



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

Item No. 11.1
Halifax Regional Council
December 6, 2016
January 24, 2017

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

Original Signed

SUBMITTED BY: Councillor Stephen Adams, Chair, Halifax and West Community Council

DATE: November 21, 2016

SUBJECT: Case 19858: Amendments to the Halifax MPS and Peninsula LUB for
6345 Coburg Road, Halifax

ORIGIN

Motion passed by Halifax and West Community Council at a meeting held on November 15, 2016.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

HRM Charter, Part 1, Clause 25(c) – “The powers and duties of a Community Council include recommending to the Council appropriate by-laws, regulations, controls and development standards for the community.”

RECOMMENDATION

Halifax and West Community Council recommends Halifax Regional Council

1. Give First Reading to consider the proposed amendments to the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law (LUB), as set out in Attachments A and B of the staff report dated November 1, 2016, to enable a multi-unit residential building at 6345 Coburg Road, Halifax, and schedule a public hearing; and
2. Approve the proposed amendments to the Halifax MPS and Halifax Peninsula LUB, as set out in Attachments A and B of the staff report dated November 1, 2016.

BACKGROUND

Halifax and West Community Council received a staff recommendation report dated November 1, 2016 at their November 15, 2016 meeting.

DISCUSSION

Halifax and West Community Council reviewed the report and approved the staff recommendation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The attached staff report addresses financial implications associated with this application.

RISK CONSIDERATION

The attached staff report addresses risk consideration.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Halifax and West Community Council is comprised of six (6) elected members. Meetings are held in public unless otherwise indicated and the agendas and reports are posted to the HRM website.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The attached staff report addresses environmental implications associated with this application.

ALTERNATIVES

Community Council did not provide alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Staff report dated November 1, 2016.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.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: Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant 902.490.6520



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

Item No. 13.1.8
Halifax and West Community Council
November 15, 2016

TO: Chair and Members of Halifax and West Community Council

Original signed

SUBMITTED BY:

Bob Bjerke, Chief Planner and Director, Planning and Development

DATE: November 1, 2016

SUBJECT: **Case 19858: Amendments to the Halifax MPS and Peninsula LUB for 6345
Coburg Road, Halifax**

ORIGIN

- Application by WM Fares Group
- June 23, 2015, Regional Council initiation of the MPS amendment process

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

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

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax and West Community Council recommend that Regional Council:

1. Give First Reading to consider the proposed amendments to the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law (LUB), as set out in Attachments A and B of this report, to enable a multi-unit residential building at 6345 Coburg Road, Halifax, and schedule a public hearing; and
2. Approve the proposed amendments to the Halifax MPS and Halifax Peninsula LUB, as set out in Attachments A and B of this report.

BACKGROUND

WM Fares Group is applying to develop a five-storey, 35-unit residential building located at 6345 Coburg Road, Halifax. This proposal cannot be considered under existing policy and zoning of the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law (LUB), respectively. The applicant is therefore seeking an amendment to the MPS and LUB to enable consideration of the proposal through the development agreement process.

Subject Site	6345 Coburg Road
Location	Northeast corner of the intersection of Coburg Road and Larch Street
Regional Plan Designation	Urban Settlement
Community Plan Designation (Map 1)	(MDR) Medium Density Residential
Zoning (Map 2)	R-2 (General Residential)
Size of Site	982 square metres (10,570 square feet)
Street Frontage	53 metres (174 feet) of continuous frontage (corner lot)
Current Land Use(s)	A two-storey vacant building
Surrounding Use(s)	17-storey mixed use building across Larch Street to the west, University of Kings College across Coburg Road to the south, Four-storey residential building abutting the property to the east Low density residential abutting to the north

MPS and LUB Context

The subject site 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).

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 further component of the Medium Density Residential 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 relating to 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 (see Map 3).

The proposed five-storey, 35-unit residential building is not enabled under existing planning policies given this designation and accompanying zoning.

Proposal Details

As the application has progressed through the planning approval process, the proposal has been modified as outlined in the following sections of this report.

Regional Council Initiation

At the June 23, 2015 meeting of Regional Council the proposal, while not inclusive of site plan or building elevations drawings, indicated the desire to construct the following:

- a building height of four to five storeys, transitioning to three storeys at the rear of the site; and
- a commitment to appropriate setbacks being provided along abutting properties.

The most recent use of the building on the site was the St. Joseph's Newman Centre, which provided chaplaincy services to Dalhousie University and residence for Catholic university students, since the late 1950's. Staff recommended that Regional Council initiate the MPS amendment request on the basis of change in use of the property and the proximity to larger existing buildings and with the caveat that the multi-unit building be designed with appropriate transition to the surrounding low density residential neighbourhood.

Public Information Meeting

A public information meeting (PIM) chaired by the District 7 and 8 Planning Advisory Committee was held on December 3, 2015. The applicant presented a revised proposal including site plan, building elevations and renderings featuring the following details:

- 28 units (17 two-bedroom & 11 one-bedroom units);
- a maximum building height of five storeys;
- a four storey streetwall;
- a three storey building height transition with abutting low density neighbourhood;
- building height stepback transitions at the third and fourth storeys; and
- one level of completely underground parking accessed from Coburg Road and featuring 21 spaces.

Planning Advisory Committee

At the February 22, 2016 meeting of the District 7 & 8 Planning Advisory Committee, the Committee concluded there was no merit in the requested plan amendment, and therefore, did not discuss the details of the proposal.

Current Proposal

Following the February 22, 2016 PAC meeting, the applicant made further revisions to the proposal which are reflected in the design considered within the Discussion section of this report. Design features of this final proposal include the following:

- a total of 28 units (10 two-bedroom, 13 one-bedroom and 5 studio units);
- a reduction in the mass of the building;
- changes to proposed materials inclusive of the addition of brick façade treatments and removal of the glass wall system;
- the removal of the third storey wrap-around rear balcony;
- a switch to recessed balconies, rather than the previously proposed projecting balconies;
- a switch to a flat rooftop, rather than a pitched roof;
- introduction of a building height stepback transition at the fifth storey; and
- one level of completely underground parking accessed from Coburg Road and featuring 21 spaces.

Although the details of the actual development proposal are not the subject of this report, Attachment C contains the proposed architectural renderings for Council's information.

The Centre Plan

The Halifax Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (RMPS) identifies the "Regional Centre" as the area encompassing the Halifax Peninsula and Dartmouth between Halifax Harbour and the Circumferential Highway. Through the recent review of the RMPS, the adoption of a Regional Centre Plan was confirmed as a primary objective for the Municipality. The Centre Plan will include the creation of a new Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy (SMPS) for the Regional Centre as well as regulatory and financial tools to ensure that the vision statement and guiding principles endorsed by Regional Council are achieved. The process is well underway, with on-going stakeholder and community engagement and a full slate of public consultations in line with the Centre Plan Engagement Strategy. The delivery of a draft plan to the Community Design Advisory Committee is anticipated for year-end 2016. The existing MPS will remain in effect on the Halifax Peninsula until the Centre Plan is finalized and approved except for certain site specific MPS amendment applications that may be considered in the interim.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The community engagement process is consistent with the intent of the HRM Community Engagement Strategy, the *HRM Charter*, and the Public Participation Program approved by Council on February 25, 1997. The level of community engagement was consultation, achieved through providing information and seeking comments through the HRM website, signage posted on the subject site, letters mailed to property owners within the notification area and a public information meeting (PIM) chaired by the District 7 and 8 Planning Advisory Committee was held on December 3, 2015. Attachment D contains a copy of the minutes from the meeting. The public comments received include concern regarding the following topics:

- height, mass and density of the proposal;
- transition of the building to the existing low density neighbourhood;
- vehicular traffic impact;
- setbacks from abutting properties;
- use as short-term rental accommodations; and
- loss of greenspace

A public hearing must be held by Regional Council before they can consider approval of the proposed MPS and LUB amendments. Should Regional Council decide to proceed with a public hearing on this application, in addition to the published newspaper advertisements, property owners within the notification area shown on Map 2 will be notified of the hearing by regular mail.

The proposal will potentially impact local residents and property owners.

DISCUSSION

The MPS is a strategic policy document that sets out the goals, objectives and direction for long term growth and development of the Municipality. Amendments to an MPS are significant undertakings and Council is under no obligation to consider such requests. In this case, staff advise that this site provides an excellent opportunity for urban densification within a strategic location; however, it is critical for the ongoing success of the neighbourhood that this density is added in an appropriate manner. The following paragraphs review the rationale and content of the proposed MPS and LUB amendments.

The Centre Plan

HRM has adopted a vision and guiding principles for the Regional Centre which forms the basis for undertaking comprehensive planning. Policy RC-3 of the RMPS identifies the creation of a Centre Plan and accompanying Land Use By-law will be guided by the vision and guiding principles. Included in the vision is a statement which aims to strengthen the Regional Centre's vibrancy, animation and economic health through the cultivation of a compact, civic inspired and human-scaled urban fabric of streets, blocks and buildings.

The guiding principles for the Regional Centre commit to new development being of high quality and compatible with other high quality developments. Additionally, guiding principles developed with the community for the Regional Centre in the drafting and adoption of the Regional Plan include a desire that new developments respond to the natural, cultural, historical, and urban character of their context and that new buildings contribute to the betterment of the public realm and support quality urban design.

To date, the Centre Plan has undertaken a significant public engagement program in an effort to ensure the new policies and regulations guiding development of Regional Centre communities will be consistent with the desires and vision of the communities themselves. The Centre Plan team has also been involved in ongoing planning application work in the Regional Centre to maintain consistency between current planning decisions, and projected future planning policy.

As of the date of this report, the Centre Plan Urban Structure Map includes the site within the proposed Higher Order Residential Area classification. Moderate to high density Higher Order Residential Areas are characterized by clusters of multi-unit apartment and condominium buildings. Redevelopment of these areas should include similarly scaled infill of moderate buildings (four to six storeys) that support a variety of housing options, provide at-grade residential entries and appropriate transition to adjacent properties.

In consideration of the inclusion of the site within the proposed Higher Order Residential Area classification of the Centre Plan, staff believe there is merit in recommending a mid-rise building to a maximum height of five storeys for this site. However, as the site also transitions to the existing low density Larch Street neighbourhood, appropriate sensitivity regarding the building height, mass and streetscape must be regulated. Staff recommends built-form characteristics be included in the proposed MPS policy found in Attachment A.

Proposed Amendments

Staff considered the existing MPS policy context in addition to the surrounding neighbourhood context when drafting the proposed MPS and LUB amendments. Attachments A and B contain the proposed MPS and LUB amendments. A summary of the proposed amendments is as follows:

Building Height

The policy objective relating to building height was identified as being the provision of a transition between the proposed multi-unit building and the existing abutting residential uses. To accomplish this, the proposed policy has identified the following standards:

- maximum building height of five storeys;
- maximum streetwall height of four storeys;
- maximum height of three storeys with abutting properties to the north prior to a required building stepback; and
- a 2.4 metre streetwall stepback for the fifth storey.

Streetscape

The policy objective relating to streetscape design was identified to ensure the development reflects the built form character of the existing neighbourhood. To accomplish this, the proposed policy has identified the following standards:

- primary residential entry be located on Coburg Road;
- main floor units must have individual unit entries; and
- high quality and durable building materials shall be used to reflect the prominence of the site.

Dwelling Unit Variation

The policy objective relating to dwelling unit type is to provide for a variety of housing options and encourage diversity of residents. To accomplish this, the proposed policy has identified the following standards:

- a minimum 25% of units shall contain two or more bedrooms, with a minimum unit size of 900 square feet; and
- each floor of the building shall contain a mix of unit types per floor with a minimum of three 2-bedroom units per floor.

Approval Process

To enable the development of their proposed project, the applicant has requested an MPS amendment and development agreement. Regional Council will first consider the appropriateness of the MPS amendments for the subject site and schedule a public hearing regarding the proposed new policies. Should Regional Council approve the MPS amendments in their current form or as otherwise modified, Halifax and West Community Council would then be able to consider the detailed merits of any resulting development proposal following a separate public hearing on the matter. If Regional Council refuses to approve new policies for the site, any re-development of the site would need to comply with the existing LUB provisions.

Conclusion

Staff have reviewed the application and the existing policy context and advise that the MPS should be amended to enable a five storey multi-unit residential building on the site. The strategic Regional Centre location of the proposal, access to active transportation systems and inclusion within the proposed Higher Order Residential Area classification of the Centre Plan align with the objectives of the Regional Plan for urban densification in strategic opportunity locations. Attention to the massing of the building, transition to the abutting low density neighbourhood and appropriate streetscaping can be achieved through proposed MPS policy. Therefore, staff recommend that the Halifax and West Community Council recommend that Regional Council approve the proposed MPS and LUB amendments to amend the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The HRM costs associated with the processing of this planning application can be accommodated within the approved 2016/2017 operating budget C310 Urban and Rural Planning Applications.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations contained within this report. This application involves proposed MPS amendments. Such amendments are at the discretion of Regional Council and are not subject to appeal to the N.S. Utility and Review Board. Information concerning risks and other implications of adopting the proposed amendments are contained within the Discussion section of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications are identified.

ALTERNATIVES

The Halifax and West Community Council may choose to recommend that Regional Council:

1. Modify the proposed amendments to the Halifax MPS and Halifax Peninsula LUB, as set out in Attachments A and B of this report. If this alternative is chosen, specific direction regarding the requested modifications is required. Substantive amendments may require another public hearing to be held before approval is granted. A decision of Council to approve or refuse the proposed amendments is not appealable to the N.S. Utility & Review Board as per Section 262 of the *HRM Charter*.
2. Refuse the proposed amendments to the Halifax MPS and Halifax Peninsula LUB. A decision of Council to approve or refuse the proposed amendments is not appealable to the N.S. Utility & Review Board as per Section 262 of the *HRM Charter*.

ATTACHMENTS

Map 1: Generalized Future Land Use
Map 2: Zoning and Notification Area
Map 3: Height Precincts

Attachment A: Proposed MPS Amendments
Attachment B: Proposed LUB Amendments
Attachment C: Applicant's Proposal
Attachment D: Public Information Meeting (PIM) minutes

Available upon request:

Case 19858 Initiation Report

<http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/150623ca1116.pdf>

Centre Plan Open House Boards

<http://shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/centre-plan/documents/3650/download>

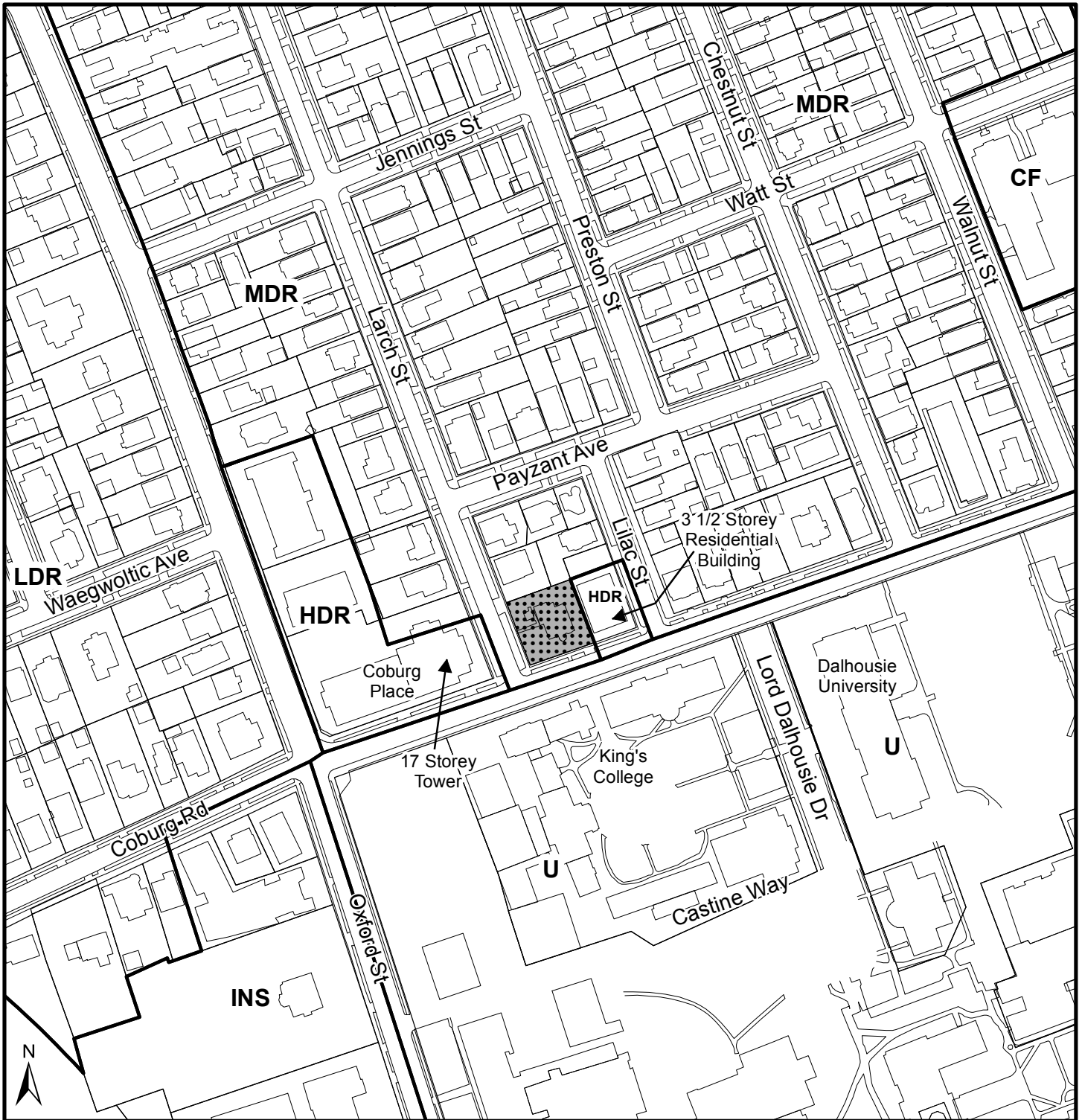
A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.php> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: David Lane, Planner III, 902.490.5593

Original signed

Report Approved by:

Kelly Denty, Manager, Current Planning, 902.490.4800



Map 1 - Generalized Future Land Use

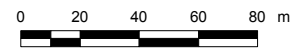
6345 Coburg Road
Halifax

HALIFAX

 Subject Property

Designation

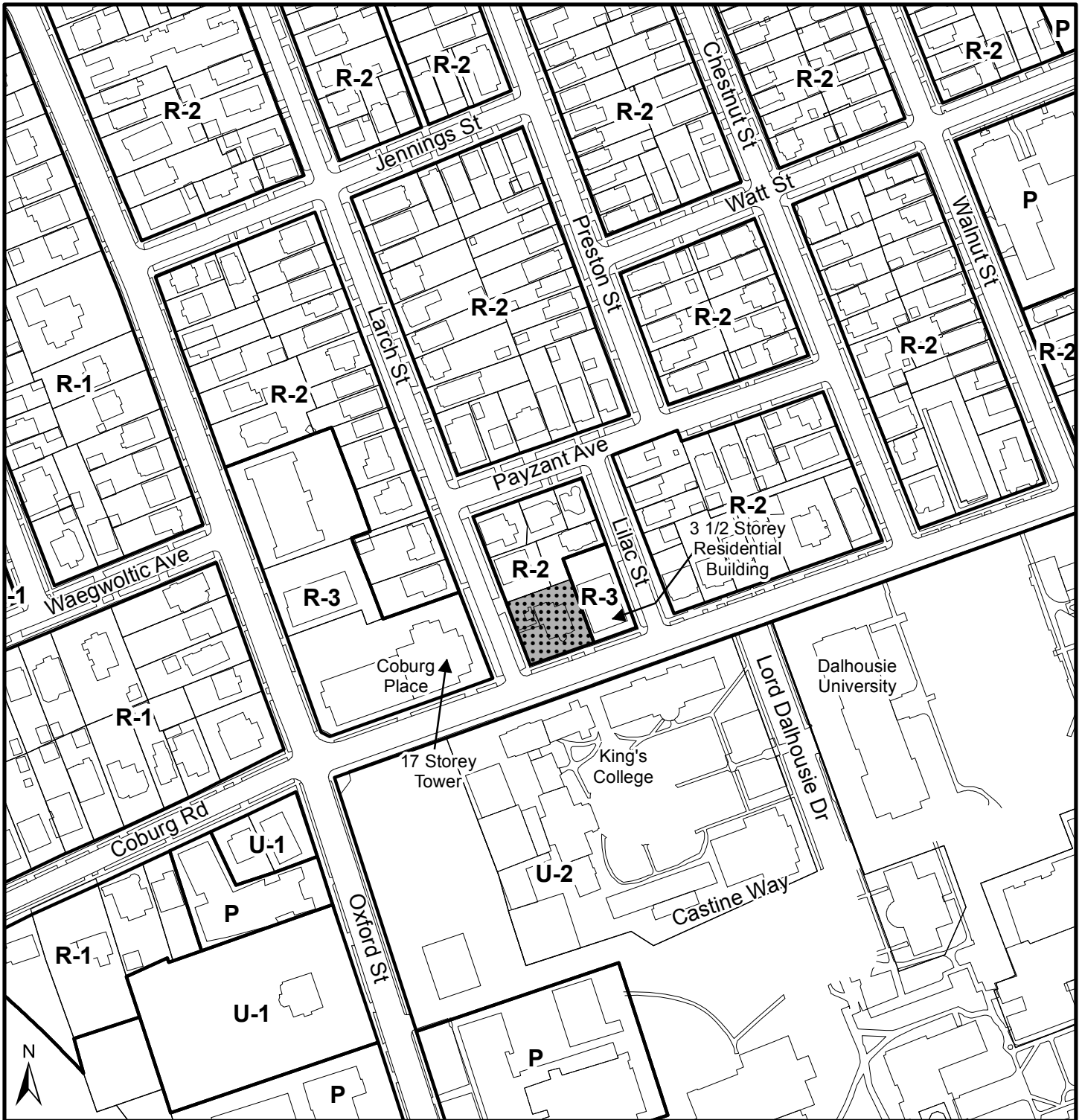
- LDR Low Density Residential
- MDR Medium Density Residential
- HDR High Density Residential
- CF Community Facilities
- INS Institutional
- U University



Halifax Plan Area
Peninsula Centre Area Plan Area

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.



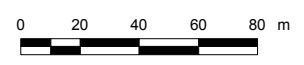
Map 2 - Zoning

6345 Coburg Road
Halifax

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 Peninsula
Land Use By-Law Area

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.




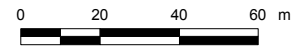
Map 3 - Height Precincts


6345 Coburg Road
Halifax

HALIFAX

 Subject Property

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



 Height measured to commencement of top storey of building

Halifax Plan Area
Peninsula Centre Area Plan Area

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

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

Attachment A
Proposed Amendments to the Halifax MPS

BE IT ENACTED by the Halifax Regional Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality that the Municipal Planning Strategy for Halifax as enacted by the Halifax Regional Municipality on the 30th day of March, 1978 and approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs on the 11th day of August, 1978, which includes all amendments thereto which have been approved by the Municipality and are in effect as of the 3rd day of September, 2016, is hereby further amended as follows:

1. Section VI, Peninsula Area Plan of the Municipal Planning Strategy shall be amended by adding the following after Policy 1.15

“1.16 The property located at 6345 Coburg Road, the northeast corner of Coburg Road and Larch Street (PID 00048397), comprised of a dwelling house, has been identified as a site for comprehensive multi-unit residential re-development.

The surrounding Coburg Road context features a development fabric of multi-unit mixed residential built form with an adjacent 16-storey building to the west, a four-storey building to the east and is located opposite the University of Kings College campus.

Thus, given that the site provides proximity to Halifax peninsula employment, shopping and institutional amenities, is accessible via active transportation and serviced by high frequency public transit, and notwithstanding the residential objective and polices of this Section, a multi-unit residential use by development agreement shall be enabled in accordance with the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*.

- 1.16.1 Any redevelopment permitted pursuant to Policy 1.16 shall be achieved by consideration of a variety of factors for which conditions may be set out in the development agreement, such as, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Appropriate scale and massing of the building for the lot area and configuration.
- b) An overall building height which does not exceed the following:
 - i) Maximum building height of 17.5 metres, to a maximum of five storeys;
 - ii) Maximum streetwall height of 14 metres, to a maximum of four storeys;
 - iii) A maximum height of 10.5 metres to a maximum of three storeys for all portions of the building within 12 metres of the north property boundary; and
 - iv) Required building setbacks a minimum of 2.43 metres in depth on Larch Street and Coburg Road.
- c) Building elevations which face the street should include complimentary streetscaping elements reflecting the characteristics of the low density built form of the existing surrounding neighbourhood. More specifically, the building should ensure the streetscape accomplishes the following:
 - i) The primary residential entry shall be located on Coburg Road;
 - ii) Main floor units facing Larch Street, the abutting property of Civic No. 1525 Larch Street and Coburg Road shall have individual unit entries; and
 - iii) High quality and durable building materials shall be used to reflect the prominence of the site.
- d) Dwelling unit variation shall be required in the building in accordance with the following:
 - i) A minimum 25% of units shall contain two or more bedrooms, with a minimum unit size of 83 square metres; and
 - ii) Each floor of the building shall contain a mix of unit types per floor with a minimum of two 2-bedroom units per floor.

- e) High quality exterior building materials and variations in the façade and mass of the building to provide visual interest.
- f) Vehicular parking be provided underground, with no surface parking provided.
- g) The size and visual impact of utility features such as garage doors, service entries and storage areas shall be minimized and mechanical equipment is concealed.
- h) The creation of high quality design detail at the pedestrian level through attention to details including but not limited to entrance treatments, landscaping and lighting.
- i) Ground floor level features individual unit entry doors.
- j) The adequacy of sewer and water servicing for the site.”

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the amendments to the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy as set out above, was passed by a majority vote of the whole Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality at a meeting held on the day of , 2016

GIVEN under the hands of the Municipal Clerk and under the Corporate Seal of the Halifax Regional Municipality this day of , 2016

Municipal Clerk

Attachment B
Proposed Amendments to the Halifax Peninsula LUB

BE IT ENACTED by the Halifax Regional Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality that the Land Use By-law for Halifax Peninsula as enacted by the Halifax Regional Municipality on the 30th day of March, 1978 and approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs on the 11th day of August, 1978, which includes all amendments thereto which have been approved by the Municipality and are in effect as of the 21st day of May, 2016, is hereby further amended as follows:

1. Section 95 of the Land Use By-law shall be amended by adding the following to part 95 and renumbering other parts of Section 95 as appropriate:

“95(6) Civic No. 6345 Coburg Road, Halifax

Council may, by development agreement, pursuant to policies 1.16 and 1.16.1 of Section VI of the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy, permit a multi-unit residential development.”

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the amendments to the Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law as set out above, was passed by a majority vote of the whole Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality at a meeting held on the day of , 2016

GIVEN under the hands of the Municipal Clerk and under the Corporate Seal of the Halifax Regional Municipality this day of , 2016

Municipal Clerk

Attachment C
Applicant's Proposal





PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING

6345 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)

Project No.: 2015.05

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 2015



A12

Attachment D
Public Information Meeting Minutes



**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 Wayne 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.

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