



**Public Information Meeting
Case 2023-00368**

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

Thursday, November 2, 2023

7:00 p.m.

Sackville High School - Cafeteria (1 King Fisher Way, Lower Sackville - NS)

STAFF IN

ATTENDANCE:

Dean MacDougall, Planner, Planner III, HRM Planning
Kelly Greenland, Planner II
Tara Couvrette, Processing Coordinator - Planning, HRM Planning
Emilie Pothier & Lisa Arblaster, Planning Information Analyst, Planning Information Services

ALSO IN

ATTENDANCE:

Paul Dec – Applicant, Upland Urban Planning + Design Inc.
Ben Chaison – Executive Vice President of First Mutual Properties, Property owner
Paul Russell - Councillor for Lower Sackville

PUBLIC IN

ATTENDANCE:

Approximately: 37

1. Call to order and Introductions – Dean MacDougall, Planner

Case 2023-00368: Application by Upland Studios requesting substantive amendments to an existing development agreement for lands at 70 First Lake Drive, Lower Sackville, to allow for two six-storey residential buildings on a shared podium and new drive-through commercial building.

Mr. MacDougall introduced himself as the Planner and Facilitator guiding Upland Urban Planning + Design Inc.'s application through the planning process.

Councillor Russell – Thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting.

2. Presentations

2a) Presentation by HRM Staff – Dean MacDougall

Mr. MacDougall's presentation included information on the following:

- (a) the purpose of the meeting including to share information and collect public feedback about the proposal - no decisions were made at this meeting;
- (b) the role of HRM staff through the planning process;
- (c) a brief description of the application including site context, explanation of what a development agreement is, proposed site plan, proposed changes, policy and By-law overview, policy consideration;
- (d) and status of the application.

2b) Presentation by Ben Chaison – Property Owner

Mr. Chaison presented details about proposal and how they got to where they are today.

3. Questions and Comments

Mr. MacDougall welcomed attendees to ask questions to staff and the presenters and provide their feedback, including what they liked and disliked about the proposal.

(i) **Jeff Thibeau, First Lake Drive:**

Feels this is greasy because they are just splitting what the originally proposed into two separate proposals and presenting it as an updated request is wrong. It was stated that the second part of this request will probably be going through the Suburban Plan after it is approved. The sewage study that was done was only done for King Fisher Way and don't reflect the impacts for the greater area of Sackville. In 2016 a report came as a result of high-density construction stating that Sackville sewer system needed significant upgrading before high density housing could be constructed. This hasn't happened yet and is concerned about the smells that will come as a result of this proposal. Development of this magnitude will have a impact on the water quality of First Lake especially sense the current sources of e coli have not been identified. The community has worked very hard, on a voluntary basis, to keep this lake clean. The Fire Dept. will require new equipment to deal with a development as large as is being proposed – is the developer prepared to donate this equipment? Or with this be on the taxpayer to pay for that new equipment? The current plan for Cavalier Dr. School is to nix the field and put in portables – this development will put more a strain on an already overloaded school system. Traffic on First Lake Dr. is already an issue that the Councillor is aware of, and this development will exacerbate an already unanswered question. We have speeders and there are no traffic calming measures in place. Transit improvements are only done up to the Mill Cove in Bedford and to develop high density in Sackville and not improve transit in Sackville is wrong. All the plans that have been show have a lack of parking – more units than there are parking spaces, where will the overflow go? It will have people parking on both sides of the road. The commercial portion of this will undermine all of the work that our local entrepreneurs have put into developing Sackville Dr. because that commercial portion isn't really required. Would like to know how they can propose an exit/entrance on St. Elizebeth Seton Property when they do not own it? The infrastructure capabilities were not highlighted in your presentation so they were not looked at as they should have been and that is disappointing.

(ii) **Peggy Hefler, Polara Drive:**

Is against this proposal. Understands affordable housing is an issue everywhere but doesn't believe what is being proposed is affordable housing. Would like to know how many stories the commercial build will be. Didn't like the layout of the survey and would have answered it differently if they could have given feedback. Feels it was a misleading deceptive survey. Concerned about property values – who will pay for my decline in value. I want reimbursement immediately once this development goes in. This development will impinge of the enjoyment of their own property. They will have people looking into their backyard or they will be staring at a cement wall. Concerned about the noise pollution for 2-3 years of building these along with the construction, traffic and chaos that goes with it. Concerned with the refuge collation in these building as well as the smell. Very concerned with emergency services and response times that such density would cause – making things worse than they already are. Phase two of this will impinge it even more. Traffic in Sackville is horrific – this will make it so much worse.

(iii) **Damion Bray, First Lake Drive:**

Stormwater issues – water in basement three times. The storm system can't handle the water now and once this development goes in it will overload the system that much more. This should not even be considered until that system is upgraded to be able to handle what is here now and any increases from further developments. Traffic is a nightmare now – this will make it worse.

(iv) **Wade Marshall, Quaker Cresent:**

Agrees with the last speakers. Can't figure out, when there is a plan in place that limits heights, why would you even consider looking at something like this. You should abide by what is in place. We do not have the capacity in our infrastructure to support what is being proposed. Politicians

are not trustworthy, and the people are finally at the point where they can't believe anybody anymore. Doesn't believe the city is going to put any money into infrastructure in Sackville. If this gets approved, will this pave the way for them to just go ahead and build phase 2? Or will it have to go through this same process again?

Dean MacDougall – It will not pave the way at all. It will have to go through this same process if the Suburban Plan hasn't been made yet.

Traffic is a major issue. Who enforces the development plan? Compliance said there is a noise bylaw. We have been dealing with garbage trucks coming here at 2-3 am on Tue & Thu's and noting is being done.

Dean MacDougall – Compliance enforces it.

(v) Dick deGier, Lower Sackville:

At this time there should be no approved development within the First Lake watershed. HRM has used First Lake as part of there sewer system for decades. A comprehensive study in 2022 demonstrated that 77% of the e coli in the lake is attributed to human waste. The main source is the inflow at Kinsmen beach and second to that is on Pine Hill. The poop from this development is going to run down the hill into the pumping station near that inflow at Kinsmen beach. It periodically overflows because it doesn't have the capacity to handle the sewage that is going into it now. This is going to increase the volume that is going in and it is going to dump into the lake more often. Feels that there are elicit hookups going into the lake. No development should be approved until the Lake is cleaned up and comprehensive testing is done to verify this. Incompetence, neglect, and malicious intent over the years has led to the situation we are in now and I am not seeing it being fixed in a comprehensive way. The lake should first be brought back to a point where it is pristine before any development can be done. The real issue is an over population increase and you can't have this happening without the proper planning. Slow down the increase in population because we can't handle that capacity.

(vi) Nick Davis, Polara Drive:

On board with what has already been said about the watershed. Biggest concern is that we are doing infrastructure backwards. The school are over capacity now. Any sports or activity in the area – you are fighting to get your kids in. My property value will be affected. We have a nice quite area and this will change that drastically. How can we support our area which is already struggling. This is not the way to do it.

(vii) Steve Annis, Nappan Drive:

Concerned with the traffic on Glendale Dr. The road system in this area is terrible. The road structures need to be looked at and they need to be upgraded. Flooding issues on First Lake Drive needs to be addressed. Sewer system needs to be looked at.

(viii) Public:

What do you do with our concerns?

Dean MacDougall – Advised a staff report is done up and given to council.

(ix) Shayne O'Neil, Candlewood Lane:

One of the founding Directors of the Sackville Rivers Association, Co-Chair the Sackville Lake Parks and Trails Association, and Director of the Friends of First Lake Society. What is a drive-thru commercial building? The proposal is 2 buildings with 154 units but the study that was attached shows 250-unit, 100 unit and another 100 unit building in the map, so why are they not compatible? Surface water issues is only going to get worse as we move forward, not get better. It should be a big part of this plan so that it is not just runoff. If they are connected to storm drainage, there should be that segment and filter traps are installed on all storm drainage to prevent any material getting into First Lake. The Sackville Planning Strategy – we have been frustrated over the years because it wasn't updated. Talking about the Suburban Plan – when are we likely to see a new Sackville Plan? Feels planning shouldn't just about looking at numbers its about looking at the intent of the community and the intent of the plan. With respect to trust, if this proceeds then the next phase will come hot on its heels – this will be a violation of trust from

the community in this process. If you want to engage the community in a way that you will get their trust people need to understand that now that you have the door wedged open in comes the truck.

Dean MacDougall – It is a building that has a drive-thru window. The studies are for the first proposal with the three buildings, and we will require updated studies for this one. The new plan would probably over years not decades – It is being broken into 2 parts – pkg A and pkg B. Advised more info online and you can get info from that team that is working on the project. It will be the same process as the Centre Plan went through.

(x) Andrew Jennings-Lindsay, Lower Sackville:

What are the units being broken down into – size etc. accessible living, active living, the type of residential units inside the building.

Dean MacDougall – We can't regulate the user only the use. The building code would require certain things and that would be applied to the site. 1-2-3 bedrooms units can be broken down in the agreement.

(xi) Wade Marshall, Quaker Crescent:

Glendale was supposed to be upgraded to a 4-lane road and it still hasn't happened and that is why there is greenspace on either side of Glendale. On the small building, the drive-thru building, there is a noise factor that goes with that. Don't want to hear – can I take your order please. Can there be consideration on how the speakers/microphones are placed to mitigate that. Instead of going two 6-story buildings you may have had a better reception with three 3-story buildings. Until the city and the province upgrade the infrastructure a responsible Community Council should put a ban on any development within the First Lake watershed. Trust – really hopes that the city is really listening to what is being said tonight. The trust issue is a major factor. We don't want this in our community – this is a bedroom community and should be just R-1 and R-2 homes.

(xii) Public:

Can Councillor Russell go to council now and say the community doesn't want it – scrap it.

Dean MacDougall – no it must be tabled first at first reading. Right now, it hasn't been tabled.

(xiii) Jason Brison, Millwood area:

Would love it if this was close to me. Agrees the infrastructure needs to be upgraded. Thinks HRM in general need to grow up (height wise). Thinks it is a joke how small Halifax and NS still is. Thinks Sackville is a great place to break that height limit and welcomes new development.

(xiv) Public:

Is this going to help at all? How long before this goes to council?

Dean MacDougall – absolutely. Encouraged to read Policy CC6 to see what this proposal is evaluated against. It should go to council within the next 6 months.

(xv) Tom, Polara Drive:

We keep our son out of the water at the beach at First Lake because of the water quality. Concerns around water management and waste management of this development. Not opposed to the development just want to echo the same concerns that have already been raised. Pathway on Quaker Crescent is in disrepair and keeps getting worse with every storm. Could the Staples building be redeveloped into apartments sense Staples is closing. Would HRM be able to enforce that some units be Social Housing units? Will there be minutes available from this?

Dean MacDougall – we can't enforce that as it is not considered in the Sackville Plan. It is proposed to change under the Suburban Plan. Meeting notes will be available online once completed.

(xvi) Greg, other side of Metropolitan Ave:

Does think development like this is important. Areas like this need to evolve and get an influx of a variety of zoning and density to accommodate better transit and to encourage better hubs and decrease the traffic. The infrastructure stuff is incredibly important, the sewage in the lake is

terrible. It is important that this that does get resolved. Doesn't think stopping all development will resolve the issues that have be tabled. There could be a chicken and the egg problem here; having more people in Sackville could led to better transit and more buses, could led to better infrastructure because there could be more money available for Sackville to be putting into that stuff. People were saying the school system here hasn't had enough improvements – maybe there just isn't enough money to go around for it. More people, more variety, and more density might improve that stuff.

(xvii) Public:

If you clean up the sewer issue that may cleanup the blue-green algae problem along with e coli.

(xviii) Kathy Normar, Cavalier Drive:

The 2022 report that came out to First Lake residents regarding e coli in the sewer system and the lake. Were the developers aware of this before they started their plan? If so, are you going to help clean that up? Now that that study is available should that not make you reconsider your thoughts about the development.

Developer – the study we conducted was pre the 2022 study.

Dean MacDougall – is currently talking with Elizabeth Montgomery about the study. The report is being taken into consideration.

(xix) Peggy Hefler, Polara Drive:

Requested answers to her earlier questions. Issues with big trucks driving around, during construction, while young children area walking around for school etc. – safety concerns. These things need to be considered before the permitting stage. Property values.

Dean MacDougall – 1 story commercial building with possible drive-thru. Noise pollution – there is a city by-law and is one way that is dealt with. Noise pollution from the development – we would look at ways to mitigate it in design. There will be noise as part of the construction. There will be a construction mitigation plan required at the permitting stage if this is approved. Dean has offered to do some research of the impact of development of property values.

(xx) Albert Scott, Cavalier Dr:

Doesn't have a problem with commercial hubs as the city expands but to impose commercial hubs on an existing community is going to create problems – as was already brought up. This will be detracting from the quality of life and property values in the area. This is not the place for it. Developers like to exploit natural amenities and that is what First Lake is – a natural amenity. Does not support congestion and population increase per square mile. This is not the place for it!

4. Closing Comments

Mr. MacDougall thanked everyone for their participation in the meeting.

5. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m.