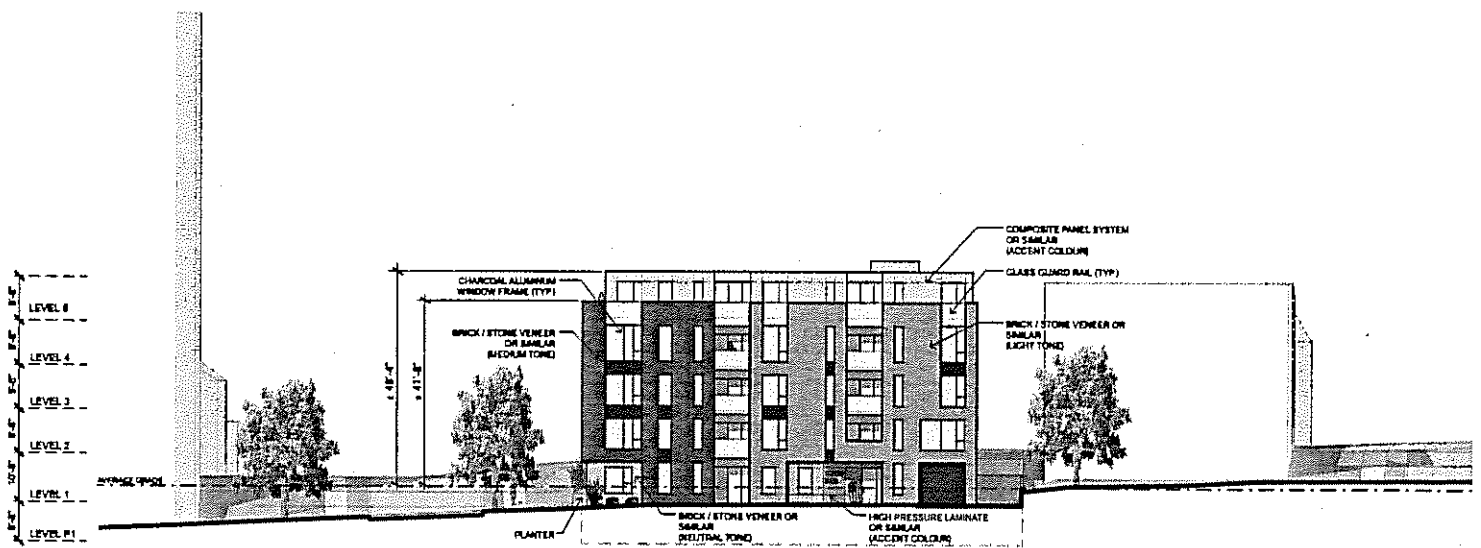
LEVEL 500
FLOOR PLAN

Project No.: P2015.05
Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"
Date: 10 Feb 2016



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ARCHITECTS

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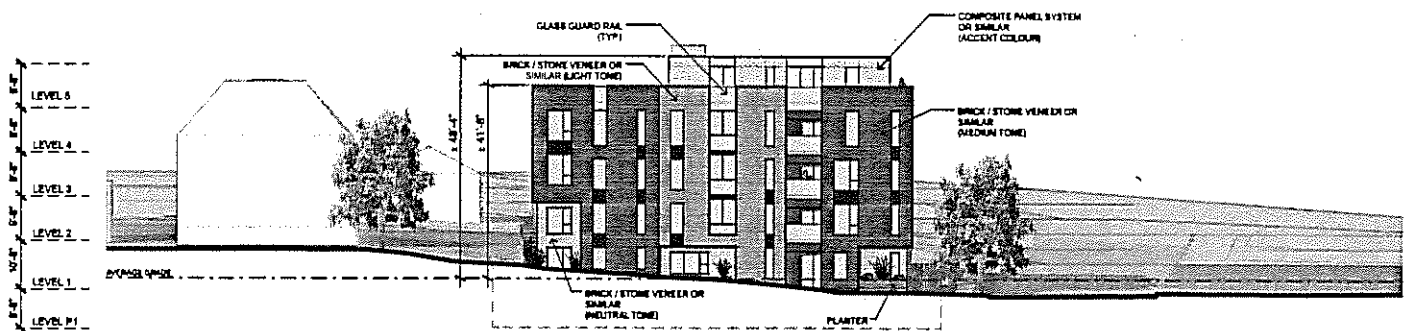
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
6345 COBURG ROAD HALIFAX, NS

SOUTH ELEVATION
COBURG ROAD

Project No.: 2015.05
Scale: 1" = 20'-0"
Date: 10 FEB 2015

WM FARES
GROUP

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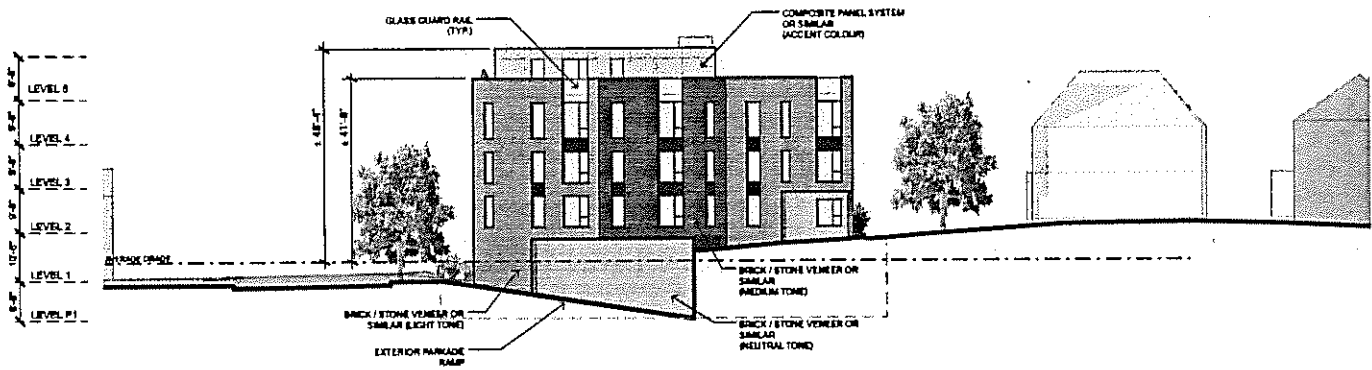
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
6345 COSBURG ROAD HALIFAX, NS

WEST ELEVATION
LARCH STREET

Project No.: 2015.05
Scale: 1" = 20'-0"
Date: 10 FEB 2015

WM FARES
GROUP

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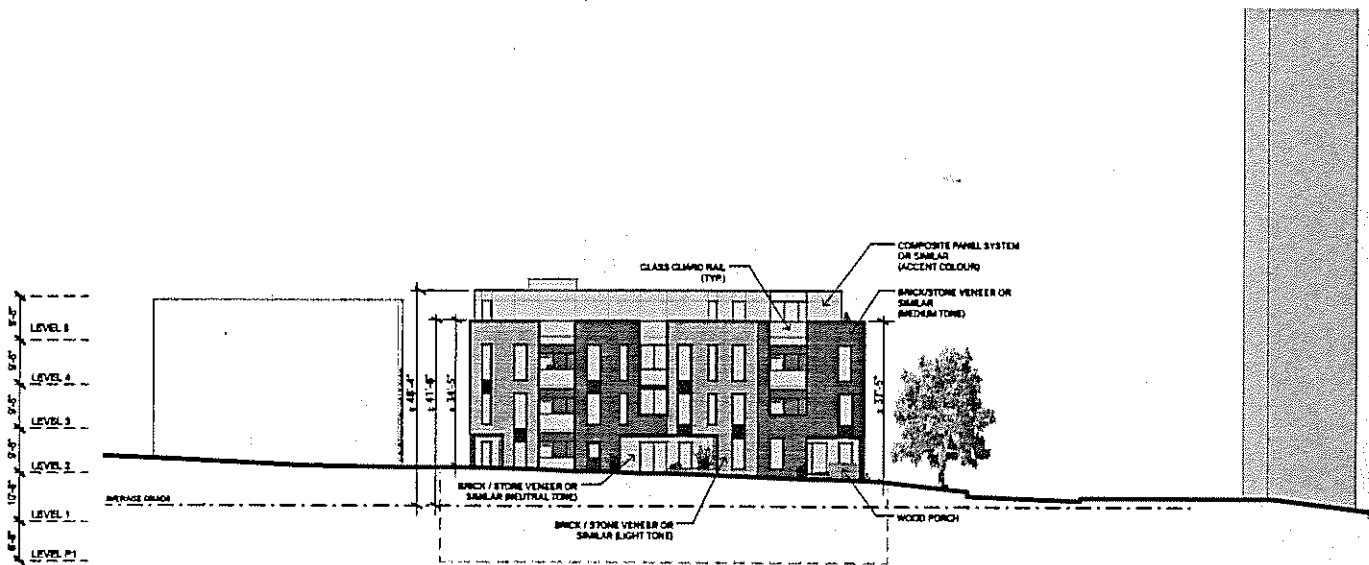
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
6349 COBURG ROAD HALIFAX, NS

EAST ELEVATION
LARCH STREET

Project No.: 2018.05
Scale: 1" = 20'-0"
Date: 10 FEB 2015

WM FARES
GROUP

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PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

6345 COBURG ROAD HALIFAX, NS

NORTH ELEVATION

Project No.: 2015.05

Scale: 1" = 20'-0"

Date: 10 FEB 2015

WM FARES
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PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
6345 COBURG ROAD, HALIFAX, NS

VIEW 1
PERSPECTIVE FACING NORTH

Project No.: 2015.06
Scale: NTS:
Date: 10 FEB 2015

WM FARES
GROUP

A9



PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
8345 COBURG ROAD, HALIFAX, NS

VIEW 2
COBURG PERSPECTIVE (FACING NORTH)

Project No.: 2015.05
Scale: NTS
Date: 10 FEB 2015

WM FARES
GROUP

A10



PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

6345 COBURG ROAD, HALIFAX, NS

VIEW 3

LARCH PERSPECTIVE (FACING EAST)

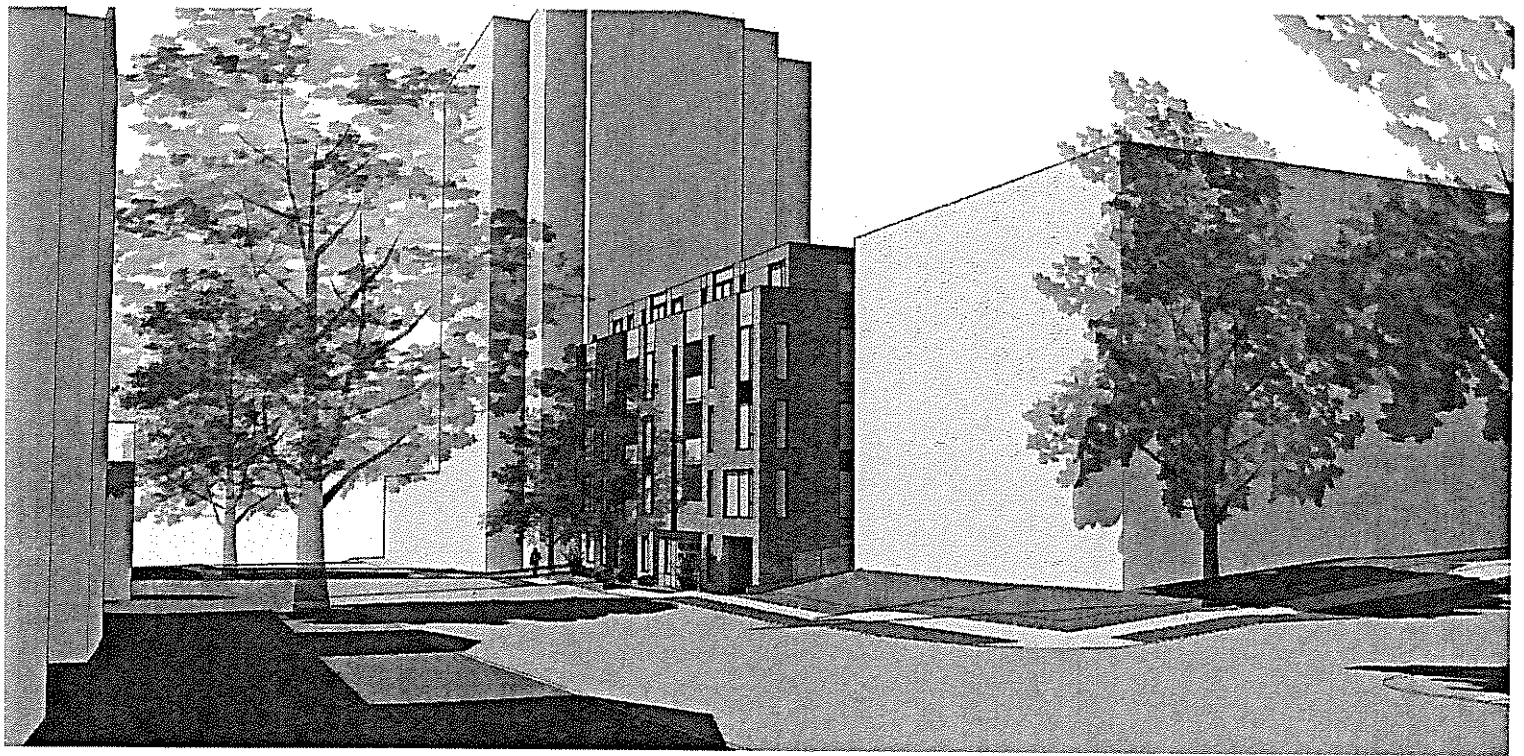
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Scale: NTS:

Date: 10 FEB 2015

WM FARES
GROUP

A11



PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

6345 COBURG ROAD, HALIFAX, NS

VIEW 4

COBURG PERSPECTIVE (FACING WEST)

Project No.: 2015.05

Scale: NTS:

Date: 10 FEB 2018

WM FARES
GROUP


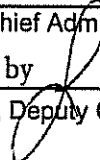
A12



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Attachment B: Initiation Report

Item No. 11.1.6
Halifax Regional Council
June 23, 2015

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council
Original signed by 
SUBMITTED BY: Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer
Original Signed by 
Mike Labrecque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
DATE: May 17, 2015
SUBJECT: Case 19858: Amendment to the Halifax MPS and the Halifax Peninsula -
6345 Coburg Road, Halifax

ORIGIN

Application by WM Fares Group.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter (HRM Charter), Part VIII, Planning & Development

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council direct staff to:

1. Initiate the process to consider amending the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law to enable the development of a new multiple unit residential dwelling on the property located at 6345 Coburg Road, Halifax; and
2. Follow the public participation program as approved by Council in February 1997.

BACKGROUND

The subject property, 6345 Coburg Road, is located at the north-east corner of Coburg Road and Larch Street, Halifax (Map 1). WM Fares Group, on behalf of the property owner, the Catholic Archdiocese of Halifax, proposes to demolish an existing 2-storey building and develop a multiple unit residential dwelling on the subject property. The proposal cannot be considered under existing policy and zoning of the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law (LUB). As such, the applicant is seeking an amendment to the MPS and LUB.

Site Description and Surrounding Land Uses

The subject property is:

- comprised of a single property which contains a 2 storey building; and
- approximately 10,566 square feet in area with 85 feet of frontage along Coburg Road and 90.5 feet of frontage along Larch Street. (Maps 1 and 2).

The surrounding area is comprised of residential and institutional uses and some smaller scale commercial uses, which include:

- University of Kings College and Dalhousie University across Coburg Road to the south;
- Coburg Place, a 17 storey mixed residential and commercial building across Larch Street to the west;
- a 3-1/2 storey multi-unit residential building abutting the property to the east;
- commercial uses along Coburg Road, further to the east; and
- low rise residential neighbourhood to the north.

The subject property is currently owned by the Catholic Archdiocese of Halifax. The existing building on the property is vacant with its most recent use being the St. Joseph's Newman Centre, which provided chaplaincy services to Dalhousie University and residence for Catholic university students, since the late 1950s. The Catholic Archdiocese of Halifax is no longer interested in retaining ownership of the building or the property. Photographs of the existing streetscapes are included in Attachment B and C.

Designation and Zoning

The subject property is:

- designated Medium Density Residential (MDR) in the Peninsula Centre Secondary Plan of the Municipal Planning Strategy for Halifax (Map 1);
- zoned R-2 (General Residential) Zone by the Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law (Map 2); and
- within a height precinct of 35 feet (Map 3).

Proposal

The applicant wishes to remove the existing building on the property and construct a new residential building that is 4-5 storeys along Coburg Road and transitions to 3 storeys at the rear of the property. Their submission notes that the proposed development would include appropriate setbacks to residential properties to the north and east.

Initially, the applicant proposed a larger building that staff considered inappropriate for the property and area. The applicant has agreed to scale a smaller building, however, before proceeding with new plans they want to ensure that Regional Council will consider initiating the MPS amendment process. Therefore, the applicant has not included proposed building plans at this time.

Existing Planning Policies and Zoning Context

The MDR designation of the Peninsula Centre Secondary Planning Strategy is intended to support a mixed residential environment with both family-oriented units and smaller housing units in buildings not exceeding four storeys. Family units are defined as those with more than 800 square feet of floor area, and 50% of units in any building must be of this form. A key component of the MDR designation is the retention of existing housing stock.

The R-2 Zone allows for up to 4 residential units depending on the lot area. It further includes requirements for minimum lot area, lot coverage, lot frontage and setbacks. The subject property is also restricted to a height of 35 feet under the ZM-17 height precinct map of the LUB as shown on Map 3.

DISCUSSION

MPS Amendment Process

Generally, amendments to an MPS are not considered unless it can be shown that circumstances have changed since the document was adopted to the extent that the original land use policy is no longer appropriate. As part of the planning process for site-specific MPS amendment requests, in particular, a significant justification is required as part of the application. As such, to support the request to amend the MPS and LUB in this case, the applicant has prepared a written submission which is included as Attachment A to this report. The following is a brief summary of the applicant's rationale for the proposed amendments:

- the current policies and requirements of the land use by-law are out-of-date and are too restrictive to allow for appropriate development;
- land use provisions should have a greater emphasis on building form and design and providing a pedestrian friendly streetscape;
- there is a mix of uses in the area that could benefit from additional density; and
- the existing 35 foot height requirement does not reflect the heights adjacent buildings along Coburg Road (Coburg Place and university buildings).

Evaluation of Proposed Amendment

Staff has reviewed the applicant's rationale and agree that there is merit to consider a site specific amendment to the MPS. The long time use of the building for chaplaincy and student residence no longer exists and with the proximity to institutional and commercial uses, a higher density than what is permitted in the R-2 Zone may be appropriate. The subject property is relatively large, in comparison to the size of the surrounding R-2 zoned properties and is located adjacent to a 17-storey building. Due to such circumstances, a building taller than 35 feet could be considered appropriate.

However, it is important to note that the subject property is located in an area that is primarily low rise residential. Any new development on this site must be reflective of the existing neighborhood and compatible with the adjacent low rise uses. This can be achieved through adequate setbacks and a transition in building height as proposed by the applicant. Through direction from Regional Council and consultation with the neighborhood, a building design is to be proposed that supports a higher density than what is permitted in the R-2 Zone, but respects the low rise neighbourhood. This is to be achieved either through the use of a development agreement or through zoning provisions in the LUB.

Conclusion

Staff recommends the initiation of the MPS amendment process for the subject property. Due to the change in use and the subject property's proximity to larger buildings, a building larger than what would be permitted in the R-2 Zone should be considered, provided that it is designed to transition appropriately to the surrounding low rise residential uses.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The HRM costs associated with processing this planning application can be accommodated within the approved 2015/2016 operating budget for C310 Planning & Applications.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Should Council choose to initiate the MPS amendment process as outlined in this report, or to enable an alternative proposal, the *HRM Charter* requires that Council approve a public participation program when considering any amendment to an MPS. In February of 1997, Regional Council approved a public participation resolution which outlines the process to be undertaken for proposed MPS amendments, which are considered to be local in nature. This requires a public meeting be held, at a minimum, and any other measures deemed necessary to obtain public opinion. The proposed level of community engagement would be consultation, achieved through a public meeting and/or public workshop early in the review process, as well as a public hearing before Regional Council could consider approval of any amendments.

Amendments to the MPS and LUB would potentially impact the following stakeholders: local residents, property owners, community or neighbourhood organizations, business owners, other HRM business units, and other levels of government.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Council may choose to refuse to initiate the MPS amendment process for this proposal. A decision of Council to not initiate the potential amendments is not appealable to the N. S. Utility & Review Board as per Section 262 of the *HRM Charter*. This is not the recommendation of staff as there is merit to the proposal.

ATTACHMENTS

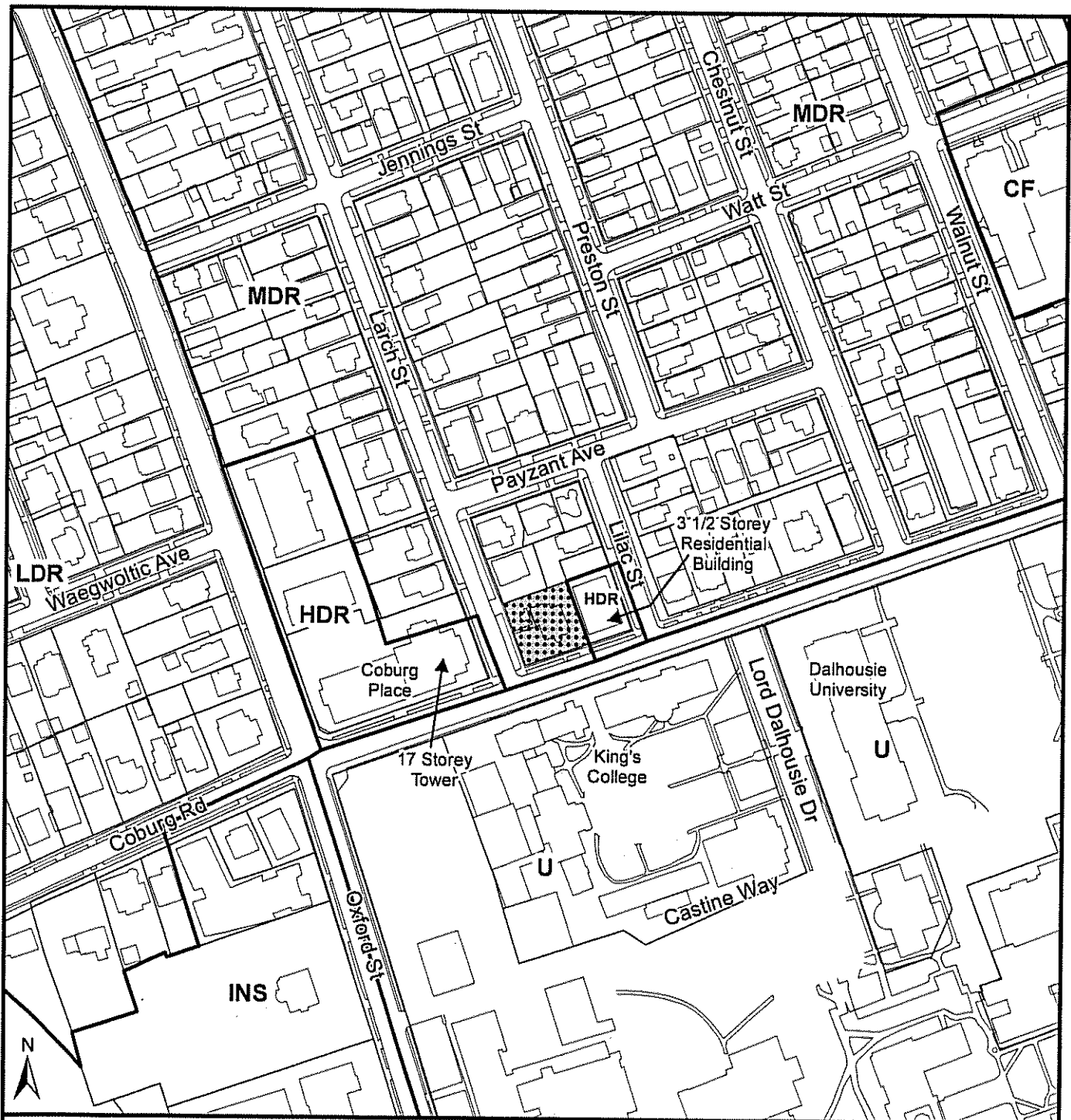
Map 1	Generalized Future Land Use
Map 2	Zoning
Map 3	Height Precincts
Attachment A	Submission from the Applicant
Attachment B	Aerial view along Coburg Road
Attachment C	Street view along Coburg Road

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/agenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Jillian MacLellan, Planner, Development Approvals, 902-490-4423

Report Approved by: Kelly Denty, Manager of Development Approvals, 902-490-4800

Report Approved by: Bob Bjerke, Chief Planner and Director, Planning and Development, 902-490-1627



Map 1 - Generalized Future Land Use

6345 Coburg Road
Halifax

HALIFAX

 Subject Property

Designation

LDR Low Density Residential
MDR Medium Density Residential
HDR High Density Residential
CF Community Facilities
INS Institutional
U University

0 20 40 60 80 m

This map is an unofficial reproduction of a portion of the Generalized Future Land Use Map for the plan area indicated.

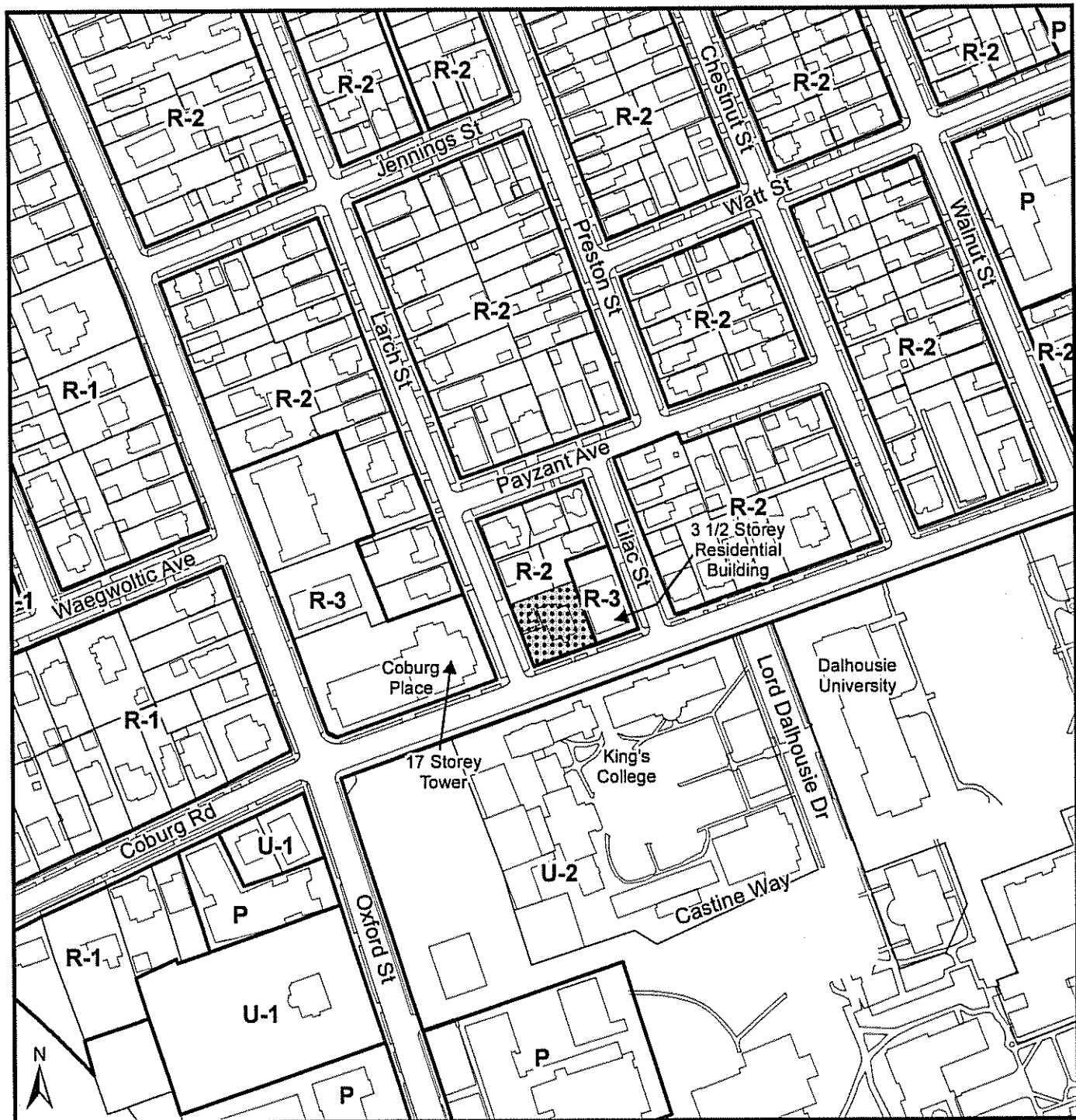
The accuracy of any representation on this plan is not guaranteed.

Halifax Plan Area
Peninsula Centre Area Plan Area

4 May 2015

Case 19858

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Map 2 - Zoning

6345 Coburg Road
Halifax.



Subject Property

Zone

- R-1 Single Family Dwelling
- R-2 General Residential
- R-3 Multiple Dwelling
- P Park and Institutional
- U-1 Low-Density University
- U-2 High-Density University

HALIFAX



This map is an unofficial reproduction of a portion of the Zoning Map for the plan area indicated.


The accuracy of any representation on this plan is not guaranteed.

Halifax Peninsula
Land Use By-Law Area





Map 3 - Height Precincts

6345 Coburg Road
Halifax

 Subject Property

Halifax Plan Area
Peninsula Centre Area Plan Area

 Height measured to highest point of top floor of building (not including non-habitable roof)

 Height measured to commencement of top storey of building

Please refer to ZM-17 - Height Precinct Map for full definitions of height measurement.

0 20 40 60 m

The accuracy of any representation on this plan is not guaranteed.

HALIFAX



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April 17, 2015

Jillian Maclellan
Planner 1, HRM Development Approvals
Community and Recreation Services
Halifax Regional Municipality
PO Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Re: Request to amend the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB) to enable consideration of a multi-unit residential building at 6345 Coburg Road, Halifax, by way of development agreement;

Dear Ms. Maclellan,

W M Fares Group is pleased to make an application for a Site Specific Plan Amendment to the existing Municipal Planning Strategy to enable a development of a new multiunit residential building at 6345 Coburg Road.

It is our understanding that the proposed development project requires a site specific plan amendment to vary the 35-foot height precinct and allow the proposed multi-unit residential building through a Development Agreement. W M Fares is seeking to undertake the required plan amendment and development agreement processes concurrently.

Project Background:

The site is currently occupied by a building which has been used for an institutional use. It is approximately 10,500 square feet in area, with 100-foot frontage on Coburg Road and 100-ft frontage on Larch Street. It is adjacent to a single family dwelling from the North; a 4-storey apartment building from the East; King's University from the West; and a 17-storey professional office centre from the West.

The site is walking distance from universities, schools, recreation facilities including tennis courts, ball fields, a boat club, gymnasiums, parks and bus stops.

The subject property is designated Regional Centre (Urban Core) under the HRM Regional Plan, and Medium Density Residential under the Peninsula Centre Secondary Plan of the Municipal Planning Strategy.

Municipal Planning Strategy Discussion:

We understand that the Municipality's MPS lays out its intent regarding appropriate land use and future patterns for growth. The redevelopment of 6345 Cobourg Road with a multiunit residential building that has good built form and responds to the existing street context will promote complete, vibrant and walkable communities that are supported and encouraged by HRM's Regional Plan.

We are asking HRM Council to consider amending the existing Policies to allow for the redevelopment of the subject site and offer the following rationale:

1. The current policies and Land Use Bylaw requirements are out dated and too restrictive to allow for a successful and appropriate redevelopment option.
2. Coburg Road, in this area, has a mix of building types, scale and uses which provides for some diversity in infill projects while still being deemed compatible with the existing neighbourhood context. The site is located on a street with high pedestrian circulation, having transit access, and is close to services, employment and shopping. Located across the street from King's and Dalhousie Universities, the proposed multi-unit residential building will provide needed accommodation for users of these institutions and their families.
3. Height limitations are too restrictive and do not reflect existing heights of adjacent buildings. We believe that the existing policies should be more flexible putting emphasis on pedestrian friendly streetscapes, and placing importance on good built form and architectural design.

Development Proposal:

We are proposing to redevelop the subject site with a multiunit residential building that is of appropriate scale and responds to the existing urban context with good built form paying special attention to architectural guidelines and building articulation.

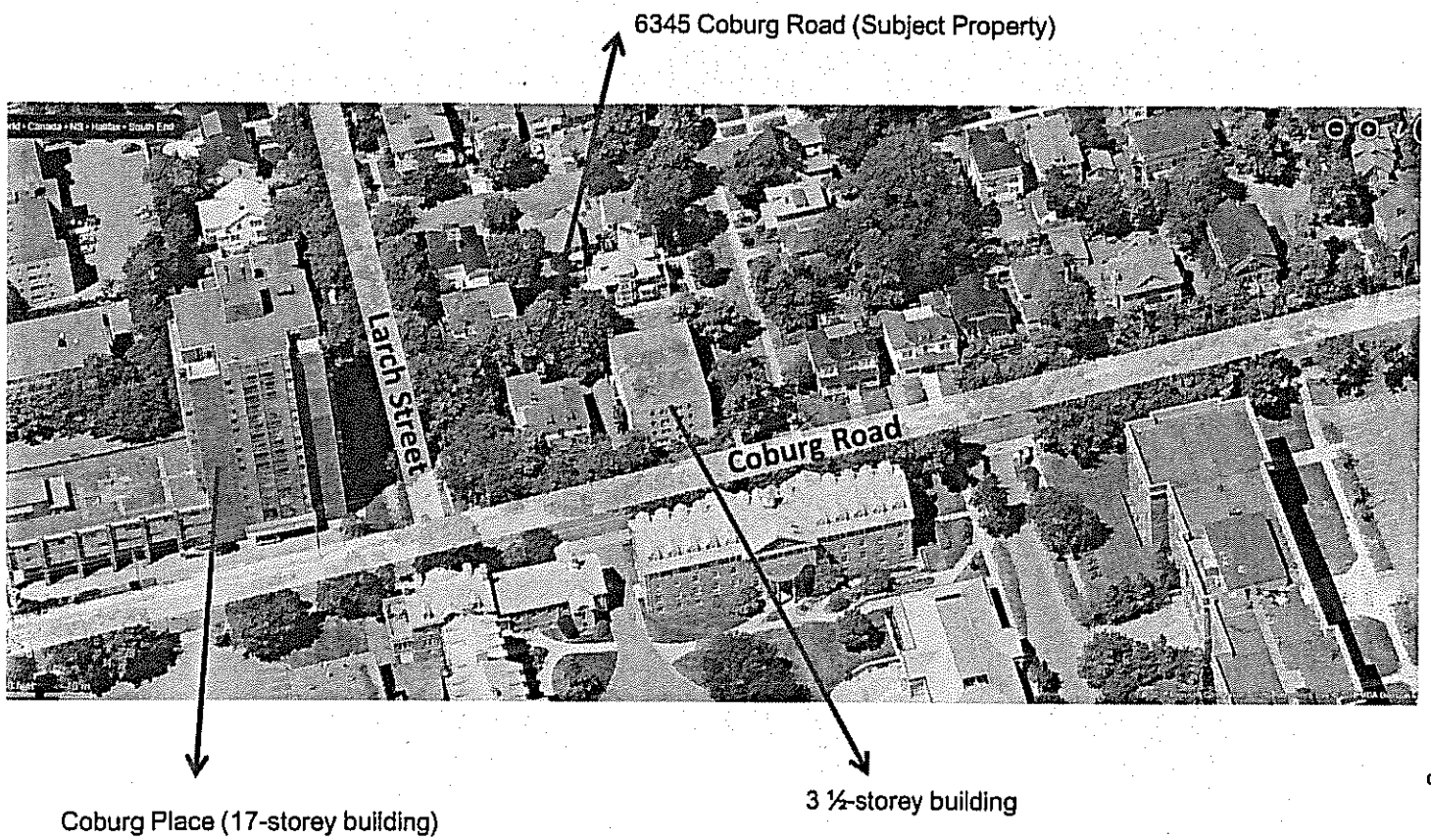
We envision a building that is 4 or 5 storeys facing Coburg Road which steps down to 3 stories in the back with setbacks from interior lot lines providing an appropriate transition to surrounding uses.

Based on our experience in similar projects and our collaborative approach of working with HRM Staff, Council and public, we are confident that through this planning process we are able to present a very good redevelopment solution for this site that is based on sound planning and design principles, and we ask Staff and Council to provide us with the opportunity to do so.

Yours truly,

Original Signed

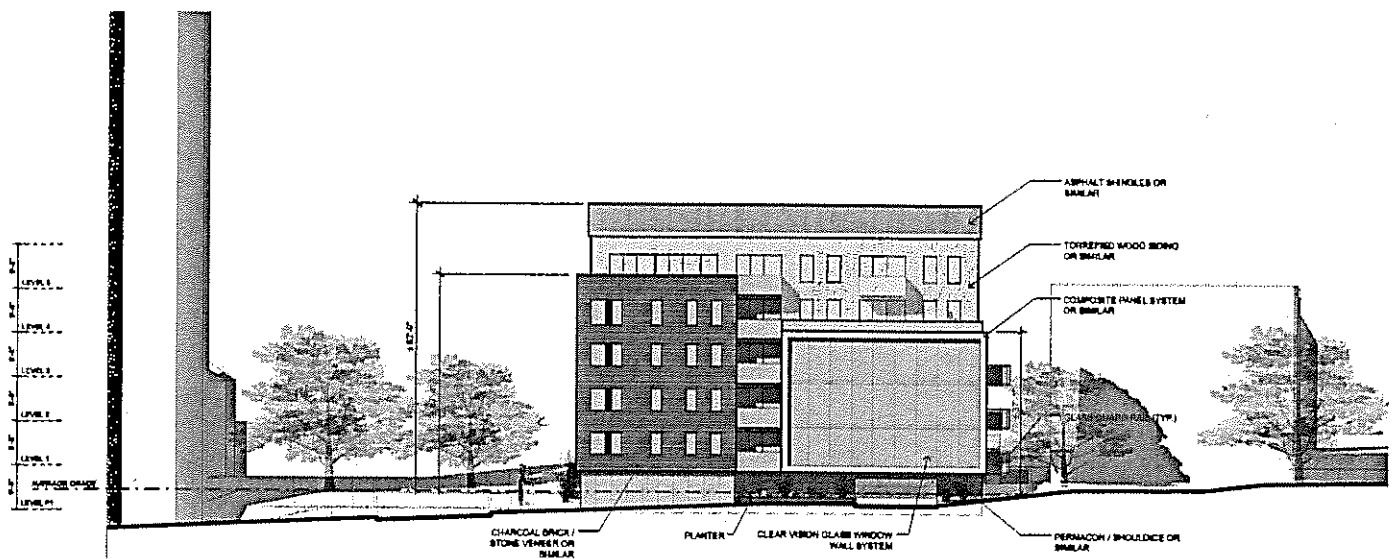
Cesar Saleh, P.Eng.
VP Planning and Design
W. M. Fares Group



Attachment B – Aerial View along Coburg Road

Attachment C –Street View along Coburg Road





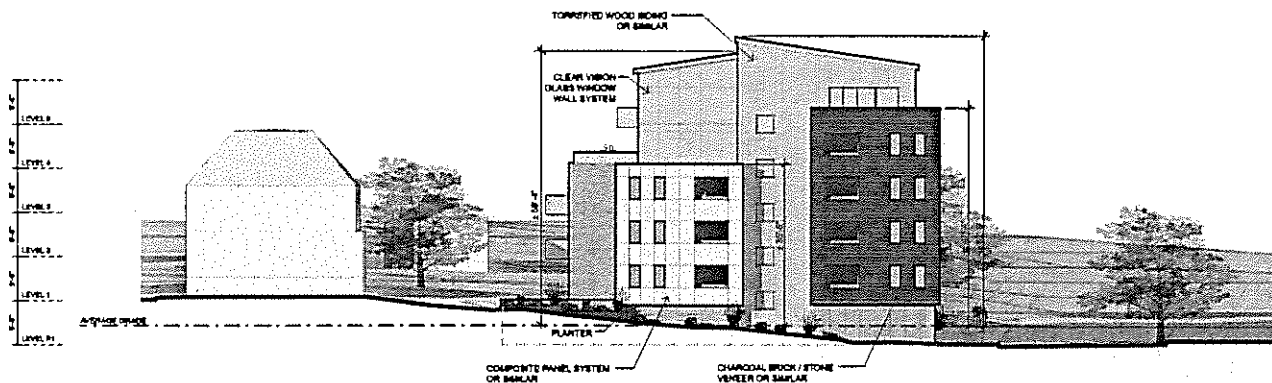
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
8345 COBURG ROAD HALIFAX, NS

SOUTH ELEVATION
COBURG ROAD

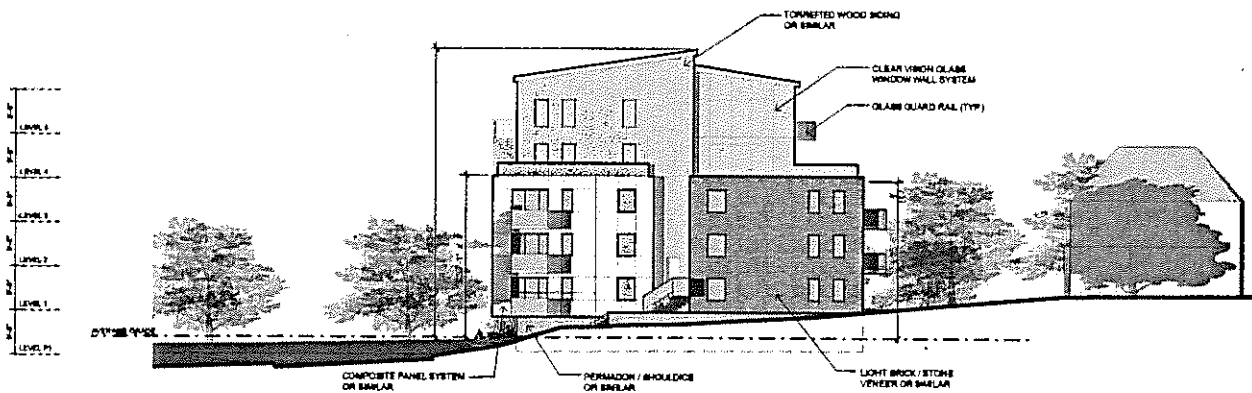
Project No.: 2015.05
Scale: 1" = 20'-0"
Date: 05 OCT 2015

WM FARES
GROUP

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PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING 6346 COBURG ROAD HALIFAX, NS	WEST ELEVATION LARCH STREET	Project No.: 2015 05 Scale: 1" = 20'-0" Date: 05 OCT 2015	WM FARES GROUP	A6
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PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

6345 COBURG ROAD HALIFAX, NS

EAST ELEVATION

LARCH STREET

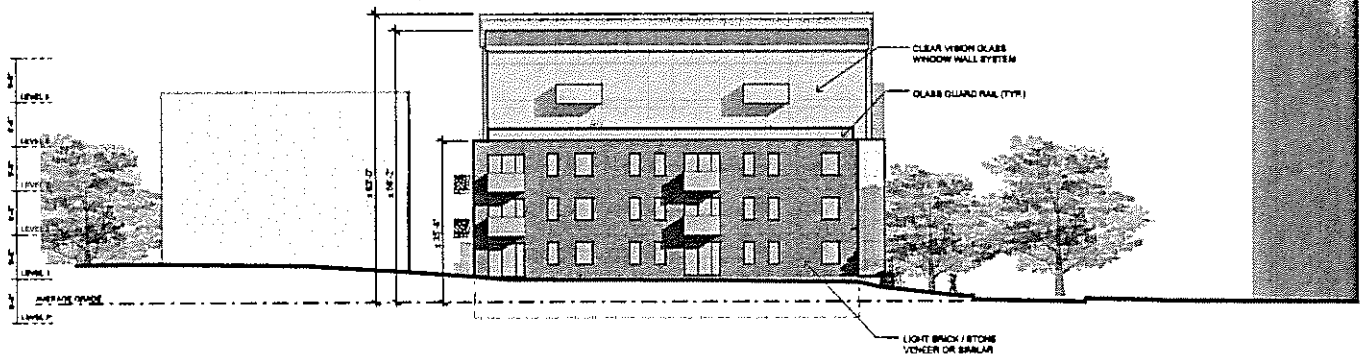
Project No.: 2015.05

Scale: 1" = 20'-0"

Date: 05 OCT 2015

WM FARES
GROUP

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<p>PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING</p> <p>5345 COBURG ROAD HALIFAX, NS</p>	<p>NORTH ELEVATION</p>	<p>Project No.: 2015.05</p> <p>Scale: 1" = 20'-0"</p> <p>Date: 05 OCT 2015</p>	<p>WM FARES GROUP</p>	<p>A8</p>
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PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
6345 COBURN ROAD, HALIFAX, NS

VIEW 1
PERSPECTIVE FACING NORTH

Project No.: 2015.05
Scale: NTS:
Date: 05 OCT 2018

WM FARES
GROUP

A9



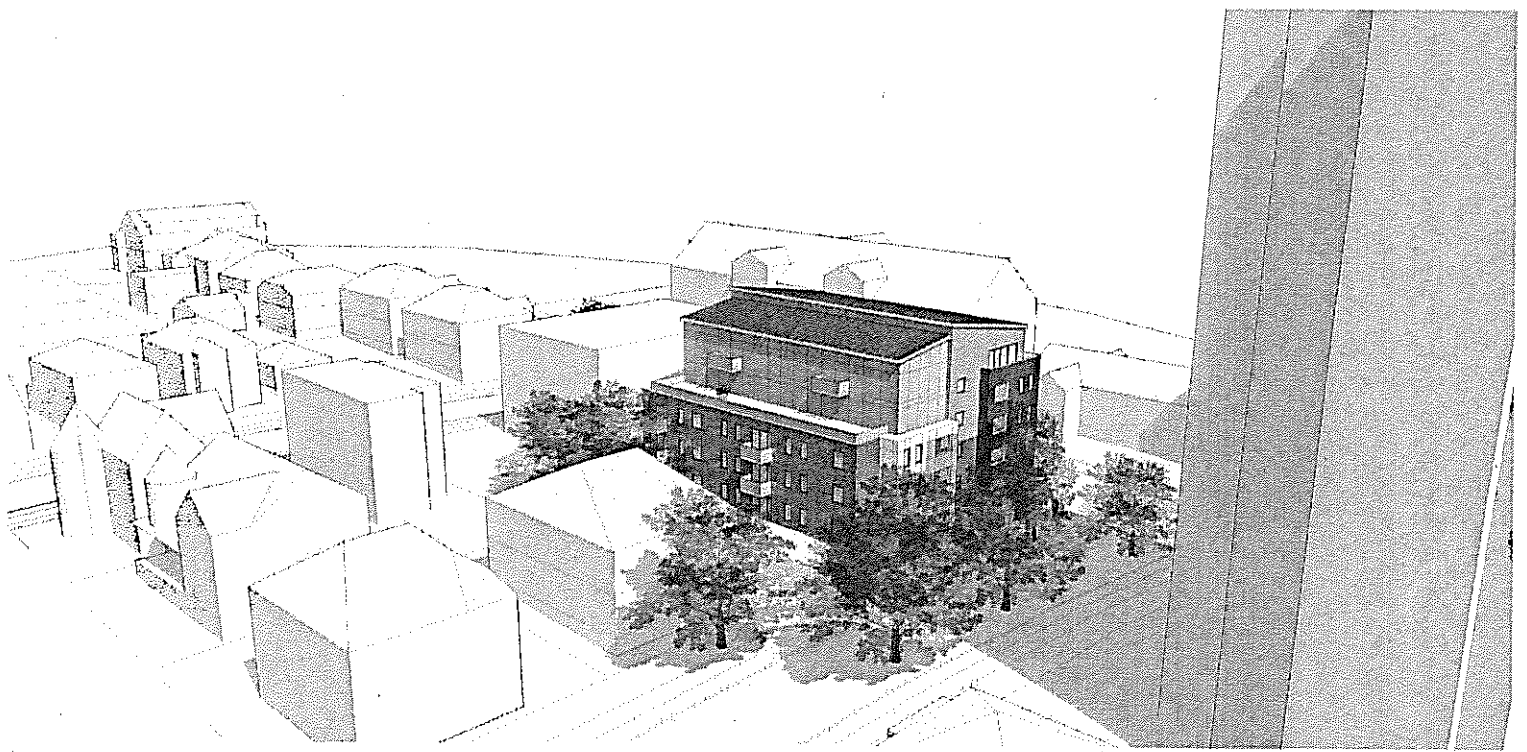
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
6345 COBURG ROAD, HALIFAX, NS

VIEW 2
COBURG PERSPECTIVE (FACING NORTH)

Project No.: 2015.05
Scale: NTS:
Date: 05 OCT 2015

WM FARES
GROUP

A10



PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

6345 COBURG ROAD, HALIFAX, NS

VIEW 3

PERSPECTIVE FACING EAST

Project No.: 2015.05

Scale: NTS:

Date: 05 OCT 2015

WM FARES
GROUP

A11



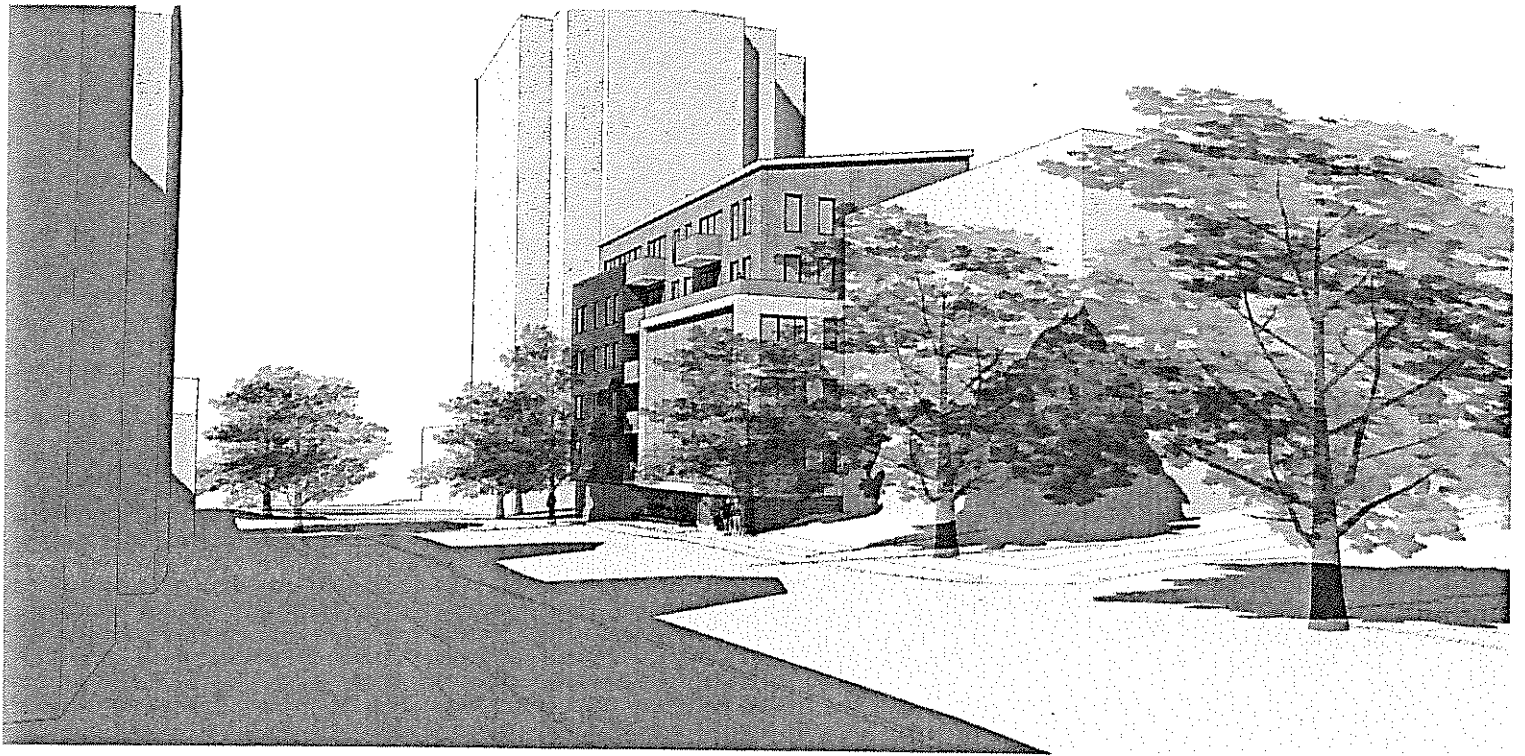
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
6345 COBURG ROAD, HALIFAX, NS

VIEW 4
LARCH PERSPECTIVE (FACING EAST)

Project No.: 2015.05
Scale: NTS:
Date: 05 OCT 2015

WM FARES
GROUP

A12



PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
6348 COBURG ROAD, HALIFAX, NS

VIEW 5
COBURG PERSPECTIVE (FACING WEST)

Project No.: 2015.05
Scale: NTS:
Date: 05 OCT 2015

WM FARES
GROUP

A13



DISTRICTS 7 & 8 PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
December 3, 2015

PRESENT: Mr. Brenden Sommerhalder, Chair
Ms. Katherine Kitching, Vice Chair
Mr. Michael Bradfield
Ms. Sunday Miller
Mr. Grant Cooke
Mr. Adam Hayter
Councillor Waye Mason
Councillor Jennifer Watts

REGRETS: Ms. Sarah MacDonald
Mr. Joe Metlege

STAFF: Ms. Jillian MacLellan, Planner
Mr. Andrew Reid, Legislative Assistant

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 PAC are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/D78PAC/151203d78pac-agenda.php>

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m., and adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Goldberg Computer Science Building (CIBC Auditorium), 6050 University Avenue, Halifax, NS

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

2.1 Case 19858 - Application by W.M. Fares Group, for the lands of 6345 Coburg Road, to amend the Municipal Planning Strategy for Halifax and Land Use By-law for Halifax Peninsula to develop a multiple-unit residential building through a development agreement.

Ms. Jillian MacLellan, Planner, presented Case 19858. She described the site context as located within the Halifax Peninsula area, its designation medium density residential and the zoning as R-2. She stated that the site was most recently used as a student residence and for chaplain services. She highlighted a number of design guidelines proposed by the applicant during the time of initiation, which included a 4-5 storey building stepping down to 3 stories on Larch Street and appropriate setbacks from neighbouring properties. Ms. MacLellan described the proposed building as a 6 storey building, 62 ft in height, with enclosed parking on the first level. She clarified that the height precinct of the site was 35 ft. She noted that the vehicular and residential access was proposed off Coburg Road, and there would be a 10 ft setback from the neighbouring multiunit dwelling to the east. She also noted that the proposed building would step down to 3 storeys north to Larch Street and transition with a 15 ft setback. She requested feedback regarding the proposed use, the overall design, the proposed height, and relation of the proposal to neighbouring properties, what features might be retained on the property, what may be more appropriate in place of the proposal, and what qualities and characteristics of the area staff should be aware of. Ms. MacLellan described the planning application process, noting that the purpose of the meeting was for information sharing and that no decisions had yet been made.

Mr. Jacob JeBailey, Architect, WM Fares, described the proposal. He noted the 89.5% site coverage, 19 below grade parking stalls, 28 residential units, the proposed building's pitched roof, and 15 foot setback towards Larch Street. He highlighted significant grade changes with the site. Mr. JeBailey described the proposed building's mixture of units. He also described the materials of the proposed building as high quality glass, cedar shake cladding, wood cladding for the taller portion, and composite panels for the 3 storey level and light grey brick.

The Chair outlined ground rules for speaking. He opened the floor to comments from the public.

Ms. Cathy Coady, resident of the South End, stated concern that there were many single family dwellings in proximity to the proposed development. She requested the current appearance of the property be maintained. She stated concern for the lot coverage in terms of eliminating greenspace and the intrusion of balconies and the combined effect on abutting neighbours. She questioned why the proposal was being considered where the municipality had refused smaller applications in the neighbourhood.

Mr. Blair Miller, resident of the South End, stated that the presentations highlighted large multiunit buildings but did not pay attention to the existing fabric of single family units. He echoed the previous speaker's comments regarding the eligibility of the application in view of smaller additions or accessory uses being refused in the area. He requested that the neighbourhood be brought back into a single family fabric habitable for families. Mr. Miller requested that a dwelling be built that complemented single unit dwellings.

Regarding the eligibility of the proposal, Ms. MacLellan responded that the applicant's rationale for development was its location between properties of a high density residential zone. She also stated that the property's previous ownership was the Catholic Archdiocese and that the applicant was interested in

exploring a use beyond the R-2 zone. She stated that this was the context in which the application was initiated by Regional Council and the meeting was to gather feedback on whether it would be acceptable to change the use of the zone.

Mr. Bruce Tinkham, resident of Larch St, questioned the ownership of the property; would the ownership be subject to the approval of the application; was the Municipality aware of traffic concerns in terms of speeding and would this be considered; was the same zoning or designation set in place during the time of the other multiunit buildings mentioned; would the proposal provide rentals or condominiums; and, would parking provisions be consistent with other parking needs in the area and with Municipal policy. He echoed the previous speakers' concerns regarding the increase in density. He also questioned the target date of development and he questioned if the condominium to the east could be purchased by the applicant to increase the size of the development. Mr. Tinkham also stated concern for the possible use of the proposal as executive suite short term rentals.

Ms. MacLellan responded that there was new ownership on the property. She stated that a traffic impact statement was provided as part of the application and would be considered closely and that staff would consider traffic mitigation. Ms. MacLellan stated that the multiunit buildings were constructed before the current zoning regulations and secondary plan came into effect. She stated that the parking requirements were slightly less than what the Land Use Bylaw requires and staff was currently examining how requirements could be revised. Ms. MacLellan responded regarding the target date that a planning strategy amendment usually required one year. Ms. MacLellan highlighted that condominium versus rental options could not be regulated in the Bylaw. Regarding use of the rentals, Ms. MacLellan clarified that the proposal was not confirmed to be used as executive suites.

Mr. Cesar Saleh responded that WM Fares does not own the property but are acting on behalf of the applicant. He stated there was no intention to accumulate nearby properties and only those indicated in the presentation would be considered by Council. Regarding density, Mr. Saleh stated that it would be 63 people from 28 units. Regarding rentals versus condominiums he stated that they could not be determined at this time. He stated that if approved in the summer of 2016, construction would begin shortly thereafter, with a usual duration of 14 months. Mr. JeBailey highlighted that the building would be of high quality and this would determine the target audience.

Mr. Christian Curran, resident of the South End, stated there was no strategic plan for the neighbourhood and many of the concerns were much larger than the site. He echoed concerns regarding traffic. He stated that there were many properties along Jubilee Street which could accommodate a property of this size and he stated concern for the setting of precedent and the lack of vision over the development of the corridors. He stated that the appeal of the neighbourhood was retention of the single unit fabric. He highlighted that the rationale for higher density on the peninsula was not sufficient for this application. He stated concern against planning on a case by case basis.

Ms. MacLellan responded that the Regional Centre plan was currently being worked on; however, site specific amendments were being permitted in the meantime. Regarding precedent, she stated that each applicant requesting a plan amendment would need to demonstrate that circumstances had changed since the Municipal Planning Strategy came into effect and that this would be subject to staff's analysis.

Mr. Steve Dolan, of Larch Street, noted changes to the neighbourhood over the past 15 years. He stated concern that the application did not fit the current bylaw in place and voiced opposition to its approval. Mr. Dolan noted concerns for traffic on Coburg Road and questioned if there were any larger traffic plans for Coburg Road. Mr. Dolan stated concern for current shortcutting on Larch Street as a consequence of development. He requested the square footage per unit be listed. He questioned the square footage of the current building on the site. Mr. Dolan stated concern that there was no comparison between the current use and proposed. He stated concern for the rental market in terms of the increase in vacancy rates. He also stated concern that the current property owners were not present.

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Regarding traffic, Ms. MacLellan stated she was not aware of any current plans for traffic improvements. She also confirmed that a vacancy rates assessment was not currently held by the Municipality for the area.

Mr. JeBailey responded that the unit size varies from 800 sq ft. to 11,000 sq.ft. He noted an error in the presentation, stating that the lot coverage was 65% and not 89%. Ms. MacLellan added that the definition of coverage was anything above ground.

Mr. John Carmichael, resident of the South End, stated that the footprint was too large for the site. He requested that the greenspace on corner of the site remain. He questioned if a smaller building had been proposed for the site or was there a possibility. Ms. MacLellan responded that this was the only proposal received to date.

Mr. Neil Ritchie, of the South End, stated concern for loss of the greenspace on the site. He also stated concern for the overall density in the neighbourhood resulting in noise and disturbance. He highlighted the length of time change has been promised to the district via the Centre Plan. He stated concern that there was an absence of an overall plan to govern the neighbourhood.

Mr. Bill Oland, resident of Larch Street, echoed the previous speakers' concerns. He also stated concern for the degradation of property on the peninsula, stating that a change in the norm for property upkeep has resulted in the loss in quality of life for those in the area. He stated that landlords were not held to the same standard as private property owners. He also stated concern for transportation corridors such as Coburg Road and Chebucto Road because of the narrowness of the roads. Mr. Oland stated if pedestrian flow could not be improved, the situation would worsen. He stated that the parking entrance on Coburg Road may be a dangerous location, as it would cause vehicles to slow down and make a turn into a sloped entrance.

Ms. Maida Murray, resident of South End, stated concern for the traffic conditions on Coburg Road and that the proposal would affect transit service due to traffic entering the proposed development, the resulting in a loss of greenspace, and the limited setback. She also stated concern for a precedent being set resulting in disruption of neighbourhoods' character.

Mr. Ross Haynes, resident of the South End, stated concern for traffic problems. He stated that the building form was inappropriate for the area. Mr. Hanes stated concern for the possibility that the applicant would conduct short term leases. He suggested that the proposal be turned down as it was incompatible with the residential community. Mr. Hanes stated concern for degradation resulting in destruction and construction of buildings not consistent with the neighbourhood. He stated that more owner-occupied dwellings conforming to the existing bylaw were desired for the area.

Ms. Coady questioned if an environmental impact study had been created for the site. She voiced concern for potential wind tunnels, shadows, and waste collection. Ms. MacLellan responded that a wind or shadow study had not been considered for the proposal as this was not requested below buildings of a 10 storey range.

Mr. Curran stated that parking garage should be on Coburg Road as currently proposed and not Larch Street. In terms of design, he voiced approval for different kinds of materials but stated opposition to the peaked roof. He questioned if there was an alternative to create a barrier from the neighbourhood to the north.

Ms. Catherine Haynes, of the South End, noted regarding the meeting process that comments on the design were incongruous as the overall acceptability of the proposal was under question. Ms. Hanes stated that the discussion should be around whether all multiple unit dwellings were appropriate for the area.

Ms. MacLellan responded that since initiation, staff would be looking for feedback on the appropriateness of the proposal. She encouraged further comments to be forwarded to her.

Mr. Dolan cited examples of retrofitted properties on Coburg used as professional buildings in terms of their quality. He stated these developments were made possible though they had fewer units. He questioned the sensibility of allowing the proposal to proceed.

Mr. Tinkham suggested that the possibility the proposal would be for short term rentals was of extreme significance. He suggested that any property approved on the site should be of high quality and for long term use.

Mr. David Gardner, resident of the area, stated concern for the proximity of the proposal to the abutting condominium. He questioned the current setback. He stated concern for the lack of greenspace fronting Coburg Road. Mr. Gardner commented that the design did not look like other dwellings in the neighbourhood. He noted the combination of different materials was without precedent in the area.

Ms. MacLellan responded that the applicant was proposing a 10 ft setback from the abutting condominium to the east, but the balconies extended into this setback. She stated that the Land Use Bylaw requirements for an R3 zone would be a minimum setback of 10 feet, subject to angle controls. She stated underground uses such as garages were not restricted through the Bylaw.

Mr. Haynes stated concern for the proposal blocking light from the abutting condominium. He commented that short term rentals or rentals of any kind were not desired in the neighbourhood.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Andrew Reid
Legislative Assistant