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Item No. 15.1.2
Halifax Regional Council
June 10, 2025

TO: Mayor Fillmore and Members of Halifax Regional Council

FROM: Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: April 23, 2025

SUBJECT: **2025-00656: Amendments to the Suburban Housing Accelerator Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law for 174 Main Street, Dartmouth**

ORIGIN

Halifax Regional Council (March 18, 2025) Item 12.2.1. (Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing: Additional Sites & Housekeeping Amendments (2024-01198))

MOVED by Deputy Mayor Mancini, seconded by Councillor Kent

THAT Halifax Regional Council:

3. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare further amendments to the Suburban Housing Accelerator Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to increase the maximum building height of the lands at 174 Main Street, Dartmouth (PID 00175455) from 9-storeys to 10-storeys.

AMENDED MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report recommends amendments to the Suburban Housing Accelerator Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law for 174 Main Street, Dartmouth (PID 00175455). The proposed amendments to the Maximum Building Height Precincts maps in the Suburban Housing Accelerator Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to increase the maximum building height for the subject property from 9 storeys to 10 storeys were directed by Regional Council at their March 18, 2025 meeting, and following a public hearing on Case 2024-01198.

Public engagement on proposed Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law amendments for this site was conducted as part of the Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing: Additional Sites process, in August and September 2025. The requests were also reviewed by internal and external service providers. No concerns were received regarding multi-unit residential uses at 174 Main Street. The proposed height of 10 storeys maintains the same tall mid-rise built form and transition

requirements as the current 9 storey height. It is recommended that Council approve an increase to a maximum of 10 storeys for the subject property.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Regional Council:

1. Give First Reading to consider approval of the proposed amendments to the Suburban Housing Accelerator Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law as set out in Attachments 1 & 2, and schedule a public hearing; and
2. Adopt the amendments to the Suburban Housing Accelerator Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law set out in Attachments 1 & 2.

BACKGROUND

At their May 23, 2024, meeting, Regional Council approved the Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing (Case 2023-01065), an extensive package of amendments to the Regional Plan, the Regional Subdivision By-law and all Secondary Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws. It also included the creation of a new Suburban Housing Accelerator (SHA) Plan and By-law to advance site-specific development requests for 28 properties in the Suburban Area. Properties approved for inclusion in the SHA Plan and By-law as part of the Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing were removed from their existing Plan Areas, added into the new plan and by-law, and given the Housing Accelerator (HA) zone, modeled on the HR-1 and HR-2 zones in the Regional Centre Plan and By-law.

During the approval of the Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing, Regional Council directed staff to undertake additional engagement and analysis and return with recommendations regarding 31 additional sites in the Suburban Area and six sites in the Regional Centre. Regional Council held a Public Hearing for these recommendations, known as the Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing: Additional Sites (Case 2024-01198) on March 18, 2025, and approved amendments to add an additional 20 sites to the SHA Plan and By-law.

In addition, at their March 18, 2025 meeting, Regional Council directed the Chief Administrative Officer to undertake additional amendments to the SHA Plan and By-law to increase the maximum building height for one of the approved sites, 174 Main Street, Dartmouth (PID 00175455), from 9 storeys to 10 storeys. Additional information regarding the subject property is available in the table below.

Subject Site	174 Main Street, Dartmouth (PID 00175455)
Request Number	SS118
Regional Plan Designation	Urban Settlement
Community Plan Designation (Map 1)	Housing Accelerator (HA)
Zoning (Map 2)	Housing Accelerator (HA)
Size of Site	2318 square metres
Street Frontage	153.5 metres (approximate)
Current Land Use(s)	Vacant
Surrounding Use(s)	Commercial use, low-density residential use

174 Main Street was included in the public engagement and service provider review of all sites considered through the Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing: Additional Sites package. This included consideration of the applicant's original request for 14 storeys and staff's recommendation of 9 storeys.

Public engagement for the Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing: Additional Sites took place from August 16, 2024, to September 20, 2024 and included mailouts sent to residents within 80 metres of

all identified sites, posts on municipal social media channels and a project website. No public feedback was received regarding the subject property.

Staff also reviewed all the requests with external and internal service providers, including:

- Halifax Regional Centre for Education
- Halifax Transit
- Halifax Water
- HRM African Nova Scotian Community Action Planning
- HRM Current Planning
- HRM Environment & Climate Change
- HRM Heritage Planning
- HRM Parks & Recreation
- HRM Transportation Planning
- Nova Scotia Cultural Heritage & Special Places

No concerns were identified by service providers regarding a 9 or 14 storey residential development on the subject property.

MPS and LUB Context

The SHA Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy was developed based on the key guiding policies and principles of the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (Regional Plan) and Priority Plans. The proposed increase in the maximum building height for the subject property is in line with the existing policy of the SHA Plan and the policies and principles of the Regional Plan and Priority Plans.

The SHA Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy requires that maximum height and built form regulations to be set out in the Land Use By-law in accordance with the policies in Part 3 of the Plan so that built forms vary based on the local context to permit low to tall mid-rise buildings under Policy US-8. Policy UD-2 builds on the requirements of Policy US-8 by stating that the Land Use By-law establish maximum building height requirements based on local context, proximity to transit and post-secondary institutions, and must be consistent with maximum heights identified on Map 2.

Section 3.2.2, Building Envelope, of the SHA Plan sets out development policies related to building height by establishing four categories of built form; low-rise, mid-rise, tall mid-rise, and high-rise. The tall mid-rise built form includes developments ranging from 8 to 10 storeys and includes larger setback and stepback requirements than mid-rise buildings but less stringent requirements related to tower dimensions than those established for high-rise buildings. The proposed height of 10 storeys falls within the tall-midrise form, requiring the any future development to meet the same built form requirements as the approved 9 storey maximum height. As the subject property sits between a high-rise zone (maximum building height of 45.0 metres) and a low-rise neighbourhood, maintaining the tall mid-rise built form requirements are in line with the second objective of the SHA Plan, to support a built form that reflects and integrates with the surrounding context and allows for transition to adjacent residential neighbourhoods and commercial areas.

Any amendments to the maximum building height for the subject property will require amendments to maps in both the SHA Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law. Map 4 from the Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy will need to be amended to show the new maximum height precinct for the site and the same amendment will be required for the corresponding Schedule 2 in the Land Use By-law. No text amendments are required to the Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to increase the maximum building height to 10-storeys.

Priorities Plans

Staff considered the objectives, policies and actions of the priorities plans, inclusive of the Integrated Mobility Plan, the Halifax Green Network Plan, HalifACT, and Halifax's Inclusive Economic Strategy 2022-

2027 in making its recommendation to Council. In this case, the proposed development does not directly conflict with any specific objectives, policies or actions of the priorities plans.

DISCUSSION

Through the Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing: Additional Sites package, staff recommended a maximum height of 9 storeys for 174 Main Street and provided the following rationale:

“The site is recommended for inclusion in the SHA Plan and By-law based on the property’s location on a major commercial and transportation corridor (Main Street) where amendments were made through the original UCPDH package to encourage greater density.

Staff are recommending a maximum height of 9 storeys to provide a more gradual transition from the higher building heights enabled on the north side of Main Street (approximately 15 storeys) to the lower density residential neighbourhood on the other side of the site.”

In response to Regional Council’s direction to increase the maximum height for the subject site from 9 storeys to 10 storeys, staff have reviewed the feedback gathered from the public and internal and external service providers through the Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing: Additional Sites process and no concerns were identified.

Staff do not have any concerns with the proposed maximum height increase from 9 storeys to 10 storeys. The proposed change meets the existing policy requirements of the SHA Plan, no text amendments to the Plan or By-law are required to permit the change in height, and any future development would still meet the definition of a tall mid-rise built form and, therefore, would be required to meet the same built form requirements as a 9 storey building.

Conclusion

Staff have reviewed the requested amendments and the existing policy context and advise that they do not have concerns regarding amendments to increase the maximum height for 174 Main Street, Dartmouth (PID 00175455) from 9 storeys to 10 storeys. Increasing the maximum building for the site to 10 storeys is consistent with the objectives of the SHA Plan to accelerate housing close to transit and services while considering the surrounding context. The proposed maximum height of 10 storeys maintains the tall mid-rise building form that staff originally supported in their recommendation through the Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing: Additional Sites. Therefore, staff recommend that Regional Council approve the proposed MPS and LUB amendments.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

General administration of the proposed amendments can be carried out within the existing resources and proposed 2025/26 budget. Potential impacts because of changes to land use include:

- Municipal capital and project investments needed to support anticipated growth may increase because of land value changes and development pressures. The financial implications of these projects and programs will be identified through the business planning process or project specific staff reports.
- As HRM continues to face pressure in growth, demand for infrastructure and services will continue to increase in both the short and long term. More work is needed to determine how to identify and distribute the costs associated with growth across the areas impacted, which is expected during the Strategic Growth and Infrastructure Priority Plan process and Development Charges Report.
- Funding constraints in local/area water, wastewater, stormwater and transportation infrastructure are the responsibility of the developer.
- Additional revenue can be expected from the Interim Bonus Zoning requirements for the site, should they proceed to development.

RISK CONSIDERATION

No risk considerations were identified. This application involves proposed MPS amendments. Such amendments are at the discretion of Regional Council and are not subject to appeal to the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board. Information concerning risks and other implications of adopting the proposed amendments is contained within the Discussion section of this report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Staff conducted public engagement on the Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing: Additional Sites, including amendments for 174 Main Street, Dartmouth (PID 00175455), from August 16, 2024, to September 20, 2024. Engagement was advertised through mailouts sent to residents within 80 metres of all identified sites and through posts on municipal social media channels. A project website shared information regarding the sites, recommendations, process, and feedback was gathered by phone and email. There was no specific feedback regarding the subject property submitted during the engagement period. A summary of the public engagement and all correspondence was provided in the What We Heard report, included as an attachment the March 18, 2025, Urgent Changes to Planning Documents for Housing: Additional Sites staff report.

A public hearing must be held by Regional Council before considering approval of the proposed SMPS and LUB amendments. Should Regional Council decide to proceed with a public hearing on this application, in addition to the advertisement on the HRM webpage, property owners within the notification area shown on Map 2 will be notified of the hearing by regular mail.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications are identified.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter (HRM Charter), Part VIII, Planning & Development

ALTERNATIVES

Regional Council may choose to:

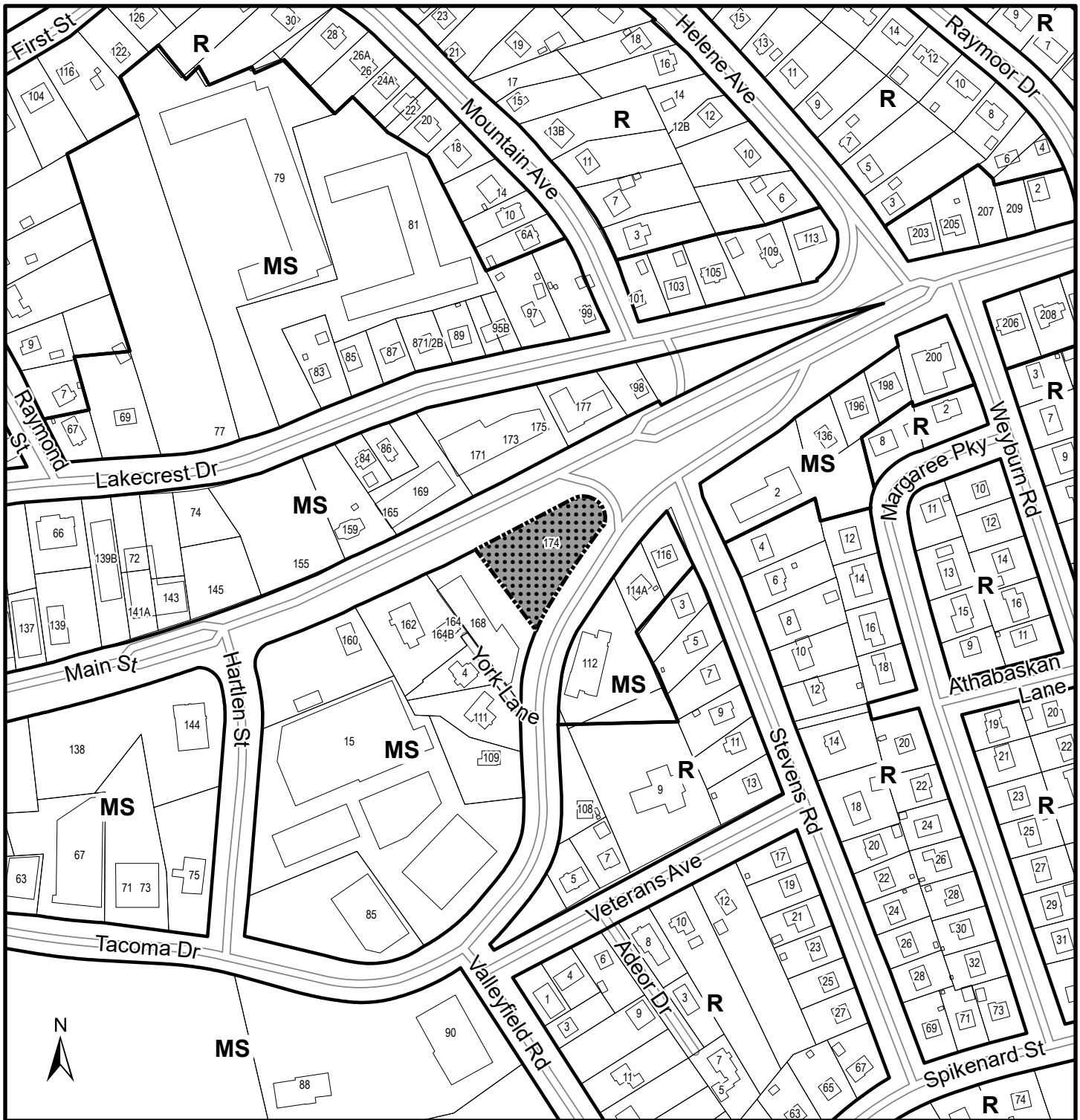
1. Modify the proposed amendments to the Suburban Housing Accelerator SMPS and LUB, as set out in Attachment 1 of this report. If this alternative is chosen, specific direction regarding the requested modifications is required. Substantive amendments may require a supplementary report or another public hearing. A decision of Council to approve or refuse the proposed amendments is not appealable to the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board as per Section 262 of the *HRM Charter*.
2. Refuse the proposed amendments to the Suburban Housing Accelerator SMPS and LUB. A decision of Council to approve or refuse the proposed amendments is not appealable to the Nova Scotia Regulatory and Appeals Board as per Section 262 of the *HRM Charter*.

ATTACHMENTS

Map 1: Generalized Future Land Use
Map 2: Zoning and Notification Area

Attachment 1: Proposed SHA SMPS Amendments
Attachment 2: Proposed SHA LUB Amendments


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Kathleen Fralic, Principal Planner, 902.233.2501



Map 1 - Generalized Future Land Use

174 Main Street,
Dartmouth

 Subject Property

 Suburban Housing Accelerator Plan Area

Dartmouth
Plan Area

Designation

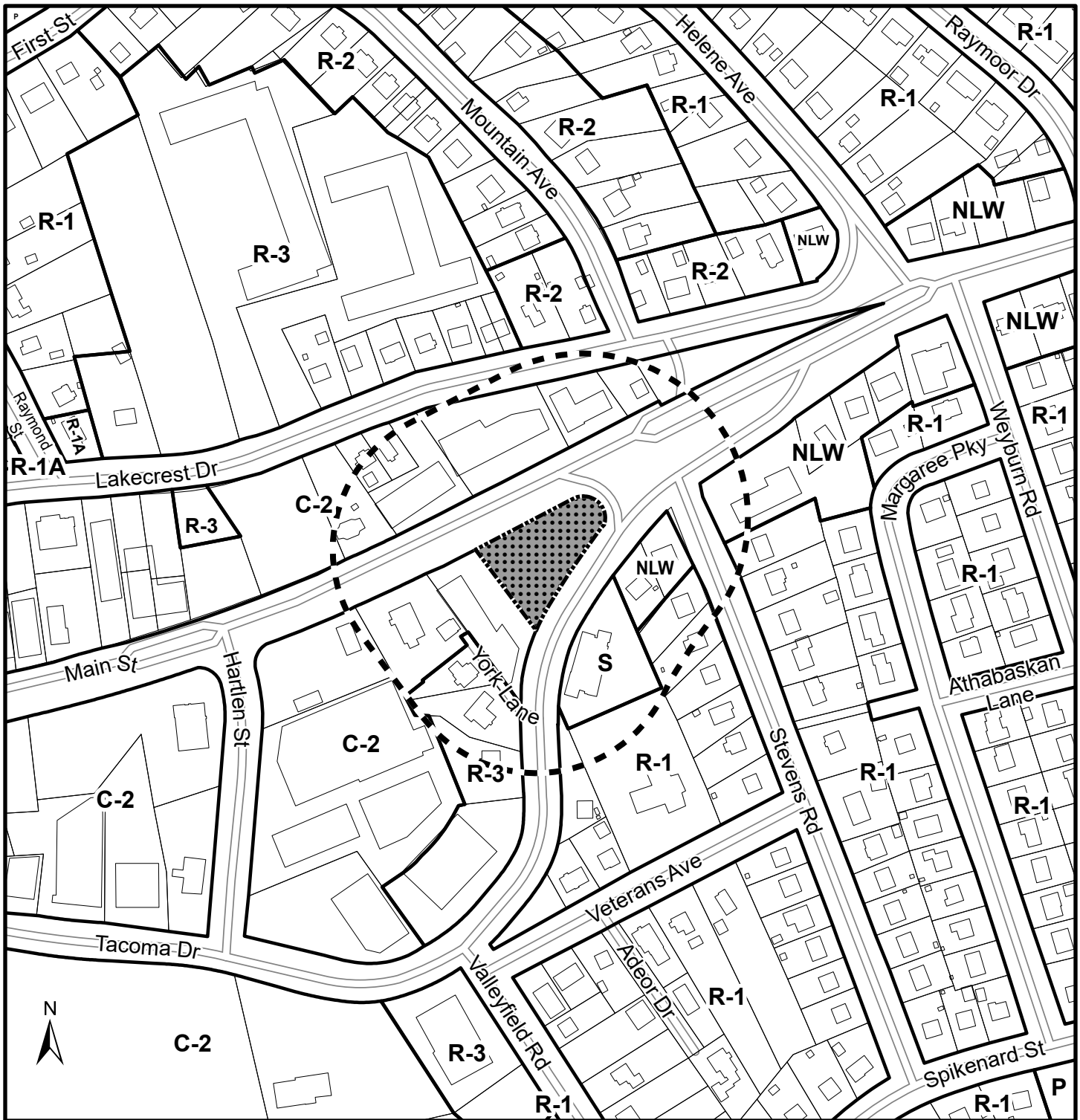
MS Main Street
R Residential

HALIFAX

0 40 80 m

This map is an unofficial reproduction of
a portion of the Generalized Future Land
Use Map for the plan area indicated.

The accuracy of any representation on
this plan is not guaranteed.



Map 2 - Zoning and Notification Area

174 Main Street,
Dartmouth



Subject Property



Area of Notification



Suburban Housing Accelerator Plan Area

Dartmouth
Land Use By-Law

Zone

C-2	General Business
NLW	Neighbourhood Live-Work
P	Park
R-1	Single Family Residential
R-1A	Auxiliary Dwelling Unit
R-2	Two Family Residential
R-3	Multiple Family Residential (Medium Density)
S	Institutional;

HALIFAX

0 40 80 m

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area indicated.

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Attachment 1

Proposed amendment to the Suburban Housing Accelerator Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy

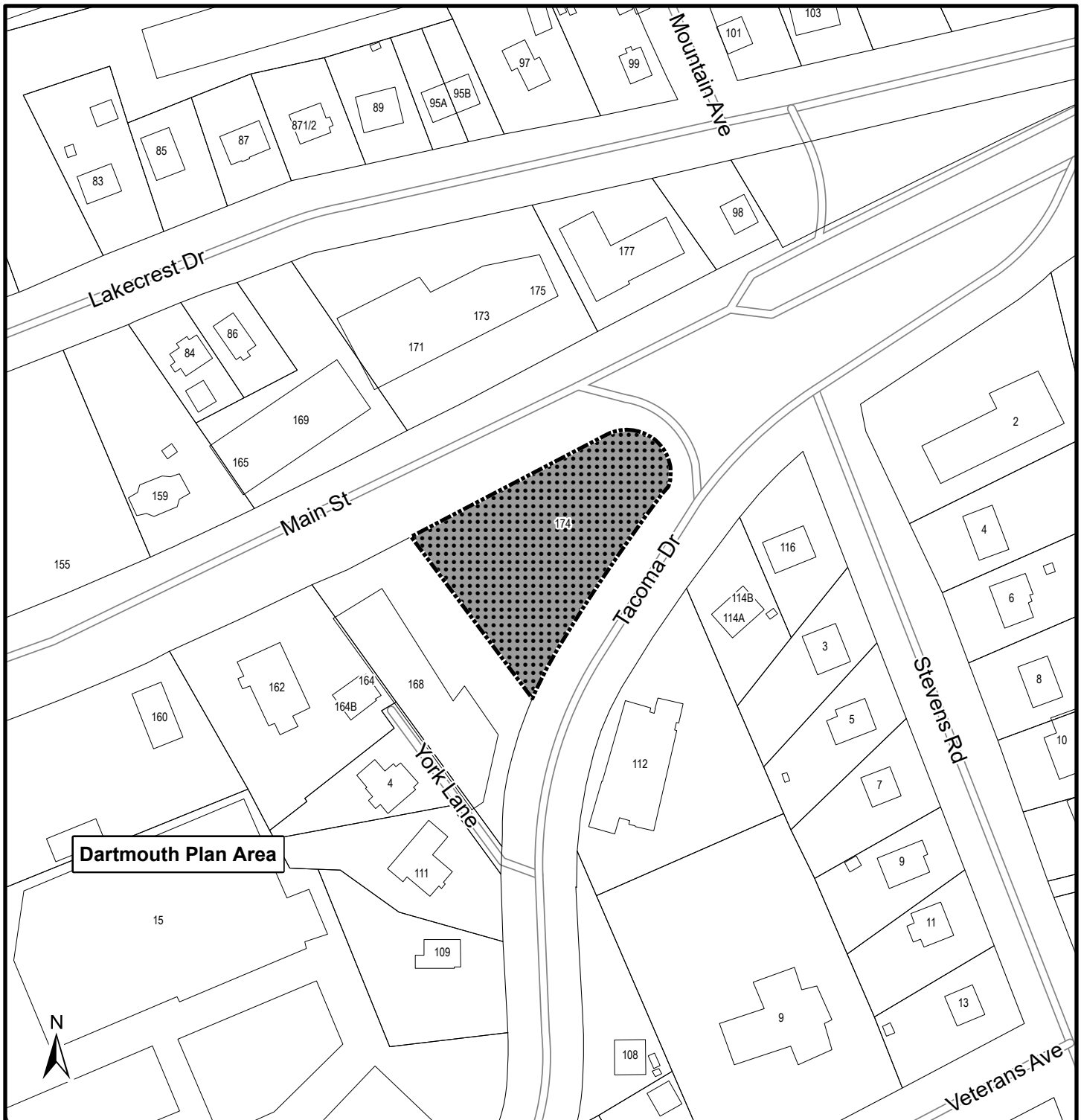
BE IT ENACTED by the Regional Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality that the *Suburban Housing Accelerator Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy* is hereby further amended as follows:

1 Map 2, the Maximum Building Height Precincts, to the *Suburban Housing Accelerator Secondary Municipal Planning Strategy* is amended by changing the maximum building height of 174 Main Street, Dartmouth (PID 00175455), shown in Schedule A, from 9 storeys to 10 storeys.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the planning strategy of which this is a true copy was duly passed at a duly called meeting of the Council of Halifax Regional Municipality held on the ____ day of _____, A.D., 20____.

GIVEN under the hand of the Municipal Clerk and under the Corporate Seal of the said Municipality this ____ day of _____, A.D., 20____.

Municipal Clerk



Schedule A

174 Main Street,
Dartmouth



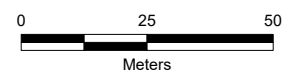
Area proposed to be changed from 9 storeys to 10 storeys
in SMPS Map 2 Maximum Building Height
Precincts and LUB Schedule 2 Maximum Building
Height Precincts



Suburban Housing Accelerator Plan Area

Suburban Housing Accelerator
Plan Area

HALIFAX



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Attachment 2

Proposed amendment to the Suburban Housing Accelerator Land Use By-law

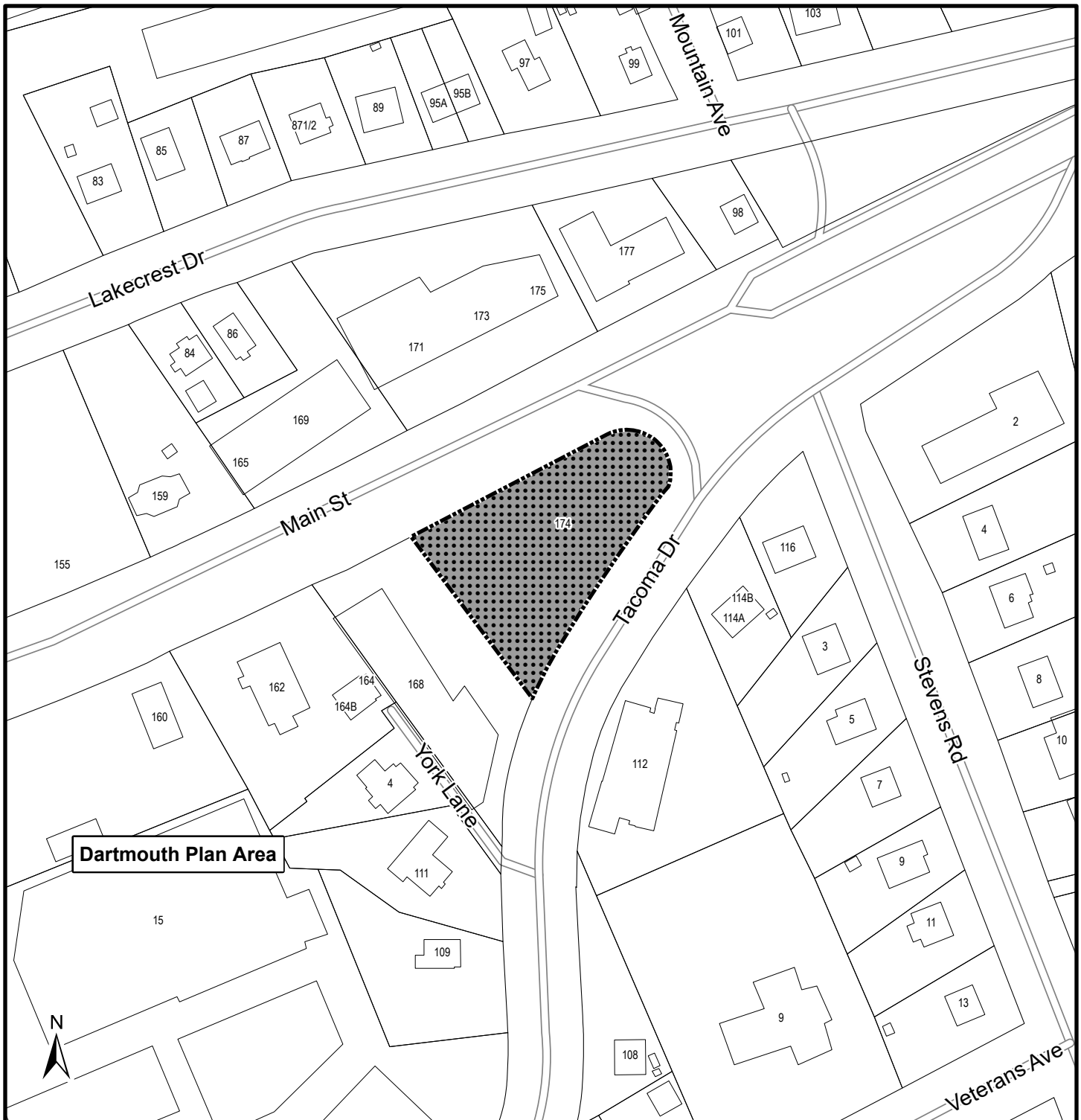
BE IT ENACTED by the Regional Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality that the *Suburban Housing Accelerator Land Use By-law* is hereby further amended as follows:

1 Schedule 2, the Maximum Building Height Precincts, to the *Suburban Housing Accelerator Land Use By-law* is amended by changing the maximum building height of 174 Main Street, Dartmouth (PID 00175455), shown in Schedule A, from 9 storeys to 10 storeys.

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Municipal Clerk



Schedule A

174 Main Street,
Dartmouth



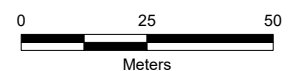
Area proposed to be changed from 9 storeys to 10 storeys
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Suburban Housing Accelerator Plan Area

Suburban Housing Accelerator
Plan Area

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