



January 18, 2024

Halifax Land Development & Subdivision

Re: Case PLANAPP 2023-01594 – Development Agreement Application for 143-153 Sackville Drive

Ms. Melissa Eavis,

Reference is made to your review comments dated January 5, 2024. Please note the following:

Planning Policy Analysis: Sackville Drive Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy

Part 5.5 Pinehill - Cobequid Designation: Policy LD-1

- a. The architectural layout prioritizes flexibility, offering adaptable spaces that can cater to the unique needs of diverse niche markets. Modular interiors and multi-functional areas provide an environment where businesses can customize their space to reflect their brand identity and cater to their specific clientele.
- b. The proposed building would provide residences for a variety of demographics including accessible units, two and one bedroom units with open and flexible designs.
- c. The building embraces a mixed-use development approach, integrating residential spaces with commercial, retail, and recreational areas. This not only adds convenience to the daily lives of residents but also creates a vibrant and dynamic atmosphere. The presence of diverse amenities within easy reach enhances the overall appeal of the building as a residential destination.
- d. Along with the natural elevating topography, the architectural design maximizes visual transparency, ensuring that both commercial and residential spaces have unobstructed views of the Little Sackville River. Large windows and balconies are strategically positioned to capture picturesque views of the water, creating a visually appealing environment.
- e. The design incorporates iconic architectural elements that capture attention and serve as visual markers for the entry onto Sackville Drive. Distinctive features, such as a unique facade, contribute to the building's identity and make it instantly recognizable from a distance.
- f. Vehicular entrances to the building are strategically located as far away from the street corner as possible to maximize the efficiency of vehicular movement along Sackville Drive and Hillcrest Avenue.
- g. The articulated masonry facade that lines the two streets commands the focus of the development from a pedestrian point of view.

Part 6.2 Architecture - Policy SS-4(a)

- a. The low-rise section of the buildings and main entrances are oriented to the streets.
- b. Other than the parking, Level 1 is occupied almost entirely by commercial and amenity spaces both inside and outside. The ground floor podium will be the primary outdoor amenity area with a mix of hardscape and softscape areas. This area will be made accessible to building residents and visitors through sidewalks, elevators and staircases for varying mobility levels. This landscaped space will be designed to accommodate a variety of activities, including communal gatherings, relaxation areas, seating, and greenery will contribute to a well-rounded and inviting environment.
- c. We have incorporated a lower-scale streetwall with a generous setback along Sackville Drive. This architectural feature ensures a transition in height, reducing the visual impact on the nearby low-density commercial and residential area. Introducing enhanced landscaping along the building perimeter and within setback areas can further soften the visual impact. Masonry is proposed on the low-rise to contribute to the visual impact of the built form from the surrounding buildings. Colours and textures can also complement the surrounding context and will be integral to improving the overall impact of the built form.
- d. A desktop wind study and shadow study will be considered as we move forward with this application. Any direction on how a shadow study should be done would be appreciated.
- e. Commercial spaces have the opportunity for 'spill-out' to the exterior for display items or patio seating.
- f. Stepbacks have been incorporated into the design above the streetwall and at the penthouse level to distinguish the building's bottom, middle & top.
- g. A landscape plan can be developed as we move along to fulfill this requirement..
- h. Some streetscape elements and furniture opportunities include benches, bicycle racks and a mix of hard and softscaping.
- i. Vehicular entrances to the building are strategically located as far away from the street corner as possible to maximize the efficiency of vehicular movement along Sackville Drive and Hillcrest Avenue.
- j.. Significant natural and cultural features on the site will be identified and protected where appropriate.
- k. A lighting plan should be provided as we move forward with this application.

Part 10.3 Land Use By-law - Policy I-5

- a. See Site Plan for architecture, landscaping areas, parking and driveway entrances.
- b. We believe that the proposal is not premature or inappropriate by reason of any listed factors.
- c. Noted.

Schedule D - A - Street level/siting design guidelines

- No blank walls are proposed.
- The building is proposed to be setback a generous distance from Sackville Drive to allow for commercial spill out and/or outdoor amenity opportunities. See site plan.
- A future landscape plan will aim to ease some of these concerns. .
- Large nonreflective minimally tinted window openings are located at ground level.
- Front elevation of the building is provided.
- Frequent street-facing pedestrian entrances are provided. See floor plans.
- Pedestrian openspace are provided. See site plan.
- Outdoor seating will be shown on the landscape plan.
- Only small spatial gaps are proposed in the streetwall.
- Small side yard setback is provided. See site plan.
- Functional exterior outdoor space is provided along the Sackville Drive street frontage. See site plan.
- A landscape plan should be provided in the future.
- Pedestrian connections along street right-of-ways are maintained.
- The vast majority of parking is located indoors. Any outdoor parking is located near the rear of the lot.
- The streetwall is designed to be below 35' tall from ground level.
- A landscape plan should be provided in the future.
- Commercial, amenity, and most residential units are all oriented toward the streets to share their internal activity with the street.
- We designed the ground level to be highly transparent from Sackville Drive.
- Our building is proposed with a large setback. This should reduce the concern of sun access and wind tunnel effects. See site plan.

Schedule D - B - Residential Architecture

- We integrated highly transparent streetwall using a mix of glazing and masonry to emphasize traditional architectural image. See elevations.
- The flat roof will be outlined with various parapet heights to create interesting roof lines and emphasize the residential entrance location. See elevations.

-We've reduced the perceived height and bulk of the proposed building by using a setback in the streetwall, and varying the materials from the low-rise to the mid-rise. The mass is further broken up by articulating the facade to emphasize the building corner and residential entrance along Sackville Drive. See elevations

-We oriented the building to face Sackville Drive. See site plan.

-We've provided substantial window areas facing the street. See elevations.

-We oriented the building to face Sackville Drive. The residential entrance is oriented towards the street as well. See site plan.

-We've incorporated molding on the top of the streetwall. See elevations

-Awnings are provided above the residential and commercial entrances.

-We are planning to shield any rooftop equipment with landscaping.

-Utility lines will be underground where possible. Utility equipment will be strategically placed with intention to be screened.

Schedule D - C - Commercial Architecture

-Compatible commercial buildings within the area are not articulated in an appropriate way for today's policies.

-The building will not be stylized for advertising purposes.

-Rear and side facades are being designed with similar detailing as the front.

-Long continuous walls are limited.

-We've articulated the facade to provide building relief.

-The entrance doors, business signs and lighting are meant to be attractive, visible, but not outlandish.

Schedule D - D - Landscaping

-We'll provide street trees where possible in the public right-of-way for an improved streetscape. The trees will be planted using HRM's planting standards.

-We'll retain street trees where possible.

-New trees will be planted consistent to the standards maintained by HRM.

Schedule D - E - Parking

-Parking and parking entrances are located to the rear of the building. See site plan.

-The majority of parking is located underground.

-Interior parking areas will be screened with walls. Exterior parking will be screened by landscaping.

-No parking is proposed in the front to maintain a clean street frontage.

-Shade trees will be provided. A landscape plan should be provided in the future.

-The number of surface parking spots proposed are over 30 spaces to ensure adequate parking for the amount of commercial space and guest spaces..

-Pedestrian walkways on the site do not cross driveways.

-Bicycle parking is located near the commercial entrance. See site plan.

-A landscape plan should be provided in the future.

Schedule D - F - Fencing and Screening

-We'll integrate fencing into the design. See site plan.

-We will not use chain link fencing.

-Utility structures will be screened using solid materials when possible.

-The fencing will be designed to be compatible with the building design.

Schedule D - G - Exterior Lighting Design

-All exterior lighting will be architecturally integrated with the building style, material & colours.

-Lights will not be directed off-site.

-Pedestrian bollards will be 3-4' in height.

-Height of fixtures should be no greater than 16' high, especially since we're next to a residential area.

Schedule D - H - Signs

-Signage will be intended to be sized appropriately and not overwhelm the architectural character of the building with indirect lighting. Flashing and moving signs will not be permitted.

Regards,

Greg Johnston

Architect, NSAA