

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
PLANNING SERVICES - SACKVILLE OFFICE  
PUBLIC MEETING**

**CASE NO. 00808 - Height Provisions and Parking Requirements on Sackville Drive**

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**7:00 p.m.  
Monday, December 5, 2005  
Fenerty/Program Room, Acadia School**

**STAFF:** Thea Langille-Hanna, Planner  
Cara McFarlane, Administrative Support

**NWPAC**

**MEMBERS:** Walter Regan, North West Planning Advisory Committee  
George Murphy, North West Planning Advisory Committee  
Ann Merritt, North West Planning Advisory Committee  
Joel Matheson, North West Planning Advisory Committee  
Councillor Brad Johns, District 19

**OTHERS:** Councillor Bob Harvey, District 20

**MEMBERS OF  
THE PUBLIC:** Approximately 7

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The meeting commenced at approximately 7:03 p.m.

**1. Call to Order/Purpose of the Meeting - Joel Matheson**

Mr. Matheson introduced himself as the Chair of North West Planning Advisory Committee (NWPAC); Ann Merritt, NWPAC; George Murphy, NWPAC; Walter Regan, NWPAC; Thea Langille-Hanna, HRM Senior Planner; and Cara McFarlane, Administrative Support.

The purpose of the workshop is the result of a request by the Sackville Drive Business Association to the North West Community Council on May 26, 2005, to initiate a public process to examine height restrictions and parking requirements along Sackville Drive.

**2. Overview of Planning Process/Policies and Regulations/Request - Thea Langille-Hanna**

The Sackville Drive Secondary Plan guides the revitalization of Sackville Drive to a safe, well functioning, and driving retail destination. The plan is needed as the primary tool for addressing functional and visual problems. In May 2002, Regional Council adopted the Sackville Drive Secondary Planning Strategy (SPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB). The adoption of the document came after approximately 1 ½ to 2 years of work with an area advisory committee. Members of the committee came up with a vision for Sackville which was then implemented through the SPS and LUB.

A coloured copy of the zoning map for Sackville Drive and the surrounding areas that are within the SPS was shown on overhead. The red area, Beaver Bank/Sackville Drive intersection, is intended for Large Scale Commercial. It encourages existing development that is there now.

The blue area is the Downsview Complex which has become a major commercial node for Sackville. A specific zone was created to help accommodate that particular growth anticipated in that area.

The next area is referred to as the Acadia Village Centre. It was thought that at some point in time there may be some interest in developing the lands around the centre. If not, the lands should remain the same as today, but if land ownership did change, protection is in the document as to what future land uses could occur around the municipal building.

The next portion of the street runs basically from Riverside Drive to Pinehill. It is referred to as the Pedestrian/Retail Zone. There are smaller lots with smaller commercial business.

The next portion runs from Pinehill Drive through to Cobequid Road. This is referred to as the Pinehill/Cobequid Zone. This area has taken existing economic driven businesses (outdoor display courts) and the idea is to encourage this use in this area with the ability for enhancement. The existing used car lots were given the proper zoning but any future ones will have to go through a rezoning process to the Outdoor Display Court Zone. In this particular area, there is more of a variety of lot sizes and quite a range of commercial activity.

When the SPS was adopted, staff had indicated to Regional Council that a review would be necessary in order to address any inconsistencies, omissions and housekeeping matters. When creating a new document, there is always a possibility that things were missed and some issues may need to be reviewed at a later date. In March 2005, Regional Council approved amendments to Sackville Drive SPS and LUB. Those amendments primarily addressed any inconsistencies, omissions or housekeeping matters, but also included new height provisions for the area.

Prior to the adoption of the Sackville Drive SPS (May 2002), land use and development on Sackville Drive was regulated through the Sackville Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS). At that time, the Sackville MPS contained no restrictions on the maximum height of buildings within the C-3 (Commercial Corridor) Zone. Similar approach was taken when looking at the Sackville Drive SPS.

In late 2004, a development application was received for an 18 storey building which caused concern in the community and resulted in staff re-evaluating this issue. It was also discussed at a public information meeting which was held in January 2005. As a result of those concerns, the amendment package included some policy and land use by-law provisions that would limit height in buildings in the Sackville Drive SPS. This was intended to be an interim measure and to simply provide an opportunity so the issue could be explored.

Staff looked at the existing lot pattern and height of buildings along the street and the type of inquiries received over the past several years with questions in respect to height. As a result, looking at all the information received and the national building code, the recommendation that was implemented by Regional Council was to limit height for all main commercial buildings and multiple unit dwellings be a maximum of three storeys up to the maximum height of 35 feet at established grade. The other provision was for residential buildings, which would exclude multiple units, was also three storeys but a maximum height of 40 feet. There was also limit on height for all accessory buildings or structures to ensure they do not exceed the height of the main building.

The other issue that came up was due to a request of the Sackville Drive Business Association (SDBA). Staff has been asked to review parking requirements specific to the parking space requirements as they link to certain land uses. In this particular situation, staff would like for the community to have some input.

### **3. Breakout into Workshop Format**

The group broke up into two tables. There were two large maps of the Sackville Drive SPS, a flip chart to gather thoughts, a copy of the Sackville Drive LUB and SPS, and a copy of the parking space requirements for each table. The groups were asked to explore new height and parking requirements for Sackville Drive.

### **4. Presentation/Questions/Comments (See Attachment A for point-form discussion)**

John Murphy presented for the first group. In general, the height for most of Sackville Drive should be six storeys by right provided all other requirements are met. The Downsview and Large Scale Commercial area should probably be eight storeys. Anything beyond either one of those should be by development agreement only.

Parking and height are tied together as you need the parking to accommodate the size of the building; however, these requirements do have to be addressed. Parking requirements for a full serviced restaurant and residential uses were used as examples.

Ms. Langille-Hanna asked if there was some discussion behind the number of sites for six storeys. Mr. Murphy said there was a lot of discussion because there are a lot of areas where six storeys would be too much, but when the other requirements were included those concerns were eliminated.

Michelle Chamniss presented for the second group. In the Downsview area the height should be ten storeys. The building could go higher than ten storeys but only by development agreement as long as all other requirements are met. The rest of the area should be a maximum of seven storeys. It was suggested that a certain setback distance be established depending on the number of storeys the building will be so there will not be any shadowing on residential properties in behind the Sackville Drive commercial area.

There was some discussion about the need for a hotel/convention centre in the Downsview area.

Some concern was shown for lack of a buffer zone between Sackville Drive businesses and the residential areas directly behind Sackville Drive.

A discussion about apartment buildings had begun but not completed. It was discussed that apartment buildings should not have the same height provisions as commercial buildings. Ms. Chamniss said it was suggested that apartment buildings be a maximum of five storeys in height. A variety of commercial and residential uses would be nice.

Mr. Regan feels in the SC and PC sections the height should be limited to five storeys and a development agreement must be entered into for anything above that. In the LS section height should be maximum of eight storeys and anything above by development agreement only. Where possible, a step system of the buildings should be done, two storeys in front then the others set back. He would also like for by-right

development be closely looked at and controlled.

There are a lot of questions when it comes to the parking requirements on Sackville Drive.

The following are proposed changes to the parking requirements:

<b>SPACES</b>		
<b>Proposed Use</b>	<b>Space(s) Required</b>	<b>Measurement Type (all square footage based on gross floor area unless specified otherwise)</b>
Any dwelling except as specified below:	<del>1</del> <b>2</b>	Per each dwelling unit
• Multiple Unit Dwelling	<del>1.5</del> <b>1.1</b>	Per each dwelling unit
• Seniors or Active Living Multiple Unit Dwelling	1	Per each dwelling unit
Retail Stores, Service and Personal Service Shops:		
• exceeding 5,000 sq ft (464.5m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross floor area	<del>5.5</del> <b>4</b>	Per 1,000 sq ft (92.9m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area
• not exceeding 5,000 sq ft (464.5m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross floor area	<del>3.3</del> <b>3</b>	Per 1,000 sq ft (92.9m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area
Banks and Financial Institutions	<del>3.3</del> <b>3</b>	Per 1,000 sq ft (92.9m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area
Motels and Hotels	1	Per sleeping unit plus requirements for associated uses such as restaurants or other facilities contained therein
Office	<del>3.3</del> <b>3</b>	Per 1,000 sq ft (92.9m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area
Shopping Centres or other similar multiple tenant retail centres and buildings (i.e. Strip Malls)	<del>5.5</del> <b>4</b>	Per 1,000 sq ft (92.9m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area
Grocery Store		
• up to 10,000 sq ft	1	Per 200 sq ft (18.6m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area
• from 10,000 sq ft to 30,000 sq ft	1	Per 300 sq ft (27.9m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area
• greater than 30,000 sq ft	1	Per 400 sq ft (37.2m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area
Restaurants		

• Full Service	20 15	Per 1,000 sq ft (92.9m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area devoted to public use (NWCC-May26/05;E-May28/05)
• Drive Thru (NWCC-May26/05;E-May28/05)	27 15	Per 1,000 sq ft (92.9m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area devoted to public use (NWCC-May26/05;E-May28/05)
• Take Out - exceeding 300 sq ft (28m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross floor area	16 10	Per 1,000 sq ft (92.9m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area devoted to public use
• Take Out - not exceeding 300 sq ft (28m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross floor area	5	
Lounges, Taverns and Beverage Rooms	20 15	Per 1,000 sq ft (92.9m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor
Warehouses	2	Per 1,000 sq ft (92.9m <sup>2</sup> ) or 1 space per every 4 employees - whichever is greater
Self-Storage Units		<b>1 space for each employee if full service office is located on the lot and 1 space for every 100 storage units. Driveway aisles shall be a minimum of 20 feet where access to storage units is only on one side of the aisle, and 24 feet where access to storage units is on both sides of the aisle. (NWCC-May26/05;E-May28/05)</b>
Automotive Repair	1	Per 400 sq ft (37.2m <sup>2</sup> ) of office/reception area and 1 space per service bay
Automotive Sales and Outdoor Display Courts	1 (groups thought this would best be answered by Kevin Kingston)	Per 3,000 sq ft (37.2m <sup>2</sup> ) of outdoor sales area, and Per 400 sq ft (37.2m <sup>2</sup> ) of indoor sales and office area
Theaters	1	Per 5 seats
Institutional Uses except as specified below:		the greater of 1 space per 4 seats, where there are fixed seats and 1 space per 100 square feet (9.3m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross floor area where there are no fixed seats, or 1 space per 4 persons which can be accommodated at any one time
• Government Offices	4.5 (the groups that this should be eliminated)	Per 1,000 sq ft (92.9m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor
• Schools		
- Elementary School	11 10	Each employee and per classroom
- Junior High School	12.5 10	Each employee and per classroom
- High School	16 15	Each employee and per classroom
- Other	3	Per classroom
Hospital, Multiple Service Centre	2	Per bed

Medical, Dental, or any Health Practitioner (including Veterinary Clinic)	5	Per consulting room
Day Care Facilities	1.5	Per 400 sq ft (37.2m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area
Funeral Homes	15	
Library, Museum or similar use	1	Per 400 sq ft (37.2m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area
Any uses not specified above	<del>3.3</del> 3	Per 1,000 sq ft (92.9m <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable floor area

<b>MOBILITY DISABLED SPACES</b>		
<b>Proposed Use</b>	<b>Space(s) Required</b>	<b>Measurement Type (all square footage based on gross floor area unless specified otherwise)</b>
Medical Clinics of any health practitioner	1	Reserved parking spaces for the mobility disabled per 5-15 parking spaces required 1 additional parking space for each additional 15 required space or part thereof to a maximum of 10 spaces
Homes for the Aged/Nursing Homes	1	Reserved parking spaces for the mobility disabled per 20 beds to a maximum of 10 spaces
Multiple Unit Dwellings	1	Reserved parking spaces for the mobility disabled per 30 units to a maximum of 10 spaces
Restaurants and Theater	1	Reserved parking spaces for the mobility disabled per 50 seats to a maximum of 10 spaces
All other uses excluding fire stations, boarding houses, and any industrial use which does not have a retail function	1	Reserved parking space for the mobility disabled per 15-100 parking spaces required 1 additional space for each additional 100 required space or part thereof to a maximum of 10.

The second group eliminated Office and Shopping Centres (i.e. Strip Malls) under Retail Stores, Service and Personal Service Shops as it is already included in the above and below 5,000 square feet section.

The parking under Grocery Store was left alone as the square footage was confusing. Mr. Regan would like to see large parking lots like Downsview be reduced to a more practical number to avoid the look of a moonscape.

Theaters were left at one but the group suggested comparing to other theaters.

Automotive Repair was referred to Kevin Kingston.

Hospital, Multiple Service Centre has two parking spaces per bed, but the parking requirements for those uses should be higher.

Ms. Langille-Hanna said that all the parking will be revisited and discussed with Development Services staff.

Ms. Langille-Hanna found the workshop format very helpful and a lot of information was gathered. The information will be reviewed with other internal/external staff for their comments. Environment Services will be asked for their comments as there are some sanitary problems along Sackville Drive.

Mr. Matheson's group focused on the vision statement and the philosophy behind creating a pedestrian friendly unique mainstreet. One concern expressed was not to become a clone of Halifax and Bedford, but to create a uniqueness.

Ms. Merritt believes that the Sackville Drive SPS lays out what should happen in certain areas and some precaution has to be taken when it comes to by-right developments. She would like to see some care taken when wording the revisions.

Ms. Langille-Hanna thanked everyone for coming to the workshop and expressing their views and comments.

## **5. Closing Comments - Joel Matheson**

Mr. Matheson thanked staff for holding the workshop and everyone who attended the workshop.

## **6. Adjournment**

The workshop adjourned at approximately 9:03 pm.





## ATTACHMENT A

### Group 1:

#### Height:

- S Most of Sackville Drive - 6 storeys
- S Downsview and Big Box - 8 storeys
- S Beyond those by development agreement only

#### Parking:

- S Need to be addressed
- S 20/1000
- S 1 residential

### Group 2:

#### Height:

- S Downsview - needs hotel/convention centre
- S Not much of a buffer between Sackville Drive and residential
- S High-rise buildings (eg: 18 storeys) would be out of place
- S Could add setback to back of building above 7 or 8 storeys (for structure). Could be used for other uses (eg: parking)
- S Downsview Zone - base 10, public consultation above 10 storeys
- S Everywhere else 7 storeys (no development agreement)
- S Apartment buildings - **the group didn't get to finish their discussion on this issue.**