



**DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
May 12, 2016**

PRESENT: Steve Murphy, Chair
Rick Buhr, Vice-Chair
Cate Courtney
Anna Sampson
Jared Dalziel
Malcolm Pinto
Kevin Conley
Emmitt Kelly
John Crace
Rob LeBlanc

REGRETS: Matt Neville
Noel Fowler

STAFF: Luc Ouellet, Senior Planner
Ben Fairbanks, Solicitor
Sherryl Murphy, Deputy Clerk
Jane Crosby, 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 Board are available online:
<http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/drc/160512drc-agenda.php>*

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m., and the Committee adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

The Chair welcomed Mr. John Crace to the Committee.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None

It was noted that the minutes of April 14, 2016 would be approved at the next Committee meeting.

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

MOVED by Ms. Sampson, seconded by Ms. Courtney

THAT the agenda be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - None

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Chair and Ms. Sampson declared a conflict of interest for item 8.1.1. Mr. LeBlanc declared a conflict of interest for item 8.2.1

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – None

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence

- **Various correspondence regarding the Citadel view from the Library**
- **Editorials by Willow Group**

The Chair asked if there were any questions in relation to the correspondence.

The correspondence was noted as being received.

8. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

8.1 Staff

8.1.1 Case 20390: Substantive Site Plan Approval – Green Lantern Building, 1581-1589 Barrington Street, Halifax

The Chair and Ms. Sampson took a seat in the gallery due to a conflict of interest with the case. Mr. Buhr, Vice-Chair, assumed the duties of the Chair.

The following was before the Committee:

- A staff recommendation report dated April 25, 2016

Mr. Pinto arrived to the meeting at 4:07pm.

Mr. Buhr invited Mr. Luc Ouellet, Senior Planner to present Case 20390: Substantive Site Plan Approval – Green Lantern Building, 1581-1589 Barrington Street, Halifax.

Mr. Ouellet provided the Committee with a brief presentation. He noted the location of the building on Barrington Street and highlighted the damage to the building caused by Hurricane Juan that has not been properly repaired.

The rear side of the building, facing Granville Street, was presented and the additions to the building were noted. Mr. Ouellet indicated that the building is not in great condition and is in need of significant repair and restoration.

The proposal for the building was presented to the Committee and various renderings were shown. The redevelopment on the Barrington street side will include a basement level, a commercial space level and three residential lofts in the historic building.

The proposed redevelopment for the Granville street side was presented and Mr. Ouellet indicated that there would be three levels of underground parking included in this portion of the building. He added that this parking area would be accessible through the Discovery Centre Building site.

Mr. Ouellet presented the four requested variances for the redevelopment which include:

- Street wall height variance on Granville Street
- Upper storey street wall step back variance on the Granville Street façade
- Maximum height variance for the Granville portion of the site
- Maximum height variance for architectural features

The requested variances were presented on several renderings and elevation views of the site.

Mr. Ouellet expressed concern regarding the size of the mechanical grille, which was noted as being roughly twenty feet wide. He indicated staff does not believe it needs to be that large. He added that, at present there is a plan to have parking spaces behind the grille. He explained that staff is recommending that those parking spaces be moved and that the grille be cut down to roughly ten feet.

Mr. Ouellet shared that the Heritage Advisory Committee has considered this application on March 23rd, 2016 and they are recommending to Halifax Regional Council that the substantial alteration is approved without conditions. He then outlined staff's recommendation for this application.

Mr. Ouellet concluded his portion of the presentation and turned the meeting back over to Mr. Buhr. Mr. Buhr thanked Mr. Ouellet and opened the floor for questions and comments from the Committee.

Mr. Conley commented that the Committee is often presented renderings of projects that do not properly capture what will surround them once the project is complete. Mr. Buhr agreed with Mr. Conley and added that it would be beneficial to see additional context around the building.

Mr. Buhr asked about the mechanical grille and the details about how it will be handled if it is downsized. Mr. Pinto inquired whether it was an air intake or an air exhaust. Mr. Ouellet responded that it is an air exhaust. Mr. Pinto asked if it might be possible to take the air through the building on the right hand side. The applicant responded that it might be possible to accommodate that configuration; however it would have to be examined first by a mechanical engineer.

Mr. Buhr asked if there were any more questions for staff from the Committee and then opened the floor for a presentation from the applicant.

Mr. Kourosh Rad, Urban Planner with WSP provided a brief introduction to the project. He commented that the project has been a collaborative venture and has gone through several stages to bring the development that is being presented to the Committee. He noted the importance of keeping the heritage site for generations to come, and added that the development, to date, has received positive feedback from both HRM Staff and the Heritage Advisory Committee.

Ms. Abigail MacEachern, Senior Architect with Architecture49 Inc. introduced herself to the Committee and provided a historical background to the site and the building. She noted that the name "The Green Lantern" comes from a former tenant of the building.

Ms. MacEachern explained that the building hasn't been updated in quite some time and damage from Hurricane Juan has not been repaired. She indicated that the project will rehabilitate the façade, as well as the inside structure of the building bringing it back to its former grandeur. A historical image of the building's storefront was presented and Ms. MacEachern explained that the project would look to achieve a similar outcome. She added that the original storefronts did not have awnings.

Ms. MacEachern presented the redevelopment of the building to the Committee. She explained that, at present, the back portion of the building does not hold historical significance. The project will maintain the front portion of the building, including the floorplates, elevator shaft and the vaults. The back portion, facing Granville, would be removed and additional floors would be added to this side.

Ms. MacEachern presented several building views to the Committee and described some of the materials that would be used on the redevelopment and features of the site.

Ms. MacEachern explained that the mechanical louvres are at the initial stages of design and that a Mechanical Engineer would be able to detail the design. She noted that they hope the louvre can be made smaller; however they wanted to accommodate for it in their design.

The penthouse portion of the building was shown and Ms. MacEachern explained that the idea was to have it be reminiscent of a lantern. Various perspectives of the roof were shown, highlighting the rooftop patios for the residential tenants.

Ms. MacEachern concluded her portion of the presentation and welcomed Mr. Rad to the floor to present the variances being sought for the redevelopment.

Mr. Rad explained that Mr. Ouellet had explained the requested variances well. He added that the variances are quite minor in their nature and that the requested street wall heights would help maintain the character of the building. Mr. Rad concluded his presentation, thanking the Committee for the opportunity to present.

Mr. Buhr thanked Mr. Rad and Ms. MacEachern for their presentation and opened the floor to questions and comments from the Committee.

Mr. Kelly inquired about the timing of the project's construction noting its proximity to the Discovery Centre site, which will also be undergoing a redevelopment. The applicant responded that the construction of both projects would happen at similar times. Ms. MacEachern noted that it is important for the timelines to be similar for access to the site and for staging.

Mr. Buhr asked the applicant to speak to the material choices on the upper portions of the site and the roof. Ms. MacEachern responded that on the Granville facing side there would be a modern interpretation of terracotta or ceramic tile, or perhaps some sort of masonry. She indicated that the upper portions would use a similar material but in a larger format. The penthouse itself would be curtainwall with a copper-like material that wraps up and around. This copper-like material would also be used for the signage band on the Granville side.

Ms. MacEachern also provided clarification on the awnings on the Barrington Street side, noting that in historical photos, the building had no awnings. The commercial entrances were set back into the building providing protection and the redevelopment will reinstate that style of entrance for the Granville and Barrington Street sides. Mr. Conley commented that it might be nice to have awnings on the Granville side.

Mr. Crace commented on the materials noting that some of them seem slightly flat. Ms. MacEachern indicated that based on historical photos that show the original materials, a flat material was used; perhaps a metal, or tile. The intent is to have a modern interpretation of the original material and she is hopeful that when the current signage is removed there will be examples of the original façade.

Mr. Pinto asked if the building was wood construction. Ms. MacEachern responded that it is not, however there are some wooden floor plates and some cast iron columns. She added that they are looking at putting in new columns and using the existing floor plates as form work for the new floors. Mr. Pinto asked what parts of the building would be kept. Mr. Rad and Ms. MacEachern answered that the elevator shaft and the safe would be kept but restored. Ms. MacEachern added that the elevator shaft will not be used for the new elevator but would be incorporated into entrances to some of the residential units. Clarifying the form of the addition on the Granville Street side, Ms. MacEachern indicated that the addition would be three storeys lower than the Barrington Street side.

Mr. Conley inquired about the differences in the vertical and horizontal banding on the windows. Ms. MacEachern responded that horizontal banding was used to de-emphasize the height of the building. She also noted that the building was originally a furniture warehouse and the new residential lofts would have an industrial style to them.

Mr. LeBlanc commented that for many applications signage is an afterthought. He added that signage can make or break some of these buildings. He expressed that it would be beneficial to see some of the signage at this stage of the application, or how the signage would be handled.

Mr. Buhr thanked the applicant and asked whether the Committee had any further questions for staff and hearing none, he opened the floor to debate.

MOVED by Mr. Dalziel, seconded by Mr. Conley

THAT the Design Review Committee

- 1. Approve the qualitative elements of the substantive site plan approval application for the redevelopment of the Green Lantern Building, located at 1581-1589 Barrington Street, Halifax, as shown on Attachment A of the April 25, 2016 staff report with the conditions that the mechanical grille located at-grade on the Granville Street frontage be reduced by half its width, that associated parking spaces number 15 and 23 be removed from Plan Level P2 and Plan Level P1/LU, respectively, and that the ground floor commercial use be extended to occupy the space previously occupied by the two parking spaces;**
- 2. Approve the requested variances to the streetwall height, the upper storey streetwall step back, and the maximum height; and**
- 3. Accept the findings of the qualitative wind impact assessment.**

The Chair invited the Committee to share their comments and discuss the proposed staff recommendation.

The Committee briefly discussed the louvre. Mr. Pinto commented that bringing it through the other building might be beneficial and the option should be explored. Mr. Ouellet explained that staff is recommending a 50% reduction at minimum. It was noted that a Mechanical Engineer would ultimately decide how the louvre is handled but there is an intention to minimize the louvre.

Noting the desire of the Committee to address the size of the louvre but to also ensure the development proceeds, Mr. Buhr called for a Motion to amend the motion on the floor.

MOVED by Mr. Dalziel, seconded by Mr. Conley

THAT the motion be amended by adding after the words 'parking spaces', the words 'unless an enlarged mechanical grille is otherwise deemed to be required by a mechanical engineer; not to exceed what is proposed by the proponent in the original site plan application'.

The motion to amend was PUT AND PASSED.

The motion now reads:

THAT the Design Review Committee

- 1. Approve the qualitative elements of the substantive site plan approval application for the redevelopment of the Green Lantern Building, located at 1581-1589 Barrington Street, Halifax, as shown on Attachment A, with the conditions that the mechanical grille located at-grade on the Granville street frontage be reduced by half its width, that associated parking spaces number 15 and 23 be removed from Plan Level P2 and Plan Level p1/L0, respectively, and that the ground floor commercial use be extended to occupy the space previously occupied by the two parking spaces, unless an enlarged mechanical grille is otherwise deemed to be required by a mechanical engineer; not to exceed what is proposed by the proponent in the original site plan application.**
- 2. Approve the requested variances to the street wall height, the upper storey street wall step back, and the maximum height, as shown on Attachment D; and**
- 3. Accept the findings of the Qualitative Wind Impact Assessment as contained in Attachment E.**

The Committee briefly discussed the materials as no materials are definitively identified for this project. It was noted that more clarity on materials, would be beneficial at this stage of an application.

Mr. Buhr called for a vote on the Motion as amended.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Ms. Sampson and The Chair returned to their seat at the meeting from the gallery.

8.2 PRELIMINARY PRESENTATIONS

8.2.1 Pre-application Presentation – Queen's Marque – 1721-1735 Lower Water Street.

Mr. LeBlanc declared a conflict of interest and took a seat in the gallery.

The Chair invited Mr. Scott Armour McCrea, CEO of the Armour Group to present to the Committee. Mr. McCrea introduced himself and his team to the Committee. He provided a brief introduction to the

Queen's Marque project and presented a brief video highlighting the project and the notion of power of place.

Mr. McCrea explained how certain projects can transform the sense of a city, using the new public library as an example of that idea. He indicated that the goal of the Queen's Marque project is to build an iconic site. He added that site has a lot of history and the original purpose of the 5 acre site was quite important as a landing site for the city.

Mr. McCrea handed the presentation over to Mr. Brian MacKay-Lyons, Architect for the project. Mr. MacKay-Lyons presented the architecture of the mixed-use site to the Committee. He provided a brief overview of the history of the site. Several historical photos were presented and the pier buildings were highlighted as inspiration for the architecture with a mix of old and new tradition.

Mr. MacKay-Lyons expressed that the hope is to have this site be a modern "Historic Properties" and explained that the site would be porous. He elaborated on this idea, clarifying that there is a desire to have it completely accessible. He presented several site renderings to the Committee, highlighting that there are no back elevations to the site. It was noted that the portions of the building facing the harbour have a ship-like look to them. Mr. MacKay-Lyons explained that the most important element of the site is the amount of public open space. He added that two thirds of the 5 acre site is open public space.

Mr. MacKay-Lyons went on to explain several other features of the site. He indicated that the lower portion of the building would have a commercial or public use. The private residences would all be in the upper portion of the building. He highlighted the stairs leading into the water, the animated roofscapes and the artistic light structure at the harbour front portion of the site. He noted that the project is not a high-rise project and explained the "floating" concept of the site's architecture.

The intended materials for the site were briefly presented. The use of sandstone and copper were emphasized throughout the building. Mr. MacKay-Lyons added that the open space would be quite simple but that further details to that space have yet to be determined.

Mr. MacKay-Lyons concluded his portion of the presentation and Mr. McCrea provided the Committee with a few more details on the project.

Mr. McCrea explained that the project would be as locally sourced as possible and that the light structure would likely result from an Artist/Designer competition. He noted that the project is a partnership with Waterfront Development and that the Corporation will have custodianship over the entire public realm of the site. Mr. McCrea indicated that the project involves a lot of engineering work due to its proximity to the water and the underground parking. He estimates the cost for the project at 200 million dollars.

The Chair thanked Mr. McCrea and Mr. MacKay-Lyons for their presentation and opened the floor to questions and comments from the Committee.

Ms. Sampson commented that it was a pleasure to look at the renderings. She also appreciated the message of resiliency and the idea of using local sources. She inquired about the roof top terraces wondering if they would be public or private. Mr. MacKay-Lyons responded that they would be for the tenants of each particular space. Ms. Sampson expressed some concern with the street wall height on Lower Water Street, but appreciates the quality of the materials that they intend to use.

Mr. Crace commented that the site is remarkable and appreciates the work that has gone into the design. He noted the rough and tumble nature of the historic waterfront and felt as though that "roughness" might not be expressed in the site. He suggested that perhaps there is some missing interplay and there could be an opportunity to roughen up the materials slightly.

Mr. Buhr asked about LEED status for the building. Mr. McCrea replied that the project could be expected to be at a platinum level. The primary system would be sea-water with chill beam technology similar to the Nova Scotia Power/Emera building.

Mr. Buhr inquired about parking and servicing given the lack of back elevations. Mr. McCrea replied that it has been a challenge to design for those functions noting that it is all below grade. The parking will be accessed through the middle of the building on the Lower Water Street side. The parking is an engineering feat unlike anything in Nova Scotia. He added that the parking will be public and it will be a net surplus on the parking sites currently available on that space.

Mr. Buhr asked about the balconies on the residential units. Mr. MacKay-Lyons responded that there are no balconies on the about 50% residential units but explained that the windows will slide wide open allowing the living room to become the balcony. The other 50% of the units would have balconies. Mr. Buhr also asked for clarification on the cantilever. Mr. McCrea responded that the rendering makes it appear quite large but in reality it is not that dramatic.

Mr. Kelly asked about the amount of commercial space that would be available on the site. Mr. McCrea responded that the site is approximately 120,000 square feet of commercial space, 200,000 square feet of residential, and 45,000 square feet would be for other uses such as hotel and food and beverage.

Mr. Dalziel asked about the access to the waterfront and has some reservations as to how it would be accessed. He noted that it feels a bit private as it is currently designed. Mr. Buhr asked about timing of the project. Mr. McCrea responded that they would like to begin in the late Fall of 2016. He added that it will take almost three years to build.

It was noted that the project will be seeking six variances and two members of the project team briefly presented the variances to the Committee but noted that these would be explained in greater detail at future meetings.

The Chair asked if the Committee had any more comments or questions. Upon hearing none, he thanked Mr. McCrea and his team for their presentation.

- 9. IN CAMERA (IN PRIVATE) - None**
- 10. ADDED ITEMS – None**
- 11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – June 9th, 2016**
- 12. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:18pm.

Jane Crosby
Legislative Support

INFORMATION ITEMS - None