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Item No. 5 (vi)
Committee of the Whole
August 17, 2021

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Committee of the Whole

SUBMITTED BY: ORIGINAL SIGNED

Andrea Lovasi-Wood for Erica Armstrong, Chair, Design Review Committee

DATE: June 28, 2021

SUBJECT: **Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law (Centre Plan) Package B**

ORIGIN

June 10, 2021 meeting of the Design Review Committee, Item No. 9.1.2.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Downtown Halifax Land Use By-law, section 4(13)(d) provides:

4 (13) The Committee shall:

...

(d) advise Council on potential amendments to regulation and policy to carry out the role and responsibilities of the Committee or to further the intent of this by-law as may be required from time to time.

RECOMMENDATION

The Design Review Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council:

1. Give First Reading and schedule a public hearing to consider the proposed amendments to the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and the Downtown Halifax Land Use Bylaw as set out in Attachments E and F of the staff report dated May 7, 2021.
2. Adopt the proposed Amendments to the Downtown Halifax Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and the Downtown Halifax Land Use By-law as set out in Attachments E and F of the staff report.

BACKGROUND

At their June 10, 2021 meeting, Design Review Committee received a staff recommendation report dated May 7, 2021 pertaining to Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law (Centre Plan) Package B.

For further information, please refer to the staff report dated May 7, 2021¹.

DISCUSSION

At their June 10, 2021 meeting, Design Review Committee considered the staff report dated May 7, 2021 and approved a recommendation to recommend that Regional Council give first reading to Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law (Centre Plan) Package B, schedule a public hearing and adopt the proposed amendments, as set out in Attachments E and F of the staff report dated May 7, 2021.

During Design Review Committee's discussion of Centre Plan Package B and its proposed amendments to the Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law for Downtown Halifax several concerns were discussed. Specifically, Design Review Committee noted that the development of the Design Advisory Committee has presented challenges in that the Design Advisory Committee does not have decision making authority and acts in an advisory role only. The Committee noted that staff and Council should be mindful of how committees will interact when creating and dissolving Committees. Design Review Committee acknowledged the importance of streamlining the site plan approval process but expressed concerns regarding accountability and public engagement. Concerns were expressed with respect to having a Development Officer making all the decisions, in that it runs the risk of human error and differences in the interpretation of legislation. Design Review Committee also noted that special consideration should be given to including the future Cogswell development in the current pedway network should that make sense for the development of that site.

For further information refer to the attached staff report dated May 7, 2021.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As outlined in the staff report dated May 7, 2021.

RISK CONSIDERATION

As outlined in the staff report dated May 7, 2021.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the July 29, 2020 direction of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing under section 14 of the Emergency Management Act, Design Review Committee meetings are being held virtually.

The meeting held on June 10, 2021 was livestreamed and video recordings are available at Halifax.ca.

Design Review Committee agendas and reports are posted on Halifax.ca, and draft minutes of the meeting will be made available on Halifax.ca.

¹ [Staff report dated May 7, 2021](#); [Attachments and Appendixes to May 7, 2021 staff report](#)

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

As outlined in the staff report dated May 7, 2021.

ALTERNATIVES

The Design Review Committee did not discuss alternative recommendations.

For further information on alternatives as it relates to this item, refer to the staff report dated May 7, 2021.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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