

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chair and Members of the Halifax Peninsula Planning Advisory Committee

FROM: Kate Greene, Policy & Strategic Initiatives Program Manager, Planning and Development

DATE: August 17, 2017

SUBJECT: Site-specific SMPS amendment requests within the Regional Centre Boundary

On August 1, 2017, Regional Council considered a staff report on 22 proposals for new planning policy in the Regional Centre. This staff report can be found at:

<https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/170801rc14110.pdf>

On August 1, 2017, Regional Council directed staff to continue processing 12 proposals, subject to:

- The proposal generally aligning with the June 2017 Centre Plan document (Centre Plan) relative to Urban Structure, Height, and Floor Area Ratio; and
- The proposal addressing the planning principles of transition, pedestrian-orientation, human-scale, building design, and context-sensitive (these principles are described later in this memo).

On August 1, 2017 Regional Council also directed staff to continue processing 2 proposals (including proposal #6 noted below – Ben’s Bakery Redevelopment) irrespective of the Centre Plan direction due to unique circumstances under existing policy.

Each of these 14 proposals involve a request for new policy and regulations, as the current policy and regulations do not permit the development as proposed. Each proponent has requested a secondary municipal planning strategy (SMPS) amendment, and has asked Council to create new site-specific policy to enable the development proposal. Council supported further analysis and consideration of the requests for new policy by directing staff to continue process 14 of the proposals.

Of these 14 proposals, 10 of these are located on the Halifax Peninsula and will be considered by the Halifax Peninsula Planning Advisory Committee (HPPAC). For an overview of the 10 proposals, please see Attachment A and B (which form part of the staff report above), and are appended to this memo for ease of reference. Halifax Peninsula Planning Advisory Committee **will review** the proposals numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 6. Proposals numbered 15, 16, 20 and 8 are all located in Dartmouth and **will not** be reviewed by the HPPAC.

SMPS Amendments within the Regional Centre

Each of the 14 proposals are closely aligned with the Centre Plan process. A SMPS amendment request and the development of a Secondary Municipal Plan like the Centre Plan are similar exercises with the same end goal; both result in the creation of new policy and supporting land use regulations for properties. Plan amendment requests are site-specific requests for new policy and regulations, while the Centre Plan looks more broadly and comprehensively at all the properties contained within the Centre Plan boundary, including those individual properties.

In June 2016, as staff began drafting detailed Centre Plan policy, a memo was provided for Regional Council indicating that Planning & Development would continue to receive new applications to amend the existing SMPS provisions along with others that were in progress. At that time staff indicated that the SMPS applications would move forward, and that we would also ensure that the processes align with development of the Centre Plan policy direction. Staff also suggested that as the policy was drafted, more information would be provided to the applicants indicating whether the proposals were in line with the draft Centre Plan. It was indicated that as the applications moved through the process they would be informed by the Centre Plan and the broader understanding of the Regional Centre that has been obtained to date.

In analyzing the proposals to date, staff have considered the rationale provided by each applicant, the change in circumstances since the time of the writing of the plan, and the merit of the proposal based on site and surrounding neighbourhood conditions and planning principles. Staff have also considered the current direction of the Centre Plan document. While the Centre Plan is not yet a regulatory document, it is important to note that on June 13, 2017 Regional Council authorized the direction contained within the Centre Plan as a framework for amending existing planning documents and developing new planning documents as may be necessary to implement the Centre Plan direction.

The Centre Plan employs the same planning principles staff would typically use in assessing a SMPS amendment proposal, but does so with the benefit of having more research, study and citizen engagement than would be the case for any individual proposal. It is a more comprehensive approach to determining how the city should strategically grow, based on best practice and planning principles. As each proposal comes forward to HPPAC, staff will indicate how the proposal relates to the June 13 2017 Centre Plan document.

HPPAC Schedule

The table below outlines our anticipated schedule for each of the Case Files, as aligned with the meetings of the HPPAC. Maintaining this schedule is important to the timely delivery of these applications, particularly in consideration of the timing of the Centre Plan. Proposals which have an asterisk beside the reference name also require a Public Information Meeting, hosted by the HPPAC. During this timeframe, we also anticipate there will be enabled applications that will come forward during this period, and we will closely with the Chair and Clerk's office to prioritize the work for each agenda.

Tentative PPAC Meeting Date	Reference #	Case #	Reference Name
August 28, 2017	6	20323	Ben's Bakery Redevelopment
	2	20148	Robie, Pepperell and Shirley Streets, Halifax
	1	20158	Duffus & Robie Streets, Halifax (Cousins Restaurant)
September 25, 2017 *	10	20632	Agricola Street
	11	20658	Bayers Road and Young Street
TBD	5	20267	Chebucto Road, Beech and Elm Streets **
	9	20577	Robie, Compton and Cunard Streets **
	3	20159	Victoria Road and South Park Street, Halifax **
	4	20218	Spring Garden Road and Robie Street, Halifax **
	13	20761	Robie, College and Carlton Streets **
* Please note this is pending progress on files at August 28 th HPPAC and the addition of any enabled applications to the September 25, 2017 agenda			
** Requiring HPPAC hosted Public Information Meeting			

HPPAC Recommendations

In preparing recommendations about these proposals for Halifax and West Community Council, the Committee is asked to consider if the proposal addresses the following planning principles:

Planning Principles	Description
Transition	The proposed building design recognizes surrounding development, especially adjacent low-scale residential buildings, through built form and landscape transitions. This can include setting proposed buildings back from property lines and stepping down the height of proposed buildings as they approach low-rise buildings. Landscaping can be used as a buffer between properties and to soften building elements.
Pedestrian-oriented	Pedestrian-oriented means that the proposed building and site design prioritizes the needs and comfort of pedestrians. The intent is to create safe, comfortable, and more enjoyable environments for people of all ages and abilities. Pedestrian-oriented design elements include buildings that are oriented to the street, with safe and inviting pedestrian connections through larger sites. Streetwalls should respond to the rhythm and variety of walking speed. Buildings should provide frequent and prominent entrances, transparent windows, weather protection using awnings and recesses, and be designed to mitigate the impact of required parking accesses and utility features.
Human-Scale	Human-scale means the impression of a building when seen in relation to its surroundings, or the size and proportion of parts of a building or its details in relation to its surroundings, that relates in a positive way to the visual and physical experience of a pedestrian. Moderately sized buildings, as well as taller buildings with lower scale podiums and architectural detailing, work together with narrow streets, plazas and small pocket parks to create an intimate environment and comfortable experience. Human scale design makes urban environments more interesting, encourages exploration and draws more people to local shops and services.
Building Design	Design means the overall architectural composition of a building and its orientation on the site. Proposed buildings should provide visual interest from all vantage points, and especially from the street. The building's façade should be articulated vertically and horizontally using a combination of windows, changes to materials and material treatments and other architectural façade elements. Coordinated building elements (like lighting and signage) and site elements (like landscaping) contribute to the overall quality of the design.
Context-sensitive	The proposed building's design respects the character of the surrounding neighbourhood. The scale, form, and materials used respond to the architectural character of the neighbourhood. Next to heritage buildings or streetscapes, the proposed building complements and enhances the heritage features.

Proposal details for each application can be found at:
<https://www.halifax.ca/business/planning-development/applications/applications-site-specific-smgs-amendments-regional>

Attachment A
Site-Specific SMPS Amendments that will continue to be processed

For the purposes of this document, “Centre Plan” means the Centre Plan document as referenced in the June 13, 2017 Regional Council motion regarding the Centre Plan Adoption Path.

	Application	Existing Land Use and Built Form Details	Proposed Land Use and Built Form	Summary of reason(s) for recommendation	Summary Centre Plan Components			Additional Public Participation
					Urban Structure	Height	FAR	
1.	<p>Application #20158 – Duffus and Robie Streets, Halifax (Cousins Restaurant)</p> <p>Applicant: Paul Skerry Associates on behalf of Cousins Realty Ltd.</p> <p>August 5, 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 existing lots • Cousins Restaurant and Needs Convenience store • Surface parking lot • 1 detached dwelling on Duffus Street 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed-use (commercial and residential) • Maximum 6 storeys, stepping down to 4 storeys • Ground floor commercial uses with residential units on upper floors 	<p>The proposed 6-storey building is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located at an intersection of significant streets • Near services and amenities • In an area envisioned by both current policy and the Centre Plan 	✓	✓	✓	Neighbourhood Questionnaire ⁱ
2.	<p>Application #20148 – Robie, Pepperell and Shirley Streets, Halifax</p> <p>Applicant: Dexel Developments</p> <p>August 7, 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed-use (commercial and residential) • Maximum 14-storey tower on the corner of Robie and Pepperell Streets, with 8-storeys extending south on Robie Street and 3-storeys extending west down Pepperell Street • Ground floor commercial with residential units on upper floors 	<p>The proposed development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located on a major street (Robie) • On a currently underutilized lot • Near taller buildings on Quinpool Road • Generally aligns with the permitted uses and height framework of the Centre Plan 	✓	✓	N/A	Neighbourhood Questionnaire

	Application	Existing Land Use and Built Form Details	Proposed Land Use and Built Form	Summary of reason(s) for recommendation	Summary Centre Plan Components			Additional Public Participation
					Urban Structure	Height	FAR	
3.	<p>Application #20159 – Victoria Road and South Park Street, Halifax</p> <p>Applicant: Kassner Goodspeed Architects on behalf of Eldorado Properties</p> <p>October 4, 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 existing lots 8 storey apartment building (at corner) Two detached dwellings on South Park Street 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed-use (commercial and residential) Renovation of an existing 8-storey apartment building, adding commercial space on the ground level, and a 9-storey addition to the north of the existing building Ground-level commercial and residential units on upper floors 	<p>The proposed development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located on a significant street (South Park) and a local residential street (Victoria) Intended to recapitalize an existing 8-storey apartment building with an addition that will introduce urban design principles to the development Located partially within the Higher Order Residential classification under the Centre Plan 	✓	✓	x	Public Meeting ⁱⁱ
4.	<p>Application #20218 – Spring Garden Road and Robie Street, Halifax</p> <p>Applicant: Dexel Developments</p> <p>October 14, 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 existing lots with a mix of 2 and 3 storey commercial and residential buildings 4 Municipally-Registered Heritage Properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed-use (commercial and residential) A 30-storey tower and a 16-storey tower on an 8-storey podium, with a 4-storey streetwall Retail and an indoor public space on the ground floor of the building, with office and residential units on upper floors 	<p>The proposed development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located at the intersection of two major streets Close to Downtown Halifax, employment centres, services and amenities Near taller buildings Within the Spring Garden Road Centre, which is envisions intensification of height and density under the Centre Plan 	✓	x	N/A	Public Meeting

	Application	Existing Land Use and Built Form Details	Proposed Land Use and Built Form	Summary of reason(s) for recommendation	Summary Centre Plan Components			Additional Public Participation
					Urban Structure	Height	FAR	
5.	<p>Application #20267 – Chebucto Road, Beech and Elm Streets</p> <p>Applicant: WM Fares Architects</p> <p>November 26, 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 existing lots Vacant (former service station) 2 detached dwellings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed-use (commercial and residential) Maximum 5-storey building Ground-level commercial retail space on Chebucto Road with on-site parking, and 56 residential units on upper floors 	<p>The proposed development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located on a major road Mostly designated for commercial and mixed uses Located within the Chebucto Road Corridor under the Centre Plan 	✓	✓	✓	Public Meeting
9.	<p>Application #20577 – Robie, Compton and Cunard Streets</p> <p>Applicant: WM Fares Architects</p> <p>April 25, 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 existing buildings, including a convenience store and residential buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed-use (commercial and residential) Maximum 8-storeys with a 5-storey streetwall Ground floor commercial uses with residential units on upper floors 	<p>The proposed development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located on a major street, at a corner Across from a major public open space Near to Downtown Halifax, hospitals, services and amenities Within the Robie Street Corridor under the Center Plan 	✓	✓	x	Public Meeting
10.	<p>Application #20632 – Agricola Street</p> <p>Applicant: WM Fares Architects</p> <p>June 3, 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 existing lots with a two-storey multi-unit building, and one retail commercial unit (record store) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed-use (commercial and residential) Maximum 5-storeys with a 4 storey streetwall Ground floor commercial with residential units on upper floors 	<p>The proposed development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located on a significant street in North End Halifax, which contains a mix of 2-storey commercial and residential buildings Within the Agricola Street Corridor under the Centre Plan 	✓	✓	✓	Neighbourhood Questionnaire

	Application	Existing Land Use and Built Form Details	Proposed Land Use and Built Form	Summary of reason(s) for recommendation	Summary Centre Plan Components			Additional Public Participation
					Urban Structure	Height	FAR	
11.	<p>Application #20658 – Bayers Road and Young Street</p> <p>Applicant: WM Fares Architects</p> <p>June 7, 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 lots with a mix of commercial buildings and low to medium-density residential uses including single detached dwellings and low-rise multi-unit dwellings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed-use (commercial and residential) Two buildings on a shared parking podium, with partial ground floor commercial on Bayers Road Bayers Road: Maximum 5-storey building with partial ground floor commercial and residential units on upper floors Young Street: 3-storey multi-unit residential building in townhouse form 	<p>The proposed development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located on a major street (Bayers) and residential street (Young) In keeping with existing policy, from a land use perspective Presents an opportunity for comprehensive redevelopment Generally aligned with the form envisioned under the Centre Plan 	✓	✓	✓	Neighbourhood Questionnaire
13.	<p>Application #20761 – Robie, College and Carlton Streets</p> <p>Applicant: Kassner Goodspeed Architects</p> <p>August 10, 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 lots with 6 buildings, 65 total residential units on Robie and College Streets 3 Municipally-Registered Heritage Properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed-use (commercial and residential) A 26-storey tower and a 20-storey tower on a 4-storey podium; commercial uses on the ground level with residential units on upper floors. 	<p>The proposed development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located on a major street (Robie) Close to Downtown Halifax, employment centres, services and amenities Near taller buildings Within the Spring Garden Road Centre under the Centre Plan 	✓	x	N/A	Public Meeting

	Application	Existing Land Use and Built Form Details	Proposed Land Use and Built Form	Summary of reason(s) for recommendation	Summary Centre Plan Components			Additional Public Participation
					Urban Structure	Height	FAR	
15.	<p>Application #20830 – Victoria Road and Queen Street, Downtown Dartmouth</p> <p>Applicant: WM Fares Architects</p> <p>September 28, 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential • Maximum 16-storey residential building with 3-storey streetwall 	<p>The proposed development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located within Downtown Dartmouth's commercial area, where higher residential development may be appropriate • Underutilized (currently vacant) 	<p>N/A – Aligns with draft Downtown Dartmouth SPS and LUB currently under internal review</p>			Neighbourhood Questionnaire
16.	<p>Application #20831 – Canal Street, Downtown Dartmouth</p> <p>Applicant: WM Fares Architects</p> <p>September 28, 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed-use (commercial and residential) • Two buildings with shared underground parking, including: an 18-storey multi-unit residential building with a 4 storey base, and a 21-storey building with a 4-5 storey base, with partial ground floor commercial uses and residential units on partial ground floor and upper floors 	<p>The proposed development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located within Downtown Dartmouth's commercial area, where higher residential development may be appropriate • Subject to current policy which represents a condition that is no longer relevant • Underutilized (currently vacant) • Within the Dartmouth Cove Master Plan area, which envisioned high-density residential/commercial mixed-use development in this area 	<p>N/A – Aligns with draft Downtown Dartmouth SPS and LUB currently under internal review</p>			Neighbourhood Questionnaire

	Application	Existing Land Use and Built Form Details	Proposed Land Use and Built Form	Summary of reason(s) for recommendation	Summary Centre Plan Components			Additional Public Participation
					Urban Structure	Height	FAR	
20.	<p>Application #20981 – 101 King Street, Dartmouth (Opportunity Site A)</p> <p>Applicant: EDM</p> <p>December 2, 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential Townhouses and multi-unit residential buildings in two alternative proposals: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Eight townhouse units, one low-rise multi-unit building; one multi-unit building with a townhouse-style base, stepping up to 7 storeys and then 15 storeys; or Three stacked townhouse blocks; one 15-storey multi-unit tower 	<p>The proposed development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located within Downtown Dartmouth Identified as a Residential Opportunity Site under existing policy Incorporates townhouses and multi-unit residential buildings which meet the intent of existing policy 				Public Meeting

ⁱ “Neighbourhood Questionnaire” indicates that public participation will include a neighbourhood questionnaire sent to surrounding properties owners to solicit feedback regarding the proposal, in addition to a specific web page for this application on the Municipal website; a sign on the subject site which clearly notifies the public about the application; and written notification of any related public hearing.

ⁱⁱ “Public Meeting” indicates that public participation will include hosting a public meeting that aligns with the Centre Plan process, for design feedback on the proposal, in addition to a specific web page for this application on the Municipal website; a sign on the subject site which clearly notifies the public about the application; and written notification of any related public hearing.

Attachment B
Site-Specific SMPS Amendments with Special Merit under existing policy

For the purposes of this document, “Centre Plan” means the Centre Plan document as referenced in the June 13, 2017 Regional Council motion regarding the Centre Plan Adoption Path.

	Application	Existing Land Use and Built Form Details	Proposed Land Use and Built Form	Summary of reason(s) for recommendation	Additional Public Participation
6.	<p>Application #20323 – Ben’s Bakery Redevelopment – Quinpool Road, Pepperell Street, Preston Street, and Shirley Street Halifax</p> <p>Applicant: WSP and Architecture 49 on behalf of Westwood Group</p> <p>December 21, 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former Ben’s Bakery (including a bakery facility, warehouse, and silo building) • 22 lots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed-use (commercial, residential and institutional) • Quinpool Road and north side of Pepperell Street: Maximum 10 storey building with 6-storey streetwall on Quinpool Road; commercial space on ground and second levels, with residential units on upper floors • South side of Pepperell Street: Stacked townhouses and 6-storey Berkeley seniors’ residence • Preston Street: Stacked townhouses • Shirley Street: Two blocks of townhouses 	<p>The proposed development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to existing site-specific policy, which requires examination of alternative residential, commercial, and mixed-use redevelopment options when the bakery has relocated • Located on a unique site, which is current developed with several vacant industrial buildings • Includes freehold and stacked townhouses in keeping with the adjacent low-density residential area • Is located partially within the Quinpool Road Centre under the Centre Plan 	Neighbourhood Mail-out Notification ⁱ
8.	<p>Application #20436 – 102 Albro Lake Road. Dartmouth</p> <p>Applicant: Shelley Dickey Land Use Planning on behalf of Chad Kennedy</p> <p>April 25, 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 storey commercial building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial • Automotive service and repair in an existing commercial building. This would be an expansion of an existing automotive service business that is located on the adjacent property at 240 Victoria Road. 	<p>The proposed development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located on significant streets • Limited to expanding an auto repair business next to the subject site into an existing commercial building 	Neighbourhood Mail-out Notification

ⁱ “Neighbourhood Mail-out Notification” indicates that public participation will include a notice of this proposal sent to surrounding property owners, in addition to a specific web page for this application on the Municipal website; a sign on the subject site which clearly notifies the public about the application; and written notification of any related public hearing.