

80 + 90 Camelot Lane, Halifax NS

PID 40524811 + 40524803

ATTN: Halifax Community Council

Submitted By: WM Fares Architects

Subject: Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy Amendment Application

Dear Halifax Community Council,

Please consider the following application, on behalf of Cosmos Properties and Developments, as a request to amend the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and Mainland Land Use Bylaw to permit the development of a Multi-Unit Residential Development at 80 + 90 Camelot Lane in Halifax NS. All drawings will be included in a separate package and referred to throughout this letter.

01 Current Location, Designation, and Zone of Subject Land

District: Halifax Mainland North

Location: 80 + 90 Camelot Lane, Halifax NS

Lot Size: 27 803m² (299 270 ft²)

Designation: Residential Environments

Zone: Schedule K

Context: The immediate context surrounding the subject property includes a variety of uses and housing types, which is typical of the Dunbrack Street area. The Rockingham Ridge commercial plaza is located directly across Dunbrack Street to the west, with several other commercial areas such as the Clayton Park Shopping Centre just minutes from the site. The Rockingham South Neighbourhood – which includes many multi-unit residential buildings and single-family townhomes – is located north of the property. The general area includes multi-unit and commercial uses bordering the site on all sides, with single-family homes and townhouses dispersed throughout the area. Many parks and recreational facilities can be found in the area including Tremont Park, Sheffield Park, Canada Games Centre, and BMO Soccer Field. Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax West Highschool, and several Primary and Junior High schools are also located within the area and serve many residents.

02 Change of Circumstance

Substantial changes have occurred in the area surrounding the subject site since the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy was adopted over 40 years ago; these changes have allowed the area to continue to be developed in-line with current growth targets and modern planning strategies have enforced a character of settlement that aligns with the objectives of the MPS. A recent amendment was made to the Municipal Planning Strategy which introduced the **Dunbrack Multi Unit Designation** and subsequently the R-4B Zone; the amendment was made to permit the development of a proposal that aligned with the strategies of the MPS but conflicted with sections of the by-law that would restrict the form and density of the project, and ultimately interfering with the intentions of the Municipal Plan.

Through MPS amendment, the designation can be expanded to other properties sharing similar characteristics and warrants Council to consider the pace of change with which the area is expanding. Lands adjacent to Dunbrack, Willett, and Lacewood Streets that contain existing commercial or multi-unit buildings should be considered as potential sites for the expansion of the designation as they currently present the potential to sustain development at a large scale.

Considering recent developments in the Rockingham South subdivision and the recently approved Willet Street development, along with the ongoing growth of the Clayton Park area, the subject site is an ideal candidate for the expansion of the Dunbrack Multi Unit Designation. With direct access to Dunbrack Street, proximity to existing commercial, institutional, and recreational uses, there is evidence that the infrastructure exists to support a development beyond what is currently allowed by the MPS and Land Use By-Law.

The site is currently underutilized; centrally located on the site and containing a large amount of surface parking, making them not conducive of the infill approach. Additionally, the existing structures are dated in their method of construction concerning their unit layout and building efficiency. Ultimately, the potential to redevelop the site exists in the ability to increase density in an area that has proven to be capable of withstanding a large scale of development, with the various measures already in place to support a local growth in population. Introducing this type of development on the subject site aligns with current planning strategies in the area; it will increase the housing stock with a variety of unit types and simultaneously replace an inefficient use of valuable land within one of HRMs fastest growing areas.

03 Proposed Development

The proposal has been prepared to replace one existing multi-unit residential building. The proposed development will create approximately 450 residential units; 80% of which being two-bedrooms or more to accommodate various family types and sizes. Considering the location of the proposal within HRM and the plan for rapid transit routes just steps from the site, the development will provide at minimum a one-to-one parking ratio. The development will contain a large, centrally located clubhouse, to provide building residents with a wide variety of on-site amenities - both indoor and outdoor - with a total area of roughly 22 000sf.

The built form of the proposal implements many design strategies from the Regional Centre Land Use By-Law that reduce the overall massing and scale of a building, while prioritizing the pedestrian experience. The proposed design locates the tallest forms near the intersection of Dunbrack Street and Ruth Goldbloom Drive – where setbacks from other residential uses are the greatest – and gradually steps the form of other buildings down as the setback from neighbouring uses is decreased. Each building maintains a three-storey streetwall to create a cohesive design language across the entire development, mitigate wind impact on surrounding open spaces and pedestrian walkways, and relate to the massing of existing buildings within the Clayton Park area. The use of different materials, step-backs, and generous buffers between forms reduces the bulk of the design and mitigates shadow impact on private yards and public open spaces in the area.

Considering the site has access to two major intersections (Dunbrack – Ruth Goldbloom, and Dunbrack – Knightsridge) and plans for transit infrastructure, the proposed development will not negatively impact current or future traffic volumes beyond what the area can sustain. Additional buffers, large open spaces between buildings, breaks in the street wall, and stepped building forms reduces the impact of the design on adjacent uses and maintains the scale of the surrounding built environment.

04 Request

The client requests a site-specific amendment to the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law to apply the **Dunbrack Multi Unit Designation and R-4B Zone** to the lands currently identified as 80 + 90 Camelot Lane. The client will work with Council to introduce the appropriate development controls into the Land Use By-Law to permit a development that aligns with the proposal shown in Appendix A.

05 Conclusion

A request for amendment is permitted under Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy policy and aligns itself with the intentions and objectives of the MPS, Regional Centre Land Use By-Law, and Regional Centre Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy. The request is required to avoid constraints on development that were implemented in the Halifax Mainland Land Use By-Law decades ago and allow for the proposal of a project that is reflective of modern planning strategies and supports the current needs of residents. Policy 2.1 of the Mainland Municipal Planning Strategy states: *Residential development to accommodate future growth in the City should occur on the Mainland and should be related to the adequacy of existing or presently budgeted services.* The proposed development aligns itself with this policy by providing new housing stock to an area that has been growing consistently within recent years; furthermore, the construction of many new developments in the areas that surround the proposal have proven that the infrastructure exists to support such a development and contribute to its success.

The Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and Mainland Land Use By-Law both allow for high-density residential development on the subject site, in support of complete communities that include a variety of housing types and accessibility to many amenities. At the time of implementation “high-density” was capped at 75 persons per acre according to the Mainland LUB; as the population grows both on the peninsula and the mainland, the policies of the Halifax MPS become critical in providing housing at a comparable rate to avoid severely low vacancy rates.

Restrictions currently enforced by the LUB prohibit the development of modernized housing and contradicts the goals of the MPS; as such, WM Fares Architects on behalf of our client formally requests that HRM Planning Staff consider our application for MPS Amendment to allow for the redesignation and subsequent rezoning of the lands known as 80 + 90 Camelot Lane. The request would permit the construction of a development that fully aligns with the policies of the MPS and introduce form-based restrictions into the LUB to place the appropriate controls on the scale and design of the development.

We ask that HRM Staff move forward with the initiation report and application process. We and the client remain open to any revision and improvements suggested by HRM Staff as we proceed with our detailed design of the proposal and receive feedback from Staff and the public. It is our intention to develop a proposal that continues to align itself with the policies of the Halifax Municipal Planning Strategy and implement sections into the Land Use By-Law that support modern forms of residential construction.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal and we look forward to receiving your comments. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or to request further information.

Regards,

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