



**HALIFAX PENINSULA PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
October 11, 2017**

**PRESENT:** Ashley Morton, Chair  
Sarah MacDonald, Vice Chair  
Councillor Lindell Smith  
Councillor Waye Mason  
Amy Siciliano  
Jeana MacLeod  
Michael Bradfield  
Grant Cooke

**REGRETS:** Joe Metlege  
Sunday Miller

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jacob JeBailey, Principal Architect, WM Fares Architects

**STAFF:** Andrew Bone, Planner  
Phoebe Rai, Legislative Assistant  
Alicia Wall, Legislative Support

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

*The agenda, reports, supporting documents, and information items circulated to the Halifax Peninsula Planning Advisory Committee are available online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca).*

*The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m., the Committee adjourned at 8:55 p.m.*

## **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Maritime Hall, Halifax Forum.

The Chair invited the attendees to continue browsing the information billboards.

## **2. PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING**

**2.1 Case 20577 - Application by WM Fares Architects to change the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law to allow an 8-storey building, with commercial and residential uses, on properties on Robie, Compton and Cunard Streets. The proposal includes 6014, 6018, and 6020 Cunard Street, 2180, 2178, 2176, 2166, 2164 and 2162 Robie Street, and 6025 Compton Avenue, Halifax which are located at the corners of Robie Street, Compton Avenue and Cunard Street, Halifax.**

The Chair invited Andrew Bone, Planner to present Case 20577. Bone indicated they were the main point of contact for this application. The speaker encouraged people to make contact with any questions or concerns. Bone explained that the purpose of the meeting was to provide information and explain the process concerning this proposal, and that no decisions were being made.

Bone advised that this proposal involves seven properties that under the Land Use By-law are currently zoned R-2 with a designation of Medium Density Residential. They provided information regarding the surrounding areas, indicating some properties on Cunard are zoned C-2-A (minor commercial) and that currently, there are two existing multiple-unit buildings on the corner of Cunard and Robie designated minor commercial, High Density Residential with an R-3 zoning.

The Speaker stated that the Municipality was in the process of updating the Land Use By-laws and the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy through the Centre Plan. Bone went on to say the draft Centre Plan has been released, and although not approved, Council has directed staff to consider the Centre Plan when making planning decisions. They advised that one of the properties is not located within the proposed Centre Plan corridor and Council has asked that the application be considered despite this, due to the majority of the site being located within the proposed corridor.

Bone explained the current planning documents do not enable this proposal and an amendment to the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy would be required. The Planner further indicated that Council has directed staff to consider five key planning principles being transition, pedestrian oriented, human-scale, building design and context sensitivity. Bone outlined the planning application process, noting that following the public meeting, staff would bring the matter to the Planning Advisory Committee for a recommendation before drafting a staff report with recommendation for the Halifax and West Community Council to consider. The process would culminate in a Public Hearing held at Regional Council.

Jacob JeBailey, Principal Architect, WM Fares Architects took the floor to present on behalf of the applicant. The speaker indicated their desire to receive and document feedback and provide the information they have to date. JeBailey indicated some concerns have already been heard regarding the main residential entrance. The Architect proceeded to show street view images of the properties and explained that as architects they take into consideration the character of the neighborhood, considering things like porches, widths, distances and heights, etc. They indicated the building was 8 stories at highest and that they felt it was important to incorporate open-space into the design. JeBailey provided site data stating the lot coverage is 72%, commercial area at grade is 6500 square feet, there are 95+ parking units below grade and 95 units, with a minimum of 30% to be family, meaning 2+ bedrooms. The parking entrance is situated on Compton Avenue and they have a traffic consultant to determine where the optimal entrances should be based on safety and traffic.

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The Chair advised the audience as to the type of feedback that would be most helpful to the Committee and things to keep in mind when commenting. Morton advised that the speakers will have five minutes to speak.

Steve Parcell, Halifax stated the proposal on the website differs from the proposal received at the meeting. Parcell went on to say that the website contained a lack of important information concerning parking spaces, number of units, design rationale, wind analysis, etc. The speaker indicated the Centre Plan allows 4 stories, up to 6, however this development is 8. They wanted to note that there is a parking garage exiting onto Compton Avenue and expressed concerns that Compton Avenue will become a back service lane. Parcell also feels the amount of erosion that is expected on Cunard and Robie is excessive.

Janet Stevenson, Halifax expressed disappointment with the proposal. Stevenson would like to see the proponent have to show how their proposal meets the planning policies. The speaker feels this development is not context sensitive to the neighborhood and that Compton Avenue will no longer be a quiet street, and will become a traffic lane. Stevenson feels this proposal is contrary to the Centre Plan as it is not pedestrian friendly and does nothing to reduce traffic.

Andrea Arbic, Lawrence Street feels the transition is insufficient and in terms of human-scale, the building is massive and has no relationship with the surrounding areas. Arbic indicated there are no heritage features and the building does nothing to enhance the streetscape. They noted that this proposal is another exception and is wondering why the application is being considered.

Allen Robertson, Vienna Street asked if the current R-2 zoning allows a thirty-five foot height.

The Chair indicated they would get an answer to that question.

Robertson feels the building is far too big and that there is no transition between the building and the houses on either side. The speaker expressed concern regarding traffic and indicated disagreement with the statement that Robie was a six-lane road, as it is only six lanes in front of this building. Robertson concluded with noting there is a bad intersection one block away.

Jennifer Berry, Compton Avenue agrees that the area near building needs improvement, but feels this building is too big and would like to see fewer units. Berry echoed previous concerns regarding increased traffic on Compton Avenue.

Pat Whitman, Wellington Street feels the location of the front door is too close to a bus stop and the corner of Cunard and Robie, as there would be cars stopping in the front of the building and pedestrians coming and going. Whitman would like to see the location of the front door moved further down the street. They feel all of the buildings are starting to look the same and would like to see something more interesting.

Candace Stevenson, North Street agrees with much of the concerns previously expressed and feels the application should not be approved as an exception due to the fact that the developer was aware of the zoning at the time of acquisition. Stevenson would like to see Council enforce the rules currently in place and feels the objective is being lost.

Susan Love, Compton Avenue described Compton Avenue as a family-oriented street whose residents get together for street parties and barbeques. Love feels this development will negatively impact the community.

Andrew Kent, Compton Avenue agrees the area needs work and would like to see a development that benefits the area. Kent is frustrated with the process and indicated the plans provided at the meeting were not found on the website. They would have liked to see developer engage the residents in order to incorporate their input into the design.

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Stephanie Robertson, Vienna Street asked the architect why glass was selected as a prominent material for the building and noted it is more of a safety risk than other building materials. Robertson further indicated that they would like to see the design of the building in context with the surrounding properties.

Jacob JeBailey responded to the question by providing some benefits to building with glass are contrast and natural light.

Beverley Miller, South Street feels the existing neighborhood, as it stands meets the five key planning principles that Council wanted considered. Miller would like to know why the developer is asking for special changes and feels it would set a bad precedent for future developers in requesting exceptions. The speaker requested more realistic drawings from staff. They further inquired as to whether or not any specific analysis has been done regarding density. Miller concluded with stating they would like to see the application denied.

Andrew Bone responded to Miller indicating to date, no major analysis has been done on this project.

Darryl Dutton, Williams Street stated they used to live on Compton Avenue and agrees the area needs improvement. Dutton indicated they like the building, but feels it is slightly too high and would like the esthetics to show more heritage features. Dutton concluded they like the idea of commercial and inquired about a roundabout.

Andrew Bone indicated they have heard talk in the public concerning potential redesign of the other intersections around the Commons and that they spoke to one of the engineers, and they were not aware of any projects. Bone stated a more detailed consultation with the development engineer and the traffic services group will be conducted subsequent to this meeting and any issues will be addressed in the staff report.

Karen Gunther, Halifax, inquired on shadow studies.

The Planner indicated updates to the project will be added to the website as they become available.

Shannon Kam, Compton Avenue stated they like the design, but not for this neighborhood and agrees with some of the neighbors that the area needs work. Kam likes the commercial space aspect of the development; the concerns are with the upkeep of the building.

Judith Cabrita, Halifax indicated they would like the developer to incorporate the character of Halifax in the design, and feels it does not reflect the history of Halifax. Cabrita concluded with asking if all five key planning principles needed to be incorporated in the design or if some, but not all would be acceptable.

Andrew Bone responded by stating Council has given direction to consider all five of the key planning principles.

Carol Godsman, West Street advised they have lived there for 21 years and feels they are being boxed in by 8-12 story buildings. Godsman expressed traffic concerns on Robie and feels the second story overhang is oppressive.

Matt Lordery, Compton Avenue, an existing resident in one of the houses being demolished, is not opposed to development on this block but feels living on the Peninsula is not what it used to be. Lordery agrees the existing buildings look rundown from the outside but indicated they were quite nice on the inside.

**3. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Alicia Wall  
Legislative Assistant