

**Item No. 11.1.5**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**January 10, 2012**

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original signed by   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Officer

Original Signed by   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Labrecque, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** November 16, 2011

**SUBJECT:** **Case 17195: 6112 Quinpool Road, Proposed Amendments to the  
Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and Halifax Peninsula Land Use  
By-Law**

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**ORIGIN**

Application from Studioworks International.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Authorize staff to initiate a process to consider amending the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and the Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-Law to permit an eight storey mixed use building at 6112 Quinpool Road, by development agreement; and
2. Request that staff follow the public participation program as approved by Council in February 1997.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Proposal**

6112 Quinpool Road is located on the west side of the intersections of Quinpool Road, Vernon Street, and Pepperell Street (Map 1). The site is currently comprised of a two storey commercial building and a parking lot that is accessed from Quinpool Road and Pepperell Street (Attachment A). The surrounding area, on the south side of Quinpool Road, is generally comprised of low-rise development. Buildings along Quinpool Road are one to three storeys in height and contain commercial uses at grade. Pepperell Street, in the vicinity of the site, consists of houses.

22277770 Nova Scotia Limited owns 6112 Quinpool and proposes to redevelop the site with a new mixed-use building that will include:

- approximately 28,500 square feet of ground floor commercial space;
- 66 dwelling units, comprised of 1 live/work dwelling unit, 57 two bedroom dwelling units, and 8 one bedroom dwelling units;
- 12,544 square feet of roof top landscaped open space; and
- two levels of underground parking, accessed from Pepperell Street, with a total of 142 parking spaces.

The proposed building is eight storeys at Quinpool Road and tapers to three storeys at Pepperell Street (Attachment A).

The size of the proposed building exceeds what is permitted for the site in the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-Law (the planning documents). Low-rise development is envisioned along Quinpool Road and Pepperell Street. However, the owner believes that the proposed building is both suitable for the site and its surroundings and has therefore applied for amendments to the planning documents. The amendments would ultimately allow the building to be the subject of a development agreement.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Existing Planning Policies and Regulations**

The site is divided across two secondary plan areas: The Quinpool Road Commercial Area Plan and the Peninsula Centre Area Plan (Map 1). The area that is in the Quinpool Road Commercial Area Plan is designated “Commercial”, whereas the area that is in the Peninsula Centre Area Plan is designated “Medium Density Residential.” Both Area Plan policies envision a low-rise form of development. The Quinpool Road Commercial Area Plan has an *Overall Objective* which is, “The encouragement of commercial and mixed commercial/residential development which strengthens the community function of the Quinpool Road area, and is in keeping with the scale and character of the adjacent residential neighbourhoods.”

On the basis of this policy context, the site is subject to two maximum height requirements: 45 feet on the Quinpool Road half of the site and 35 feet on the Pepperell Street half (Map 1)<sup>1</sup>. The proposed building is approximately 90 feet in height. Therefore, a change in the height requirements would be the most substantial amendment to the planning documents.

Although the Pepperell half of the site is within the Medium Density Residential designation, the entire site is in the C-2 (General Commercial) Zone (Map 2). This zone allows for commercial and residential development and, as such, mixed use projects. The commercial part of the proposal meets the requirements of the C-2 Zone. However, the residential part of the proposal exceeds several of the zone requirements including those relating to the:

- setback requirements from the western property boundary;
- angle controls that regulate the height/setback of a building relative to street lines and interior property boundaries; and
- density requirements.

### **Future Planning Policies and Regulations**

While the current policies and regulations do not allow for the intended building, it is felt that the proposal has merit. Municipal Planning Strategy amendments should be considered where there is a change in circumstances. The Quinpool and Peninsula Centre area plans were both adopted in the 1980s. Since then, there has been increased interest in allowing for greater density and building heights along commercial street corridors, provided there is a transition to adjacent lower density neighbourhood areas and where the massing on the corridor itself is appropriate.

In 2006 and 2007, public workshops were held as part of the original HRMbyDesign project. An area that was referred to as the Vernon/Jubilee/Quinpool Road Area was considered in 2006. With respect to building height, it was thought that three to five storeys would be appropriate on the south side of Quinpool Road (Attachment C). In 2007, a second workshop was focused on what was referred to as Quinpool Centre (around the former St. Patrick's High School site). There were, however, general ideas about Quinpool Road which included that building heights of five to six storeys might be appropriate, with greater height in situations where there is a transition to adjoining lower density buildings (Attachment D, page 3). This project has taken that transition of height into account. It is also important to note that the greater height of the building corresponds to what might be expected at corner sites.

With respect to the current open space and setback standards of the Land Use By-Law, HRM staff recognize that such regulations may not be appropriate in many urban contexts such as the Quinpool Road area. Based upon decades of experience, it is recognized that the sum of these regulations does not necessarily result in buildings that are appropriate for their site or surroundings.

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<sup>1</sup> For that part of the site that is within Peninsula Centre, the top storey of a building is permitted to exceed the maximum permitted building height (35 feet). Therefore, the actual building height that is permitted on the Pepperell half of the subject site is almost equal to that which is allowed on the Quinpool half (45 feet).

An overall review of the land use by-law requirements will occur during the course of the upcoming HRMbyDesign Centre Plan project. In the meantime, the proposed building provides an opportunity to consider the merits of this individual project as a pre-cursor to such future comprehensive planning for the Quinpool Road area. With respect to this application, it is expected that any prospective amendments to the planning documents will be solely for this site.

At this stage, staff believes that there is merit in the project proceeding with public consultation and more detailed analysis.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

The HRM costs associated with processing this planning application can be accommodated within the approved operating budget for C310.

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN**

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

At this point, Regional Council is being asked to initiate a process to consider the amendments being sought by the proponent. If Regional Council agrees to this, staff will undertake a comprehensive review of the issues associated with the application. We will also consult with the public and other stakeholders, through a public information meeting and other means, following which we will submit a report and recommendation to Regional Council. This report will be considered by the Peninsula Community Council, who will make a recommendation on any prospective amendments to the planning documents. With this information, if Regional Council wishes to consider adopting amendments, it will need to hold a public hearing.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Regional Council may choose to initiate the application, which is the recommended alternative for the reasons outlined in this report.
2. Regional Council may choose not to initiate the application, the result of which would be the retention of the current policies and regulations. Refusing to initiate the application is not recommended as the proposal warrants further detailed review and public consultation.



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**ATTACHMENTS**

Map 1	Location and Area Plan Boundaries
Map 2	Zoning and Height Requirements
Attachment A	Photographs of the Existing Building
Attachment B	Site Plan and Elevations
Attachment C	Vernon/Jubilee/Quinpool Road Workshop Outcomes (2006)
Attachment D	Quinpool Centre Workshop Outcomes (2007)

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Richard Harvey, Senior Planner, 490-5637

Report Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Austin French, Manager, Planning Services, 490-6717

Financial Approval by: \_\_\_\_\_  
James Cooke, CGA, Director of Finance/CFO, 490-6308

Report Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phillip Townsend, Director, Planning and Infrastructure, 490-7166

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## Map 1 - Location, Zoning and Detailed Area Plan Boundaries

6112 Quinpool Road  
Halifax



Subject area



Detailed plan area boundary

Halifax Peninsula  
Land Use By-Law Area

### Zone

R-2	General Residential
C-2	General Business
C-2C	Minor Commercial - Quinpool Road
P	Park and Institutional

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
PLANNING SERVICES



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

HRM does not guarantee the accuracy of any representation on this plan.



## Map 2 - Height Precincts

6112 Quinpool Road  
Halifax



Subject area



Height precinct boundary

Halifax Peninsula  
Land Use By-Law Area

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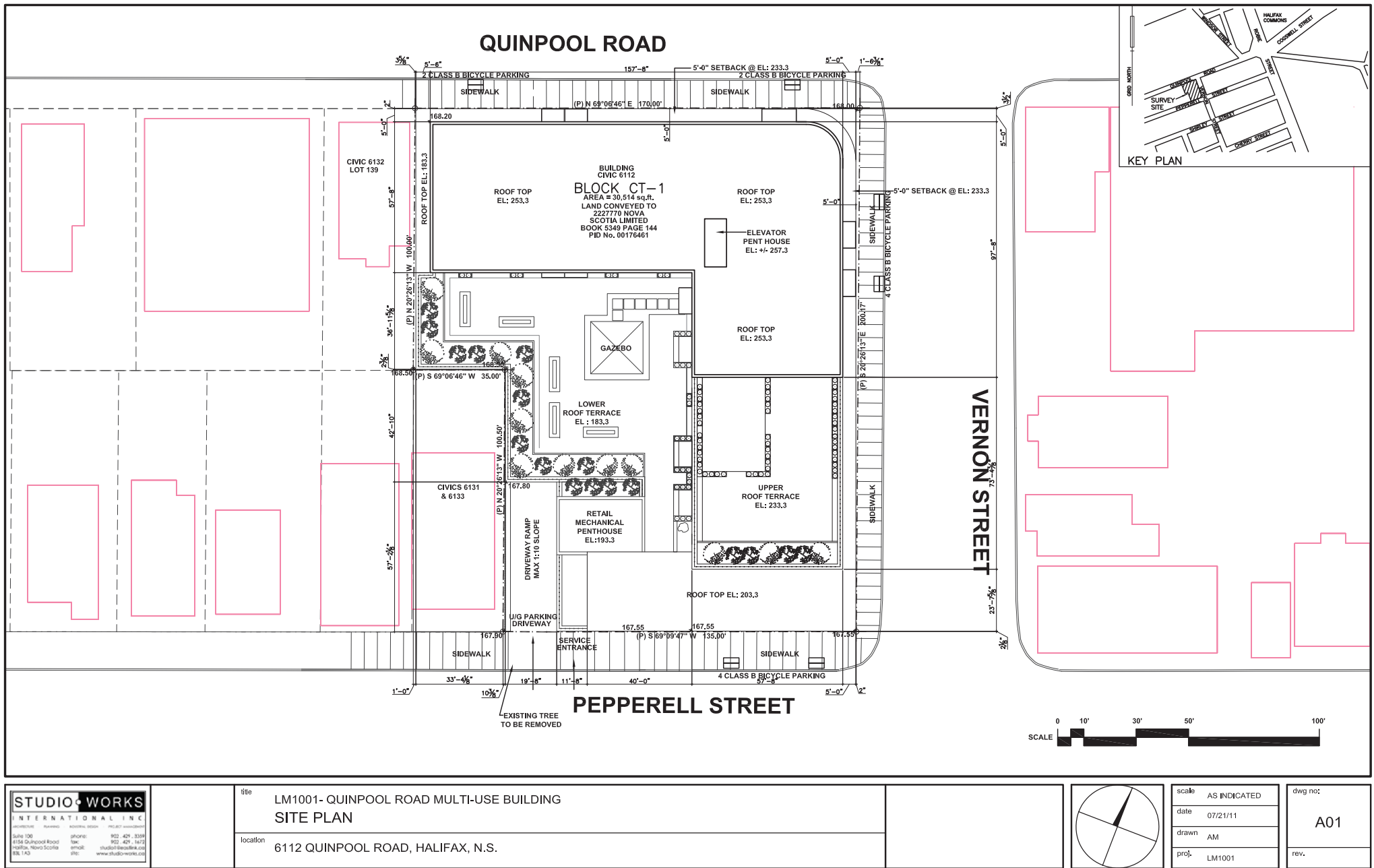
## Attachment A – Photographs of Existing Building



Corner of Quinpool and Vernon streets

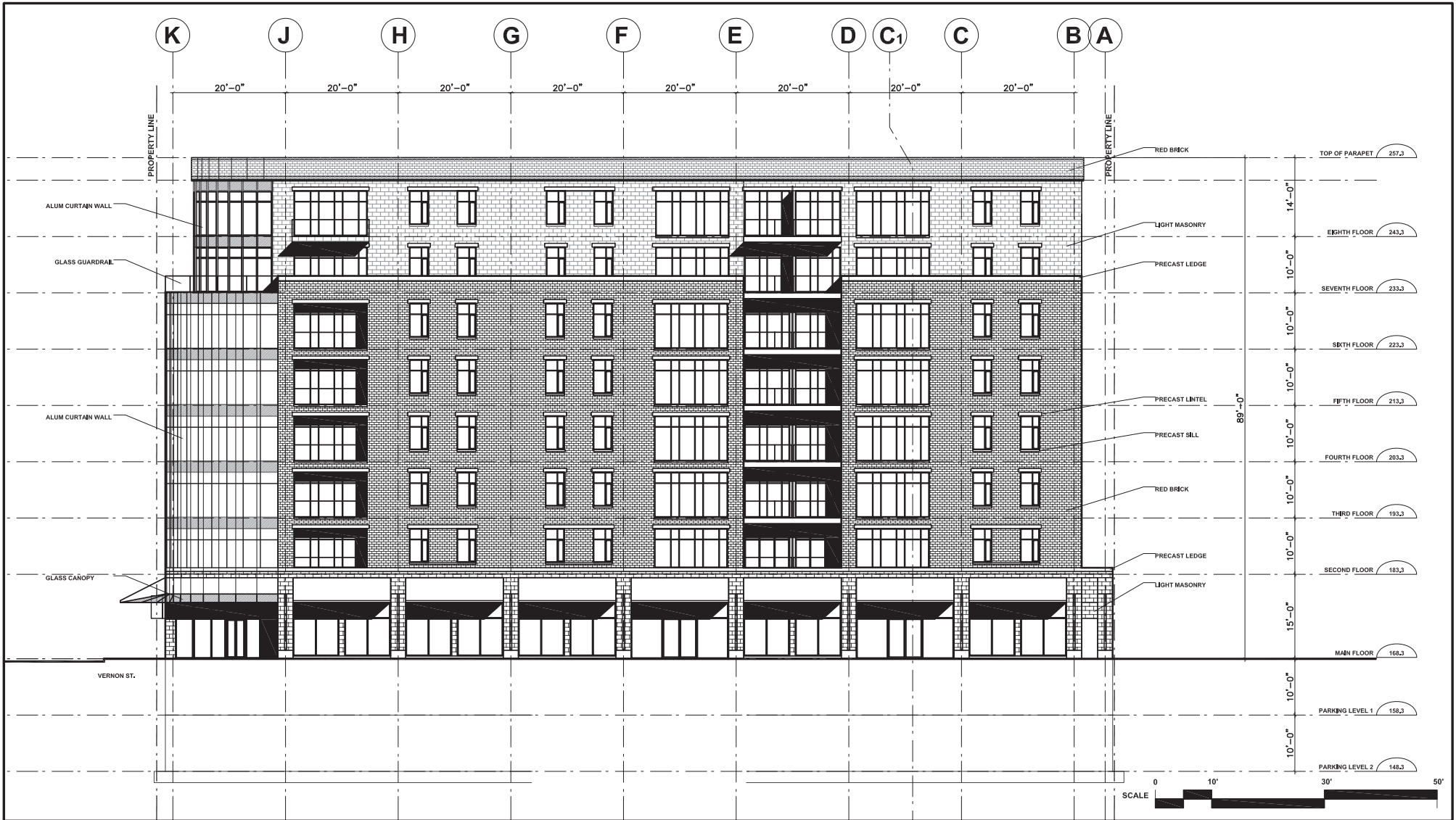


Corner of Vernon and Pepperell Streets



Attachment B - Site Plan and Elevations





<div><div>STUDIO WORKS</div><div>INTERNATIONAL INC</div><div>ARCHITECTS PLANNING INTERIOR DESIGN PROJECT MANAGEMENT</div><div>Suite 100    phone: 902-429-3399 6154 Quinpool Road    fax: 902-429-1615 Halifax, Nova Scotia    email: studio@studio-works.ca B3B 1A3    web: www.studio-works.ca</div></div>	<div>title</div> <div>LM1001 - QUINPOOL ROAD MULTI-USE BUILDING NORTH ELEVATION (QUINPOOL RD.)</div>				<div>scale</div> <div>AS INDICATED</div>	<div>dwg not</div> <div>A11</div>
	<div>location</div> <div>6112 QUINPOOL ROAD, HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA</div>				<div>date</div> <div>07/21/11</div>	
					<div>drawn</div> <div>LG</div>	
					<div>proj.</div> <div>LM1001</div>	<div>rev.</div>



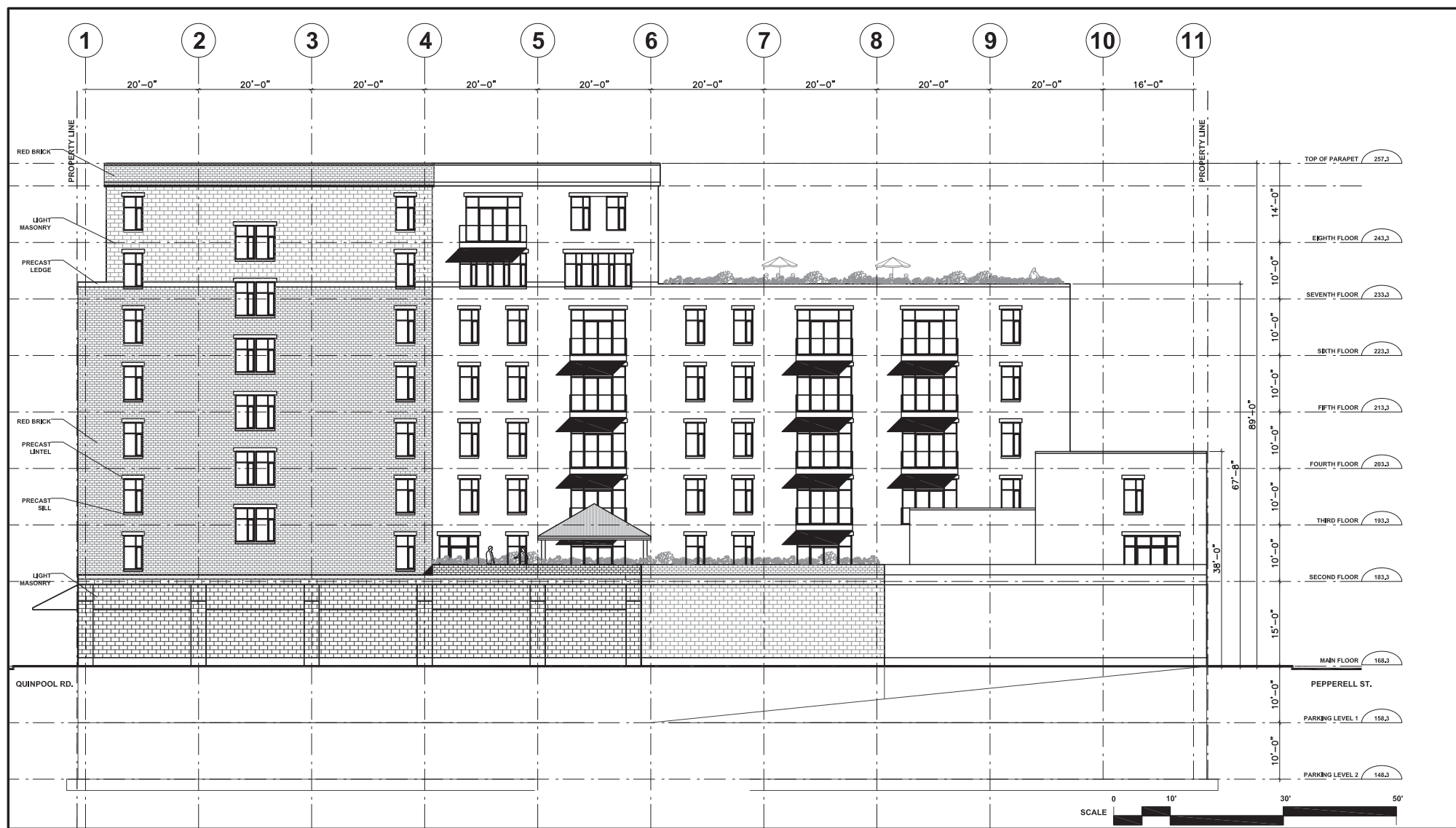
<div><div>STUDIO WORKS</div><div>INTERNATIONAL INC.</div><div>ARCHITECTURE PLANNING INTERIOR DESIGN PROJECT MANAGEMENT</div><div>Suite 100 Phone: 902.429.3399 6112 Quinpool Road Fax: 902.429.1412 Halifax, Nova Scotia email: studio@studio-works.ca B6, L43 Web: www.studio-works.ca</div></div>	<div>title</div> <div>LM1001 - QUINPOOL ROAD MULTI-USE BUILDING EAST ELEVATION (VERNON ST.)</div>			<div>scale</div> <div>AS INDICATED</div>	<div>dwg no:</div> <div>A12</div> <div>rev.</div>
	<div>location</div> <div>6112 QUINPOOL ROAD, HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA</div>			<div>date</div> <div>07/21/11</div>	
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Attachment B - Site Plan and Elevations



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**STUDIO WORKS**  
INTERNATIONAL INC.  
ARCHITECTURE PLANNING INTERIOR DESIGN PROJECT MANAGEMENT  
Suite 100 Phone: 902-429-3399  
6154 Quinpool Road Fax: 902-429-1412  
Halifax, Nova Scotia Email: studio@studio-works.ca  
B1B 1A3 Web: www.studio-works.ca

title LM1001 - QUINPOOL ROAD MULTI-USE BUILDING  
WEST ELEVATION  
location 6112 QUINPOOL ROAD, HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA

scale AS INDICATED  
date 02/08/11  
drawn LG  
proj. LM1001

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## Attachment C - Vernon/Jubilee/Quinpool Road Workshop Outcomes (2006)

### Vernon/Jubilee/Quinpool Road

This case study area is characterized by the low-rise commercial along Quinpool Road with stable residential areas to the South. It was generally agreed by the group that the low-rise commercial along Quinpool Rd. makes the street feel more suburban, despite being within an urban context. There was consensus that more residential uses should be introduced to ensure more people are able to live closer to where they work.

The group tackled a number of issues around built form with consensus reached that drive-thru's should be restricted along Quinpool Rd. It was also agreed that appropriate transitions will need to be accommodated such as the back lanes between Pepperell and Quinpool to ensure minimal impact to the stable residential areas to the south.

Principles for the Vernon/Jubilee/Quinpool Road Area:

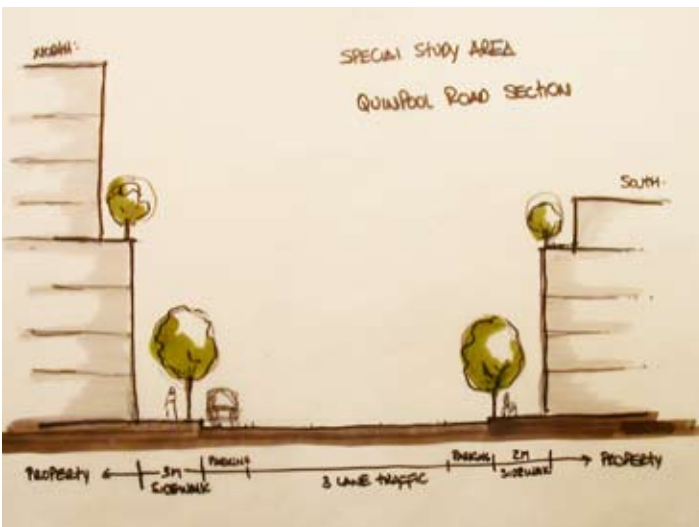
- Intensification may be accommodated as long as low-rise residential neighbourhoods are respected (adjacent).
- Respect for low-rise neighbourhoods includes consideration of:
  - Minimizing traffic impacts
  - Ensuring no/limited wind and shadow impacts
  - Ensuring development on Quinpool does not adversely impact on the quality of side streets (i.e. Pepperell St)
- Drive thru's restricted as incompatible with pedestrian-oriented street.
- In order for Quinpool to become a thriving pedestrian neighbourhood and regional centre, appropriate transitions need to be created (i.e. back lanes).
- Intensification may be defined in a preliminary way, for Quinpool as being 3-5 storeys.
- Quinpool needs to be shaped by a defining feature, or characteristic, that shapes its personality into the future. This must draw from the character of the residential neighbourhoods to the north and south.
- Traffic infiltration into residential neighbourhoods will be restricted.
- Ensure pedestrians can cross Quinpool Road with ease at regular intervals.
- Improvements to the road network must provide high quality pedestrian and bicycle environment and must accommodate increased transit service over the long term.
- Utilities along Quinpool Rd should be placed underground, and the previous locations of utility poles should be planted with trees.
- Explore the possibility of extending the Chebucto lane south of Quinpool Rd.
- New development should ensure a continuous street wall (no set back) as per existing dominant character on Quinpool.
- The St. Patrick school site, and the Quinpool Centre, was identified as a significant redevelopment site that offers the opportunity to accommodate a significant residential population. It was agreed that more height could be accommodated on these sites, particularly given the precedent of height both to the north and south. Any new development should have commercial uses at grade on Quinpool Road, and should provide for a strong pedestrian environment.
- Amenity green/open space must be provided for new developments.
- Parking for Quinpool will be accommodated through municipal lots, shared parking, and on-street parking. In addition there should be no parking fronting on Quinpool (i.e. surface/structured lots). Reducing the parking requirements should be explored.



Concept Plan created during the workshops for the Vernon/Jubilee/Quinpool Road Area.



Public and Private Realm Improvement Plan created during the workshops which also identifies potential opportunity sites.



Street Cross Section for Quinpool Road showing possible height scenarios.

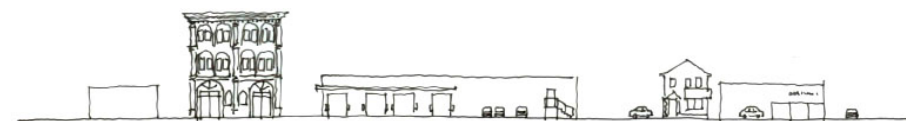
## General Urban Design Objectives

The Quinpool Centre site presents a significant opportunity to intensify and revitalize Quinpool Road. HRMbyDESIGN identifies this segment of Quinpool Road as an “Urban Corridor” and the street character as an “Avenue”. The key general urban design objectives to ensure consistency with this desired outcome include:

- Continuous retail frontages along Quinpool Road with above grade offices or residential uses
- A high quality, pedestrian-oriented streetscape including continuous rows of trees, clearly defined crosswalks, places to sit, and uniform lighting and signage treatments
- Bus stops with appealing shelters located at key intersections
- On-street parking in lay-bys with featured paving treatments
- A variety of modest scaled formally paved and/or landscaped Open Space for gathering and spill-out activity
- Parking areas are located to the rear, underground or in concealed above-grade structures
- Visually and physically well-connected to the surrounding neighbourhoods and districts through cross-streets, mid-block connections and appealing buildings or landmarks at visibly strategic locations
- Important intersections and gateways are clearly defined with well designed buildings that give prominence to their corners, the butting-out of sidewalks and public art
- Building heights and massing transition down to adjacent low-rise neighbourhoods and ensure adequate sun penetration to the retail street
- The continuity of a human-scaled streetwall is reinforced with the stepping back of taller portions of the building
- Access to parking and servicing is provided through side streets or a network of rear lanes



*Prototypical Urban Corridor*



*Transforming into Urban Corridors: Before*



*Transforming into Urban Corridors: After*



## Site-Specific Urban Design Objectives

- Redeveloping the one-storey mall and St. Patrick School to reintegrate the site and transform it into a more 'urban' and fine-grained configuration
- Extend and completing the street grid through the site to create a finer-grained street and block configuration
- Retain and better integrate the existing residential uses (the apartment tower and residential uses to the rear of the site).
- Better integrate the senior center and church with a consideration for an expansion to the residential component
- Provide St. Patrick Park with well defined urban frontages and an appropriate sense of 'enclosure'
- Explore opportunities to create a sense of a gateway at the Quinpool and Robie intersection

## 2

## General Guidelines for Uses & Density

- The same or more commercial area should be provide as what is currently existing
- Large format retail should be considered along Quinpool Road in a more 'urban' configuration that considered providing for smaller commercial spaces at-grade with the larger format commercial spaces on the second storey
- Parking and servicing should be placed to the rear or below-grade, accessed through side streets, laneway etc.
- The residential density could range between 100 -145 units per acre (250-360 units per hectare) and could be achieved with low (5 storey) to medium-rise (12 storey) building forms
- A new community-oriented facility (recreation, meeting rooms, etc.) should be provided on a portion of the former St. Patrick school site
- Opportunities for a variety of small scale open spaces for a variety of users and activities should be explored – plazas, squares, courtyards etc.



Quinpool Centre Site

	Typical Built Form Typologies*	Typical Uses
Urban Corridor	Predominant Types: Low-Rise Podium Forms (Mixed-Use)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail or Public use at grade is required</li> <li>• Residential</li> <li>• Live/Work</li> <li>• Secondary School</li> <li>• Place of worship</li> <li>• Day care</li> <li>• Offices</li> <li>• Public uses</li> <li>• Public Open Space</li> </ul>
	Other Possible Types: Mid-Rise Forms (Mixed Use) <i>subject to conditions set out in these guidelines</i>	

Appropriate Typologies and Uses in Urban Corridors

## General Guidelines for Built Form

### Heights & Massing

- Generally minimum 5 storey and maximum 6 storey heights along Quinpool Road
- Taller heights may be accommodated in appropriate locations where adequate transitions in height to adjacent low-rise residential uses can be achieved (subject to a 45 degree angular plane as illustrated in the Massing Profile diagram to the right)
- Street wall heights should be a minimum of 3 storeys and a maximum of 4 storeys – taller elements of the buildings should step-back a minimum of 1.5 metres (5 feet) from the face of the building forming the street wall (see illustrated Massing Profile diagram to the right)

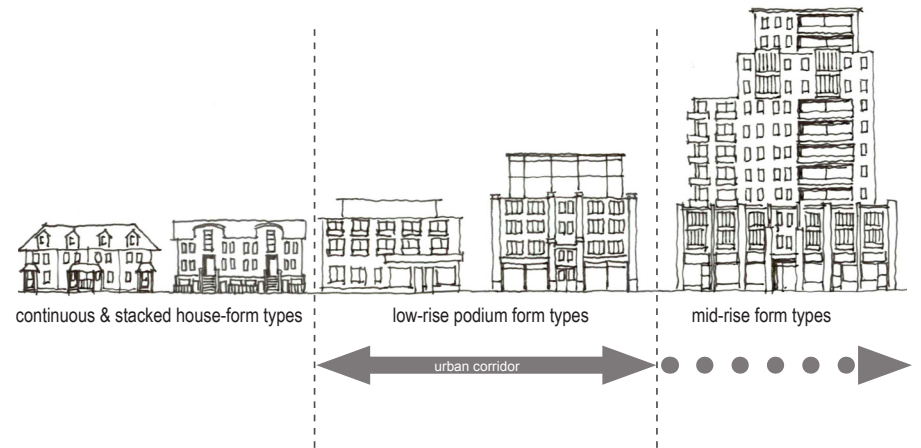
### Street Wall Condition

- All building frontages should provide an animated street edge through high levels of transparency along Quinpool Road and at-grade access residential units on other streets
- Minimum ground level (floor-to-ceiling) heights are 4 metres (13 feet)

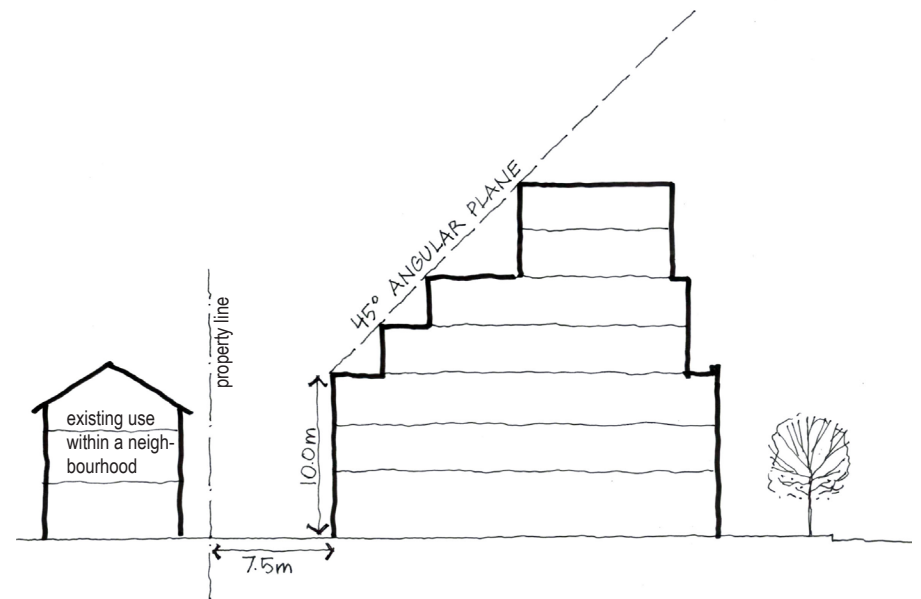
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### Architectural Quality

- The massing, material and architectural articulation should reinforce a 'base', 'body' and 'top' to a building
- Taller buildings should have an expressive roof that integrates the mechanical penthouse into the design
- Roof gardens are encouraged
- High quality contemporary designs are encouraged and consideration should be given for compatible proportions and materials where adjacent to existing residential house-forms



*Appropriate Typologies in Urban Corridors*



*Appropriate Massing Profile to ensure transition and sun penetration to adjacent low-rise residential neighbourhoods*

## HRMbyDESIGN Workshop Outcome

The following is a summary of the outcomes of the two day workshop held during Forum 3 in April (refer to drawings for demonstration of concept):

### Principles

1. Increase the access through the site, particularly for pedestrians
2. Increasing affordable housing – that is well designed – on the site (not just replacing what exists)
3. Ensure the public amenity on the site is increased and appeals to a broad demographic (ie. Park Spaces, Daycares, Mix of retail amenities, Gym, Theatre, Fitness Spa)
4. A range of housing types should be accommodated – including high(er) end and live/work units (studios)
5. Parking should not front onto a public right of way
6. Accessibility and Connectivity: Main means of movement should accommodate who move in a variety of ways including wheelchairs, strollers, restricted ability, etc.
7. There should be a prominent public/community use on the site; it can accommodate office and institutional uses with street edge retail
8. St.Pat's Site should be a place that is special, that draws people in
9. The development of the site should respect and strengthen the existing residential neighbourhood
10. Ensure new development meets the needs of the community
11. The Opportunity for large format retail albeit in different built forms – needs to be maintained

### Big Moves

- “Normalize” Windsor St by extending it directly south, thereby allowing the under-utilized triangle park and making it a linear park that extends to Quinpool
- Remember the story of the Willow tree by planting willows in this park
- Extend existing park to the north of the site to Quinpool - Will mirror new park near Robie St.

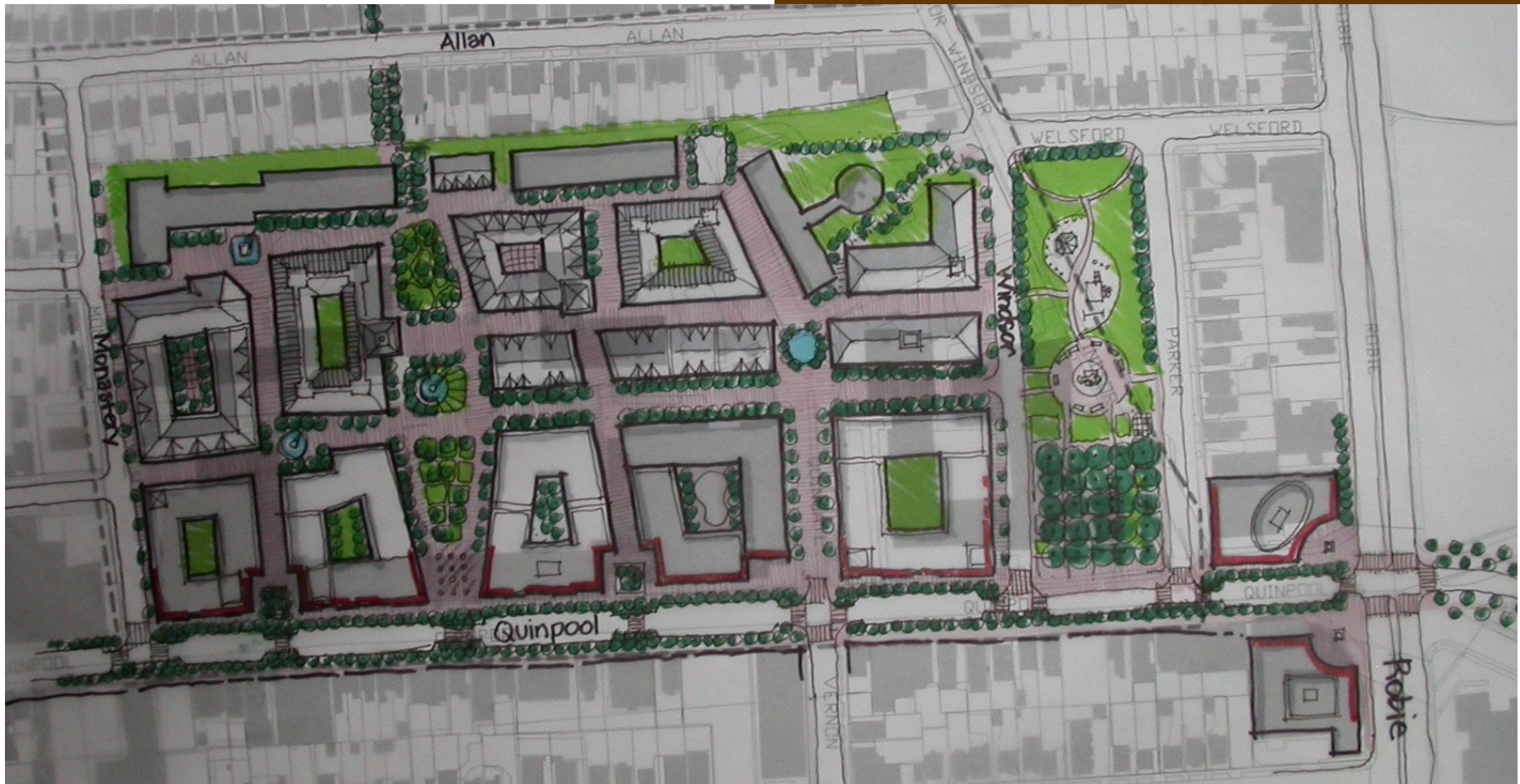
- The corner of Quinpool and Robie should be intensified/redeveloped with a point tower (not a slab)
  - Tall and slender with a human scale base (podium and tower of 18 storeys) – height of the podium to be determined.
- Continuous retail at grade along Quinpool with 2 interruptions: The two splendid open spaces
- St.Pat's Site
  - Ground related retail on Quinpool
  - Well concealed parking internal to the Site “Wrap It” - This could accommodate a “shared” parking (i.e. Municipal lot)
  - Stacked townhouses to the south of the site, through units with yards
  - Public amenities on top of the parking structure
- As a principle, height must transition downwards, north (and we assume 6 storeys on Quinpool)
- However, we recognize the importance of high density on the site (but it must conform to the previous guidelines)

### Preferred Concept

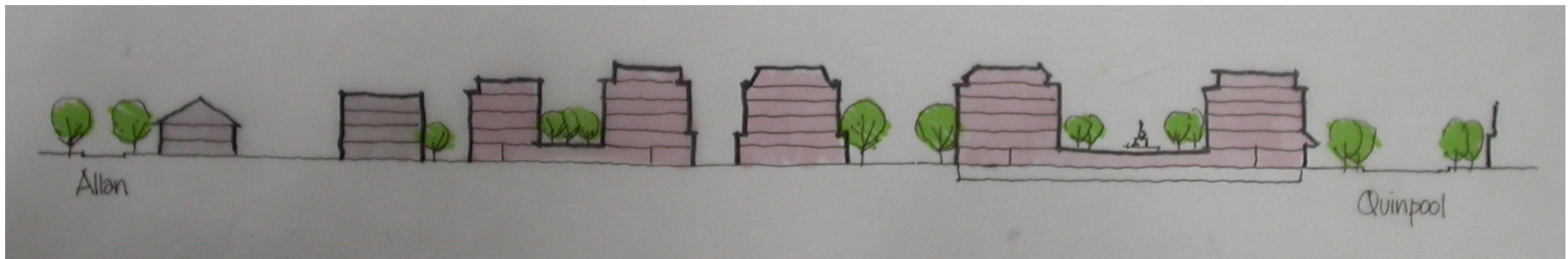
- 6 Stories
- Walking Streets
- Green roofs and solar panels
- Model community for sustainable development
- Rooftops also as courtyards
- Gateway Character/Whole Site
  - No reflective glass
  - No blank façades: prominent frontages need a “face” with access points and transparency (Refer to drawing)
- As much as possible, it is desirable to have multiple access points on Quinpool
- “Keystone” larger format retail should be accommodated behind smaller scale retail fronting on Quinpool.



5



Demonstration Concept Plan prepared in HRMbyDESIGN Forum 3



Demonstration Cross-Section through site prepared in HRMbyDESIGN Forum 3



## Design Charrettes - Site Design Guidelines

- Zero Setback throughout the site (retail, residential, etc)
- All streets “naked” within the site
- Extend the on-street parking eastwards on the north side of the street in front of the site
- The emphasis has been on transit – oriented development (less parking, emphasis on pedestrian/bike connections)

### Comments on Workshop Outcomes

- The reconfiguration of St. Patrick Park can assist in better utilizing the open space, reinforces the gateway and improves the traffic intersection
- With continuous 6 stories, a significant density can be achieved, however by reconfiguring the density into some taller buildings will permit greater sun penetration throughout the site
- The inner courtyards are too small in scale to be viable spaces (not likely to code), to permit adequate sun penetration and to ensure privacy between units – facing units in buildings over 4 storeys should be no less than 15 metres (50 feet) and no less than 18 metres (60 feet) for buildings over 6 storeys.
- The idea of ‘naked’ streets is an interesting one for creating a distinct identity; however, matters of parking, servicing, emergency vehicle access, etc. seem unresolved. Perhaps a balance between normal and ‘naked’ streets may be more realistic.

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# Quinpool Centre



*Demonstration Cross-Section at Quinpool Road  
prepared in HRMbyDESIGN Forum 3*