



**COMMUNITY DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
APRIL 13, 2018  
MINUTES**

PRESENT: Fred Morley, Chair  
Gaynor Watson-Creed, Vice Chair  
William Book  
Eric Burchill  
Christopher Daly  
Dale Godsoe  
Rima Thomeh  
Councillor Lindell Smith  
Councillor Sam Austin

STAFF: Jacob Ritchie, Urban Design Program Manager  
Carl Purvis, Planning Applications Program Manager  
Liam MacSween, Legislative Assistant  
Simon Ross-Siegel, 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 are online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca).*

*The meeting was called to order at 11:40 p.m., and the Committee adjourned at 1:35 p.m.*

## **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m.

## **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 28, 2018**

MOVED by William Book, seconded by Dale Godsoe.

**THAT the minutes of February 28, 2018 be approved as presented.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

## **3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

The agenda was accepted as distributed

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

## **4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE**

## **5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE**

## **6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS**

### **6.1 Staff presentation – CDAC Feedback: Integration of Previously Provided Comments**

The following was before the Community Design Advisory Committee:

- A staff presentation “CDAC Feedback: Integration of Previously Provided Comments”, dated April 13, 2018

Jacob Ritchie presented before Committee on comments received regarding the Centre Plan and actions and responses to these, including the following topics:

- site specific issues arising from the Centre Plan;
- other concept specific issues, such as former places of worship, parking and transportation infrastructure, urban agriculture, and floor area ratios;
- key objectives, and managing expectations;
- measuring regulatory impact;
- urban structure affordability;
- monitoring the Centre Plan framework;
- jobs and economic development;
- vision and future proofing the Centre Plan;
- HRM culture and resources;
- pedestrian first objectives and service standards;
- government coordination;
- the role of CDAC under the Centre Plan;
- heritage preservation;
- harbour development;
- development in the corridors;
- uniformity of height; and
- definitions of urban structures.

Several Committee Members communicated concerns about affordability and possible rent increases. Staff expressed that the Centre Plan operates in the context of using the existing tools to achieve this objective. While the municipality does not, for example, have rent control powers, the city can work within a market by controlling what development is allowed. Increasing supply of available residential and commercial space, and opening zoning to permit broader use are intended to increase the supply of rental units and thereby lower rents. However, staff noted that it was a noted weakness in the Centre Plan that these strategies are the best tool available at this time, though not necessarily the best tools overall.

Regarding the monitoring framework, staff expressed that the municipality's business service department undertakes, in addition to ensuring planners meet the municipality's development targets, to communicate the role and value of these targets to the public. Several Committee Members sought to clarify some confusion regarding comments in the Centre Plan suggesting in one case a one year review and in others a five year review. Staff stated that the mention of a one year review is likely meant to refer to a first year housekeeping review period, and following this a full review of the Centre Plan in five years following implementation.

There was general discussion regarding concerns about office space moving to suburban areas. Staff expressed that while the Centre Plan does not and cannot prevent this, it can incentivize competing actions and trends, namely by encouraging central development. Planners are also working with the department of finance to change the tax code to further development of regional tax districts as permitted in the HRM Charter. Taxpayers can thereby pay their taxes on a moving average, so that when assessments rise, taxpayers can phase the cost increases over a longer time period and thereby absorb increase shocks.

Jacob Ritchie noted that though some have expressed the belief that the city's population estimates are inflated in order to allow for further development, this is not accurate. Staff clarified that figures regarding the extrapolated population growth are based on two sources from Statistic Canada, the population annual estimate and Canada census data. Staff has chosen to use the population annual estimate because, unlike the census, it is tracked and calculated annually and therefore is likely more reflective of the current trends. However, Statistics Canada stands by both figures and the Centre Plan cites these when discussing population growth.

Jacob Ritchie noted that regarding the current circulated draft of the height map, there are three or four asterisks and explained to Committee that these refer to several development projects for which work has been performed which predates the Centre Plan, and there are ongoing conversations regarding how the height and setbacks of these existing plans will work with the plan. Planners want to incorporate these elements into the plan to communicate certainty to landowners and community stakeholders regarding their expectations. Staff plans to circulate a memorandum to Committee in the near future with further details regarding these projects.

## **7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS**

### **7.1 Correspondence**

#### **7.1.1 Correspondence from EDM Planning Services**

Correspondence from EDM Planning Services dated April 5, 2018 was before Committee. Chair Fred Morley stated that since similar correspondence is currently being received by the Committee and will continue to be received, he proposed that it was his intention to collect correspondence and deal with all similar such correspondence at a later time, rather than dealing with each on an ad hoc basis.

## **8. REPORTS**

### **8.1 STAFF**

### **8.1.1 Update – Feedback from March/April Consultation**

Chair Fred Morley stated that as there were a number of details relating to the Centre Plan Package A which will benefit from the Committee's thorough and structured review, he had discussed with staff how to best organize the Committee's time to concentrate on these issues. Jacob Ritchie concurred and expressed that it was staff's plan to collect the results of the public engagement sessions and present these to the Committee in late April. Following the Committee's fulsome review in April, staff hopes to return to the Committee in May following the final submission deadline with a report with comments listed in tabular form integrating the results of the Committee's review. Staff clarified for Committee Members that the reports and feedback coming before the Committee will come with staff's opinion and synthesis of the comments and feedback, so as to assist the Committee in its review and to avoid unnecessary duplication. Chair Fred Morley also encouraged Committee Members to continue to attend and participate in community engagement sessions as they continue to be held.

Several Committee Members expressed concern regarding the challenging schedule of work to be completed and hoped staff could provide a realistic end date, while other Committee Members expressed the opinion it was a better practice to provide short achievable mid-point dates rather than an overly optimistic end date. Further to this some Committee Members suggested a prioritized set of issues requiring the Committee's attention would be helpful to improve the efficiency of its review, and staff concurred. Staff stated the items which would likely benefit most from the Committee's prioritized review would involve issues where there is disagreement between groups where both have valid opinions and a compromise is not possible or feasible.

### **8.1.2 Discussion of Significant Issues/Concerns with Package A**

This item was not addressed at this meeting of the Committee and will be addressed at a future meeting of the Committee.

### **8.1.3 Discussion regarding Future Agendas**

This item was not addressed at this meeting of the Committee and will be addressed at a future meeting of the Committee.

## **9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – May 23, 2018**

**NEXT MEETING – Wed - April 25, 2018**

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Simon Ross-Siegel  
Legislative Support