

DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
MINUTES

August 11, 2011

PRESENT: Mr. Alan Parish, Chair
Mr. Terry Smith-Lamothe, Vice Chair
Ms. Anne Sinclair
Mr. Roy McBride
Mr. William Hyde
Mr. Ramzi Kawar
Mr. Cesar Saleh
Mr. Jeff Pinhey

REGRETS: Ms. Sue Sirrs
Ms. Suzanne Saul
Mr. Nick Pryce

STAFF: Ms. Kelley Denty, Supervisor, Planning Applications
Mr. Richard Harvey, HRM Planner
Mr. Luc Ouellet, HRM Planner
Ms. Sherrill Murphy, Deputy Clerk
Ms. Sarah Pellerine, Legislative Support

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in Halifax Hall, 2nd Floor, City Hall.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – July 14, 2011

It was noted that the date of the minutes was July 14 rather than June 14.

MOVED by Mr. Kawar, seconded by Mr. McBride that the minutes of July 14, 2011 be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS.

The chair proposed changes to the order of the agenda as follows:

- 7.2 Case 17136, Substantive Site Plan Approval – Central Library
- 7.1 Case 16466: First Annual Review – Amendments to the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law (Phase 1 of 2)
 - i) Correspondence dated August 4, 2011 from Mr. Phil Pacey, Chair HRM Committee, Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia
- 7.3 Memorandum – Case 17070, Pre-application, TD Bank Building Expansion (Barrington/George/Granville Streets)

MOVED by Mr. Hyde, seconded by Mr. Saleh that the Order of Business be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERED BUSINESS – NONE

6. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

The Committee held a brief discussion around accepting the letter submitted August 4, 2011 by Mr. Pacey, as well as hearing a presentation.

MOVED by Mr. Kawar, seconded by Mr. Hyde that the letter submitted by Mr. Pacey dated August 4, 2011 be accepted and that Mr. Pacey be permitted to give a brief presentation. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

7.2 Case 17136: Substantive Site Plan Approval – Central Library

A staff report dated July 28, 2011 was before the Committee

Mr. Richard Harvey, HRM Planner, gave a brief presentation on the proposal.

The Committee entered into a discussion on the application and the members decided to review Attachment D – Design Manual Checklist as a means to identify/discuss concerns with the proposal.

2.3 Precinct 3 – Spring Garden Road Area

2.3c – The committee identified no issues with this section.

2.3d – There was discussion around the parking lot remaining in use in while development was ongoing. It was noted that if the site plan approval is granted, the parking will remain as parking for Dalhousie university and not for general public use.

2.3e – The sidewalks will be replaced with the only foreseeable issue being along the back corner of the building on the Queen Street side, where there is only a 6 foot barrier free entry way.

2.3f – Staff noted that this proposal complies with the Public Lands Plan. The development will provide a new public space along Queen Street with the 1,300 square foot south plaza being the start of a 2,000 square meter park. The remaining 700 square feet is to be completed in phase two.

3.1 The Streetwall

3.1.3 – The building is currently complying with the land use by-law and does not require an additional step back.

3.2.1 Design of the Streetwall

3.2.1a – The building will be creating its own streetscape.

3.2.1b – The requirement is that the building occupy 80% of the street front and currently the building is occupying about 50%. This is one of the variances which will be considered later in the meeting.

3.2.1c – The building is higher than the width of the road making the ratio larger than 1:1. The proposed building set back brings the proposal into compliance with the regulations.

3.3 Building Design

3.3.1b – The building is of high quality architecture but does not meet with the downtown tradition. There are key elements submitted which adhere to the current Downtown

context such as vast open space, however, the building does not meet with the context of the current streetscape.

3.3.3 Entrances

3.3.3a – Concerns were expressed that the entrance to the building was not highlighted and would not be visible from a distance. The architect for the proposal addressed this concern and noted the landscaping, difference in the pavement and the clear glass all account for the “entrance” to the building. It is unlikely that the public will not know where the entrance is located even though the actual doors are small.

MOVED by Mr. Smith-Lamothe that the entry way off the north plaza be emphasized to indicate it is an entrance in accordance with the Design Guidelines.

There being no seconder to the motion, the MOTION WAS LOST

3.3.4 Roof Line and Roofscapes

3.3.4c - There will be landscaping on the lower roofs while on the upper roof the landscaping will consist of pavers. The architect for the proposal explained that because the building will be using the rain water collected for basic water functions in the building, the water must be clean and vegetation free. The architect also noted that the pavers will be sunk down so that you will not be able to see them from Citadel Hill.

MOVED by Mr. Smith-Lamothe, seconded by Mr. Pinhey that the pavers located on the top roof have a high albedo to meet with LEED standards and to mitigate the impact of heat. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3.4.2 Corner Sites

3.4.2.c – The Committee identified no issues with this section.

3.4.2d – The Committee identified no issues with this section.

3.4.3 Civic Buildings

3.4.3g – Concern was expressed regarding way finding signage with the architect noting that work on the signage on the main portion of the building along the Queen Street side as well as smaller signage within the landscaping is ongoing. Approval of the signage for the building is within the Development Officers authority.

MOVED by Mr. Smith-Lamothe, seconded by Mr. Hyde that the signage eventually proposed to the Development Officer also emphasize the entry way. MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.

3.5.1 Vehicular Access, Circulation, Loading and Utilities

3.5.1c –The loading dock and garbage is located as noted because where it is currently located is the only viable option.

3.5.1d – The architect explained that there will be vegetation growing up the wall to cover the wall and a decorative grill will be concealing the ventilation.

3.5.2 Parking Structures

There will be underground parking which will be for the general public's use, as well as, staff and library users.

3.5.3 Surface Parking

The only surface parking located on the property will be that of Dalhousie University.

3.5.4 Lighting

There is a lighting plan proposed that will highlight the north and south plazas and the building itself will provide lighting due to the clear glass and plans to light part of the building at night.

3.5.5 Signs

The Committee identified no issues with this section.

The Committee discussed the issues around the variance requests:

Maximum post-bonus height variance;
Projections over lower portions of the building; and
Minimum street wall width requirements

In response to concerns with the height variance, it was noted that the small amount of height variance will not affect the amount of sunlight on the public space, nor will it affect the level of wind or public comfort.

In response to a question, staff explained that the post-bonus calculation is achieved by multiplying the actual floor area by the cost per square meter of the building arriving at a cash value. This cash value must be provided by way of public benefit to qualify for the bonus variance. Staff indicated that the proposal provides public benefit beyond the cash value.

MOVED by Mr. Saleh, seconded by Mr. McBride that the Design Review Committee approve the qualitative elements of the substantive site plan approval application for the Central Library, including the variances being sought, as shown on the plans identified as Attachment A of the July 28, 2011 staff report with the condition that material used on the uppermost roof be high albedo to mitigate the heat impact. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

MOVED by Mr. Saleh, seconded by Mr. Pinhey that the Design Review Committee recommend that the Development Officer accept open space, in the form of the north and south plazas as shown on the plans identified as Attachment A, as a public benefit, thereby allowing the proposed building to exceed the maximum pre-bonus height identified on Map 4 of the Downtown Halifax Land Use By-law. MOTION PUT AND PASSED

7.1 Case 16466: First Annual Review – Amendments to the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law (Phase 1 of 2) i) Correspondence dated August 4, 2011 from Mr. Phil Pacey, Chair, HRM Committee, Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia

Mr. Pacey gave a brief presentation to the Committee, based on his letter submitted August 4, 2011, regarding two issues in the proposed changes to HRM by Design, Landscaping and Non-Conforming Structures. Mr. Pacey discussed concerns on how these could affect the Heritage buildings located within HRM.

Mr. Luc Ouellet, HRM Planner gave a brief presentation to the Committee.

The Committee reviewed the Proposed Amendments to the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law as follows:

- 1) Drive- Thrus – Consideration of this matter was deferred to the next meeting. The Committee would like to have further discussion on Bank drop offs.
- 2) Recognizing the Undergrounding of Overhead Utilities as a Public Benefit – Approved.
- 3) Clyde Street Parking Lots – Consideration of this matter was deferred to the next meeting .
- 4) Non- Conforming Buildings – Consideration of this matter was deferred to the next meeting. The Committee would like to consider Mr. Pacey’s concerns in this regard.
- 5) “Average Grade” Definition – Approved.
- 6) “Flat Roof” Definition – Consideration of this matter was deferred to the next meeting.
- 7) “Multiple Unit Dwelling” Definition – Approved.
- 8) “Projecting Sign” Definition – Approved.
- 9) Composition of the Design Review Committee – Approved.
- 10) Public Consultation Component – Approved.
- 11) Requirement for Landscaped Open Spaces – Consideration of this matter was deferred to the next meeting.
- 12) Temporary Construction Uses – Consideration of this matter was deferred to the next meeting. The Committee requested that staff provide further information regarding this matter and the regional impact.

13) Maximum Streetwall Heights Map – Approved.

7.3 Memorandum – Case 17070, Pre –application, TD Bank Building Expansion (Barrington/George/Granville streets) – Deferred to next meeting.

Consideration of this matter was deferred to the next meeting due to time constraints.

8. ADDED ITEMS - None

9. NEXT MEETING DATE – September 8, 2011

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16PM.

Sarah Pellerine
Legislative Support