



**HALIFAX PENINSULA PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
April 9, 2018**

PRESENT: Sarah MacDonald, Chair
Jeana MacLeod, Vice Chair
Grant Cooke
Jason Cooke
Margo Grant
Councillor Lindell Smith
Deputy Mayor Wayne Mason

REGRETS: Ashley Morton
Houssam Elokda
Mathew Novak

STAFF: Tyson Simms, Planner III, Planning and Development
Sharon Chase, Legislative Assistant

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.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m., the Committee adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Harbour Suites, Westin Hotel, Halifax.

2. PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

Case 20159- Application by Kassner Goodspeed Architects to change the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and Halifax Peninsula Land Use By-law to allow for a renovation to an existing apartment building at the northwest corner of South Park Street and Victoria Road, Halifax (South Park Towers), including a 9-storey addition on two adjacent properties and adding ground floor commercial space.

The Chair invited Tyson Simms, Planner, to present Case 20159. Simms reviewed the steps in the planning process and the role and opportunity for public engagement.

This proposal is for a 9 storey mixed use development which would consolidate 3 parcels of land. The site context was reviewed. It falls within the South End Secondary Plan area of the Municipal Planning Strategy with the existing building zoned high density residential (R3) and the two adjacent properties zoned medium density residential (R2A). The Heritage Advisory Committee will also review this case as the property is adjacent to registered Heritage Properties. This site-specific application is in general alignment with the proposed Centre Plan. The planning principles of: transition, pedestrian orientation, human scale, building design and context sensitivity are being considered.

Richard Kassner, of Kassner Goodspeed Architects, was then invited to speak to the application. In May 2015 a meeting was hosted by the developer to receive public input during the design phase. 30-40 people attended and based on their feedback some changes to the design were made. Kassner noted that ceramic and brick were being used for their durability and that the commercial space was designed to reflect the 1960's style of commercial buildings which is the era of the original building. The architect then reviewed the five planning principles and indicated how they had been addressed in this proposal. They shared the shadow study results. The following aspects of the proposal were also highlighted: elevations, bike and underground parking, finishes, energy efficiency of the new envelope of the building, and landscaping. Kassner explained that the two wooden buildings on the adjacent properties did not have any truly heritage aspects of merit and there was no attempt to echo their design in the proposal.

The Chair reviewed the ground rules for the public participation portion of the meeting and invited the audience to share their feedback. The Chair advised that the speakers have five minutes to speak.

Rebecca Jameson, Halifax, expressed concern around transition to the surrounding 3 storey buildings. Making a big non-conforming building bigger is a mistake. Pedestrians cannot be safely seen by vehicles exiting the existing parkade and the new design does not appear to address this issue.

David Miller, Victoria Road, noted the massing of the building will result in the loss of late afternoon sun on Victoria Road and create a wind tunnel on South Park Street, both of which negatively impact the highly valued aspect of a walkable neighbourhood. They also questioned the decision to eliminate the heritage type buildings. They suggested that the massing was too much and that innovative design was needed. Miller shared that Ashville N.C. was a good example of how development and planning innovation can work.

Rick Gibson, South Park Street, felt that this proposal doesn't fit the Victorian Neighbourhood or complement its heritage characteristics. They noted that the 3-foot podium has pushed the ground floor out closer to the street, leaving no room for landscaping. Gibson suggested that parking, driveway and wind problems will increase and there was a lack of transition to the 9 storey building. The removal of a 100-year-old oak tree was also noted.

Michael McCurdy, Victoria Road, attended the developer's meeting but doesn't remember the meeting as relayed by Richard Kassner. Their main concern is that the facades and Victorian fronts of the two buildings be preserved at the very least. McCurdy felt that parking should be included in the rent to prevent residents from parking on the street. The time period and disruption of additional construction was also of concern.

Chris Beamont, Halifax, expressed concern about the re-development of an already non-conforming property and asked about the Floor Area Ration (FAR) for this proposal and whether it was in line with the proposed Centre Plan?

Tyson Simms, Planner, confirmed that it does not meet the most recent draft of the Centre Plan but that this application must be considered using the June 2017 draft as the guide along with the five planning principles.

Chris A, Wellington Street, also attended the developer's meeting where the public did express concern over the two Victorian buildings. They felt that the measurement of the step-backs speaks to transition and that they were not quite enough. They felt design variation and articulation could have been better used to cut down on wind on the street.

Michael McCurdy, Victoria Road, spoke for a second time. They also recall that different public feedback was shared at the developer's public meeting. They noted that additional commercial businesses will affect vehicle traffic in the area and was concerned about parking and what type of businesses they would be.

The Chair called for any other speakers and as there were none closed the public feedback portion of the meeting.

Tyson Simms, Planner, reviewed the next steps and opportunities for public participation and shared their contact information encouraging the audience to contact them with any further questions.

The public was thanked for their attendance and participation.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Sharon Chase
Legislative Assistant