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Information Item No. 2
Halifax and West Community Council
May 11, 2021

TO: Chair and Members of the Halifax and West Community Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Kelly Denty, Executive Director of Planning and Development

Original Signed

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: February 3, 2021

SUBJECT: **Case 19532 - Meeting National Association of City Transportation Officials
and Transportation Association of Canada Minimum Standards**

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

On November 14, 2018, the following motion of Halifax West Community Council was put and passed regarding item 10.1.1:

THAT Halifax and West Community Council:

- 3. Request a supplementary staff report [to] examine options for developing of road guidelines for Case 19532 with NATCO and TAC minimum standards.*

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

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

HRM Charter section 226(1) (a) The Council may, by policy, adopt amendments to the engineering specifications in a subdivision by-law.

HRM Charter 290 (1) (a) No plan of subdivision may be approved by a development officer if the plan shows a street to be owned by the Municipality, unless the Engineer has approved the design and construction standards of the street.

Part A of the Municipal Design Guidelines (2013).

Section 2 - General Requirements, 2.2 - General, Where the designer proposes variations from this document and where the designer can show that alternate approaches will produce the desired results, such approaches may be considered for approval.

Section 2 - General Requirements, 2.2 - General, The Engineer's decision shall be final and binding in matters of design and construction.

BACKGROUND

On November 14, 2018, Halifax and West Community Council approved a Stage I development agreement (Case 19532¹) for a mixed-use development consisting of residential and commercial uses on a site having frontage on Washmill Lake Drive and abutting the Halifax Mainland Common in the Clayton Park area (Map 1). The Stage I development agreement regulates high level matters such as land use, residential densities, parking requirements, parkland dedication, and road networks. The subsequent Stage II development agreement will regulate detailed matters such as residential unit types and locations, architectural building designs and parking layouts.

Traffic and safety concerns were raised at the public hearing for the Stage I development agreement due to the potential road width of the Regency Park Drive extension through the site and connecting to Washmill Lake Drive. A supplementary staff report was requested by Community Council directing staff to consider the requirement for the connector road to be limited to necessary width based on National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) and Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) standards.

Subsequently and separately, on August 13, 2019, Regional Council directed staff to prepare amendments to the Regional Subdivision By-law for Council's consideration to update the Municipal Design Guidelines. This work is being carried out under the direction of a steering committee responsible for reviewing existing guidelines and industry best practices [including NACTO, TAC, and International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Association (CPTED)].

DISCUSSION

Municipal Design Guidelines

Although the general location of the road network is regulated by the Stage I development agreement, the detailed design of the network which will include road width, is evaluated through the subdivision application process. The HRM Charter authorizes Council to adopt requirements for the construction of streets as part of the Regional Subdivision By-law. Detailed street design elements are part of the By-law in the form of Municipal Design Guidelines (commonly referred to as the "Red Book"). These guidelines provide uniform standards for the construction of infrastructure to be taken over by the Municipality. All subdivision applications proposing new streets are evaluated against these design requirements.

It is important to note that NACTO, unlike TAC and CPTED, tend not to be rigid standards, but rather are design guidelines that describe the street function which is reinforced through design features. In addition to guidelines and standards, the revised Red Book will be informed by the most recent adopted versions of the Municipality's relevant strategic documents such as the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (Regional Plan), Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP), Active Transportation Priorities Plan, Urban Forestry Master Plan, the Centre Plan, and HalifACT.

It is anticipated that the Municipal Design Guideline amendments will be before Regional Council for consideration during the spring of 2021. In the interim, the Municipal Engineer is entertaining variances to the current Red Book that are consistent with the approach to mobility in the IMP, the design guidance in NACTO and TAC and other relevant strategic outcomes.

¹ See report online at <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/community-councils/181114hwcc1011.pdf>

Regency Park Drive Extension

Regency Park Drive was built in phases through various subdivisions from 1998-2005 as development extended off Lacewood Drive under the Clayton Park West development agreements. The Stage I

development agreement for Case 19532 requires the completion of Regency Park Drive to Washmill Lake Drive based on the same engineering design standard in place for the existing portions of the street. Establishing this connection will provide the following traffic related service improvements:

- improved traffic flow in the broader area;
- alternate routes for emergency vehicles;
- support the density permitted in the Stage I agreement (1216 residential units and 14,000 sq. metres of commercial use); and,
- allow an additional alternate route to several community facilities for the local and greater community, such as Halifax West High School, BMO Soccer Centre, and the Canada Games Centre.

Maintaining a road cross section that is constant with the existing constructed street design (width) provides consistent road conditions and avoids drivers encountering unexpected changes in road dimensions on the collector road.

Notwithstanding, staff have discussed, and the Engineer is prepared to grant a variance for this section of Regency Park Drive that would allow for two lanes of traffic, sidewalks on both sides, and elevated bikeways. If this were to occur, the remainder of Regency Park Drive could be converted to a similar cross section when the street is renewed as part of the annual recapitalization program.

It is up to the developer to request a variance, but staff agree in principle with the functional elements described in the preceding paragraph. Design standards for the connector road (Regency Park Drive), will be evaluated against the Municipal Design Guidelines, through the Regional Subdivision By-law at the subdivision application stage. To date, a subdivision application has not been submitted.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs associated with the update of the Municipal Design Guidelines can be accommodated within the approved 2021/2022 operating budget for Planning and Development and Transportation and Public Works. The costs of construction of the extension to Regency Park Drive are borne by the developer.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement in accordance with municipal policy was completed as part of the process leading to the development agreement approval in November of 2018. No additional public engagement was conducted as part of the preparation of this supplementary report.

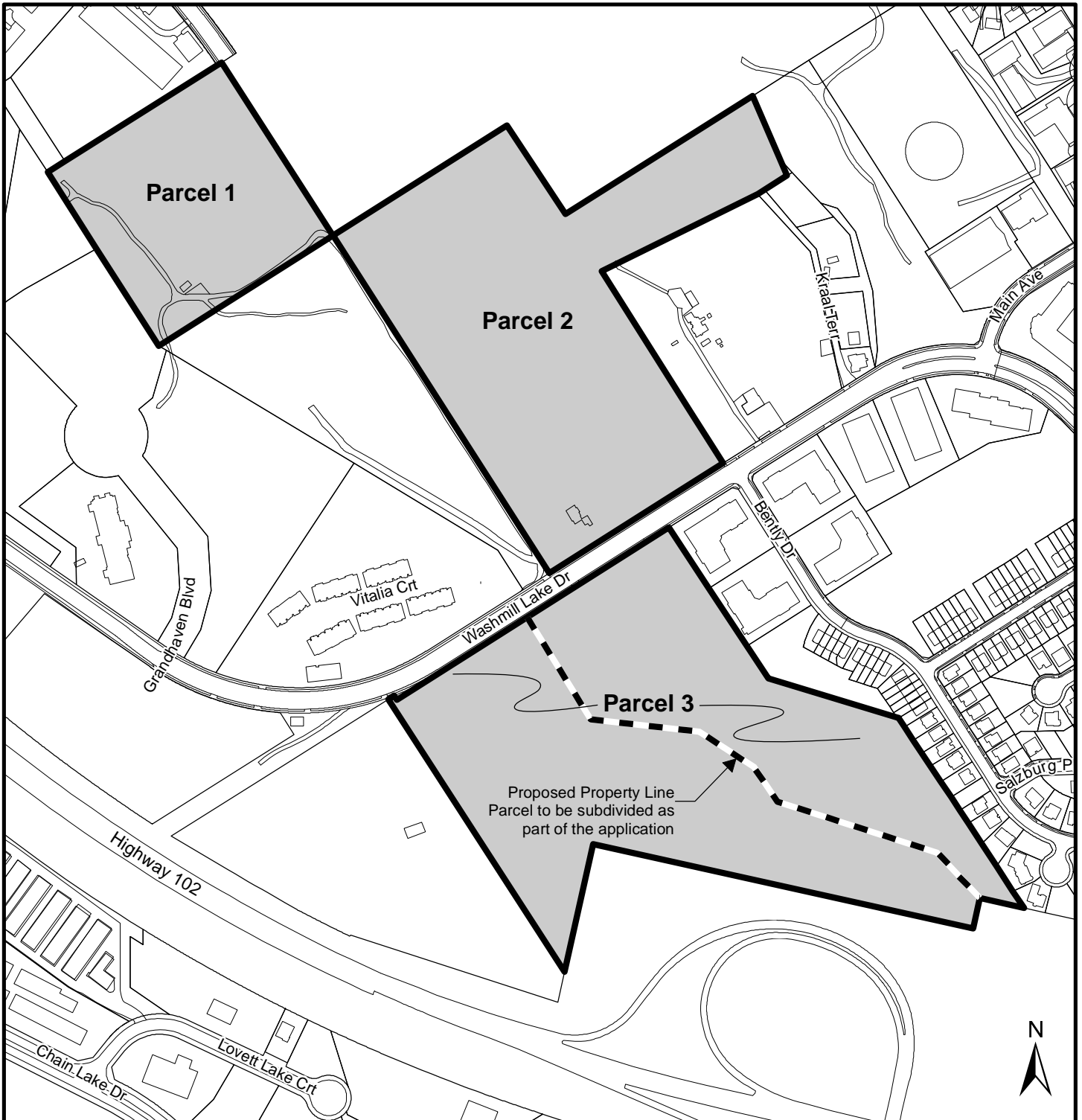
A public participation program will be completed as part of the Municipal Design Guidelines update. Staff will consult with the public and industry stakeholders, and the results of this consultation process will be included in a future staff report to Council regarding possible updates to the Municipal Design Guidelines.

ATTACHMENTS

Map 1 Location Map – Mainland Commons Development, Washmill Lake Drive, Halifax

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared and approved by: Peter Duncan, Manager of Infrastructure Planning 902.489.4634

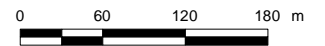


Map 1: Location Map

Mainland Common Development, Washmill Lake Drive, Halifax

HALIFAX

 Subject Site



Halifax Plan
Area

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