

**TOWN PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
November 30, 2020 – 6:00 PM
Zoom Meeting**

PRESENT:	IN ATTENDANCE:
Don Taylor, Member Julianna Bernard, Councillor Bill Thomas, Councillor Ted Fitzgerald, Member Stephen Johnston, Chair Jenn Mantin, Member Wayne Talbot, Councillor	A. Redmond Secretary J. Fox, Director of Planning M. Dolter, CAO A. MacKinnon, Engineer A. Grant, Economic Dev Officer C. Connolly, Planner K. Marchand, Marchand Homes, Developer C. Markides, ZZap Consulting Ltd G. Zwicker, ZZap Consulting Ltd D. Zareski, ZZap Consulting Ltd C. Wallace, ZZap Consulting Ltd M. Bitar, Developer K. MacQuarrie M. Napier, MNA Inc

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, S. Johnston

AGENDA

On motion of T. Fitzgerald 2nd B. Thomas, the agenda was approved as circulated.

MINUTES

On motion of J. Mantin 2nd D. Taylor, the minutes from September 28, 2020, were approved as circulated.

**DEVELOPMENT
AGREEMENT
APPLICATION
OVERVIEW PROCESS**

J. Fox, Director of Planning provided the Committee with an overview of the five-step Development Agreement application process.

**245 ROBIE STREET
DEV AGREE**

C. Connolly, Planner presented an Application Briefing (Step 2) dated November 26, 2020, regarding an application by Strathallen and ZZap Consulting Ltd to demolish the old Sears retail space at the Truro Mall and construct four (4) stand-alone mixed-residential apartment buildings of varying height in the western section of the existing parking lot with a proposed 178 residential units.

T. Fitzgerald questioned the architect on the phasing of the project. The architect advised that this would be a phased development depending on the market analysis. They intend to construct the Townhouses in Phase 1, then proceed with the remaining proposed buildings.

W. Talbot questioned whether a Traffic Impact Study would be required. C. Connolly indicated that the developer is aware that a Traffic Impact Study is required before a development permit is issued.

W. Talbot questioned if the department has received any feedback on the proposed development. C. Connolly indicated that comments have been made on the Town's Facebook page regarding the flood plain but nothing specific regarding the development.

W. Talbot questioned whether the Town's By-laws have height restrictions. C. Connolly indicated that each zone has a set height restriction, however, the development agreement process gives flexibility and options for each proposal.

C. Markides presented an overview of the re-development of the Truro Mall and indicated that this development will appeal to a wide array of tenants, especially young professionals and is very walkable to downtown amenities and noted that the vacancy rate is low in Truro at 1.9 percent as stated by Canada Mortgage and Housing and this residential use will ensure activity at the mall and surrounding businesses and will attract additional retailers and restaurants.

C. Markides indicated that there are 178 proposed residential units with 178 underground parking spaces with 52 surface parking spots for visitors and additional unit parking. The majority of the mall parking lot will be maintained on the other side of the mall.

C. Markides indicated that the townhouse entrance is elevated above the flood level to provide flood protection and additional flood plain measures will be put in place to mitigate those effects and that a stormwater management plan will be completed for this development

C. Markides provided an overview of the development and started with building A, consisting of three-story stacked townhouses with semi-recessed underground parking. The townhouse units will consist of four buildings containing fifty-six dwelling units and will be constructed with wood, brick, and earth tone colors keeping the design similar to existing buildings within the Town. The townhouses will have community green space between each of the two buildings which tenants can access directly from their back yard.

Building B, the six-story multi-unit residential building containing fifty-four units with amenity penthouse, will take on the colors and materials historically used in Truro and the color palette of the natural surrounding area. The average unit size is 950 and 1200 square feet and will consist mostly of one and two-bedroom units with a few three-bedroom units. Based on the market analysis there is more need for one and two-bedroom units within Truro. C. Markides indicated that there is a landscape podium feature as well as a rooftop amenity space along with 54 semi-recessed underground parking spaces.

Building C consists of an eight-story multi-unit residential building containing sixty-eight units that is the same footprint and unit size with similar esthetics

as the six-story building with sixty-eight semi-recessed underground parking spots with guest parking on the surface.

C. Markides specified in his presentation that currently there is an eighty-five percent impermeable lot surface and the development would cover 5048 square meters (twenty-eight percent) of impermeable lot surface factoring in green roofs, landscape buffers, and ground-level amenity space and would provide a dual impact of good amenity and stormwater management containment on-site as opposed to flowing off-site and confirmed that a stormwater management plan will be submitted before building permits are issued or if required, submitted as part of the Development Agreement.

B. Thomas raised concern regarding the number of underground parking that is available for the units as a one to one ratio and additional parking being used on the subsurface if this would create less mall parking during peak shopping seasons.

C. Markides responded that there are an additional fifty-seven subsurface parking spots available for visitors and additional unit parking which can be managed through parking permits for visitors and guests and the existing mall parking will remain at the other end of the mall.

B. Thomas expressed his concern over sufficient parking with the proposed one-to-one ratio per unit being low and the Town's current policy is to have one point five spaces per unit and feels that there would be some overflow into the general outdoor parking area.

B. Thomas expressed his concern over the amenity area, he feels that the proposed amenity space for the townhouses are sufficient but raised concern over the lack of amenity areas such as playgrounds or recreational uses for small children in the proposed multi-residential buildings and that there are no parks in the area. B. Thomas questioned the architect on what has been provided for outdoor recreation for small children.

C. Markides responded that the amenity space that they reference excluded the landscape buffers which can be used as amenity space such as play areas.

B. Thomas recommended that amenity space be provided for small children as the development is surrounded by heavy traffic and children cannot walk to a local park and there are no amenities.

W. Talbot asked if there has been any consideration given to establishing some affordable housing within the proposed development.

C. Markides responded that these are market units and the intention is to price them at what the market recommends and indicated that if there was a desire from the Town to provide affordable units, Strathallen is open to working with the Town, but at this point, there has been no communication with Town on affordable units in this development.

W. Talbot expressed his concern regarding affordable housing within the Town and indicated that even though it's the responsibility of the Province the

Town is interested in this project and stated his concern that affordable housing is being ignored for this size of development.

D. Taylor – was seeking clarification from the architect regarding his statement that this development would have no impact on the flood plain.

C. Markides responded and confirmed that there would be no additional impact from this proposed development on the flood plain.

D. Taylor. Questioned whether the Town has received any correspondence from the general public regarding the proposed development.

C. Connolly responded that there were general Facebook comments regarding the floodplain to-date.

D. Taylor also agrees that the Town does need more affordable housing units but feels that we cannot require developers to subsidize units as they are looking for the feasibility of the project.

D. Taylor suggested a sub-committee of the Planning Advisory Committee be formed to look into how we could help with affordable housing within the Town.

C. Connolly received a comment from the public regarding the accessibility issues with the raised grade for flood plain management.

C. Markides indicated that all the units will be accessible which is required by the Building Code and will be considered as part of the design.

J. Barnard raised concern over the six-story building and the proximity to the road and the lack of a buffer.

C. Markides responded that the setback is four meters from the road which is the standard for the front yard in a suburban setting.

J. Mantin asked the developer if there were sidewalks along Marshland Drive and also feels that the six-story building is close to the road without a sidewalk.

C. Markides responded that there is one on that side currently and the intention is to build an access point for the comprehensive development there would be a sidewalk included in that.

C. Connolly provided the committee with preliminary comments from the Parks and Recreation department that the need for a trail along the general marshland area is becoming more significant. Any proposed trail on the periphery of the development could link into a larger future trails network to the downtown.

S. Johnson suggested that flooding is a concern and a flood management plan should be submitted for review sooner rather than later.

C. Markides responded that the Engineer will have a plan for the next meeting.

60 GOLF STREET

J. Fox, Director of Planning presented an Application Briefing (Step 1) dated November 27, 2020, regarding an Application by Endurance Equities Corporation and Brentwood Developments Limited to permit a Multi-unit residential development consisting of one eight-story building containing 80-88 dwelling units.

D. Taylor stated that the development is too large for the size of the lot and too close to the front property line and feels that this development does not fit well within the general neighborhood and would prefer to see a smaller development for this site.

W. Talbot noted that he has received a lot of feedback from area residents regarding this application and was looking for clarification on the development agreement process to ensure that all comments and feedback will be part of the public participation process.

J. Fox confirmed that all comments and feedback received will be circulated to the committee for review.

D. Taylor wanted clarification on the responsibility of the Planning Advisory Committee when reviewing development applications.

J. Fox advised that the Committee is a technical advisory body for Council and its responsibility is to review an application based on its merits after review of the Town Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw to ensure that it conforms to the Town's planning policies. The committee will decide whether the development meets those policies and then make a recommendation to Council.

Members raised concern over the height and scale of the building and feel that it's oversized for the lot in comparison to other developments in the area.

J. Fox indicated that he received one public inquiry so far on how an eight-story building respects the integrity of the surrounding community and traffic issues in the area.

S. Johnston raised his concerns regarding the development and provided his feedback for the developer that a stormwater management study be completed due to the size of the building on the lot, the height of the building and how it fits within the area, and what type of finishes and balconies is being proposed as well as a traffic impact study will be important going forward.

C. Wallace appreciated the valuable feedback on the proposed development and indicated that this is a preliminary exercise for the subject property and is planning to take a more detailed look at the site and building design, stormwater management, traffic, and parking as they continue through the planning process.

Dr. N.Clague property owner of 142 Smith Avenue presented to the committee his concerns regarding the proposed development and identified several Town Policies that conflict with the proposed development.

536 YOUNG STREET

C. Connolly, Planner presented an Application Briefing (Step 2) dated November 26, 2020, regarding an application by Marchand Developments Limited to permit three four-story, fifty-two - unit residential buildings and 17 townhouse units on lands at 536 Young Street.

W. Talbot asked if they intended to keep the existing vegetation.

G. Zwicker indicated that this development is focused around the environmental buffer, the river, the walking trail, and landscaping around the site, they intend to maintain as many trees as possible but will depend upon the grading plan that will determine what vegetation will remain.

C. Connolly stated that underground parking is available as well as subsurface parking for the units, she also indicated that the unit sizes are not available at this time as the developer is working on the configuration of the units within the building but have general numbers for the expected density which is one spot per unit with 178 units.

J. Bernard questioned the green space that was identified on the future land designation map that is located across from the proposed development that displays a public park and was wondering if there were plans that could potentially connect to the proposed trail.

G. Zwicker indicated that Victoria Park and specifically the Railyard bike park are a huge asset to the community and the proposed development. The developer would be interested in working with the Town to find a way to link their trails to the Towns.

C. Connolly advised that preliminary comments were received from Parks, Recreation, and Culture that if opportunities exist to upgrade the Pleasant Street playground and green space, they currently have a walking path adjacent to the seniors complex that connects Young Street and to the playground through the Gero Walkway.

B. Thomas suggested that an overlay of the community parks and playgrounds be identified for review on future proposals.

M. Dolter advised that all green space has been identified and is available for review.

G. Zwicker presented an overview of the proposed development.

K. Marchand stated that they intend to provide additional buffering along the left side of the development that abuts the single residential dwelling such as fencing.

Members raised concern over the ditch in the front of the development and would prefer to see sidewalks and walkways to enhance the street view.

A. MacKinnon advised that the Town does have an adequate storm system and that the west side of Young Street could be curved and could handle the stormwater and would tie in well with the proposed development, he also indicated that on-street parking is not restricted in that area and parking could be accommodated and feels that the proposed parking of one to one for the development would be adequate.

Members raised concern over the one to one parking if more than one tenant owned a vehicle as well as visitor parking.

K. Marchand indicated that the majority of the units are tentatively one-bedroom units and will not require additional parking spaces.

K. Marchand advised that they are currently in the process of deeding over the brook area as parkland to the Town of Truro as part of an approved development agreement on lands located on William Barnhill Drive, there intent and vision is to connect this project corridor to the lands located on William Barnhill Dr.

C. Connolly stated that she had received comments from the public on how the developer intends to address the housing insecurity issues for low-income residents and if affordable units will be available.

K. Marchand advised that they are looking at different options that are available that can address affordable housing within this project as well as other projects within the Town but could not offer specifics at this time.

34-38 CURTIS DRIVE

J. Fox, Director of Planning presented an Application Briefing (Step 1) dated November 4, 2020, regarding an Application by 34-38 Curtis Drive Inc. to permit a Multi-unit residential development consisting of one three-story building containing eighteen dwelling units.

S. Johnston addressed the developer regarding the proposed parking that is located on the left-hand side of the building that is abutting the residential dwellings and if he intended to erect fencing to address any lighting issues from the vehicles.

S. Khanna indicated that there is currently a buffer of mature trees along the property and stated that he is currently in the preliminary stages of the development.

A. Mackinnon addressed the developer if he has considered underground parking or at grade parking under the building to save covering so much of the lot impermeable surface and not have so much outdoor parking.

S. Khanna indicated that it will depend on the cost and the affordability of the housing and he intends to use the concept of the affordable housing program as a framework for this design around those guidelines.

W. Talbot addressed the developer if he intends to offer these units as affordable housing.

S. Khanna indicated that he is exploring affordable housing for this development.

B. Thomas addressed the developer on the proposed parking of 1.5 parking spaces per unit and was concerned that the building and parking were taking up much of the lot and did not offer any green space, and wanted to know if the developer would consider reducing the parking to ensure adequate green space.

S. Khanna stated that he would consider reducing the parking to allow for more adequate green space, but did indicate that amenity space was not part of the framework highlighted for affordable housing and did indicate that the development is close to the elementary school.

J. Bernard addressed the developer on his intentions for energy efficiency for the proposed project.

S. Khanna advised that he is currently at the preliminary stages of the development and stated that there are guidelines that you can achieve by being under fifteen percent of the building code requirements.

S. Johnston addressed the developer on the finishes of the building.

S. Khanna advised that he intends to keep in line with and compliment what's already existing in the area.

125-135 WILLOW STREET J. Fox, Director of Planning presented an Application Briefing (Step 1) dated November 26, 2020, regarding an Application by 3331111 Nova Scotia Ltd. to permit a Multi-unit residential development consisting of one four to five-story building containing fifty-two dwelling units.

B. Thomas raised concern over the height of the development compared to the neighboring residential buildings in the area and noted that several heritage properties abut the project. He noted the importance of this development given its location at a prominent corner to the entrance of the downtown residential area and stated that the building's design should reflect the downtown residential area in its bulk, height, and its appearance and does not feel it's an appropriate development for this lot.

B. Thomas also raised concern over the one to one parking spots per unit and the lack of visitor parking that is available for this site and noted that street parking is restricted in this area.

J. Bernard asked if a traffic impact study will be required to address the traffic flow in this area.

A. MacKinnon stated that the developer has an opportunity to have driveways off both roads, Arthur and Willow, it would make it easy for people exiting and entering the site making right-hand turns only and not left-hand turns.

Committee members expressed concern regarding the flat roof and stated that they would like to see more architectural details that would complement the existing structures along Willow and Victoria Street and indicated that a rendering of the proposed development showing finishes and design would be beneficial.

M. Napier stated that this was a preliminary exercise on the height and scale of the project and was appreciative of the feedback from the committee.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of T. Fitzgerald, the meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

January 7, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

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Secretary

APPROVED

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Chairperson