



2024-04-02

John Woodford
Director of Planning & Development
Municipality of East Hants
230-15 Commerce Court
Elmsdale, NS B2S 3K5

Re: Request for Development Agreement Amendment for PID 45428802, 45428810 and 45416831

Dear Mr. Woodford,

Riverstone 214 Ltd ("the Client") has approval to construct four storey and six storey mixed use development, which has already been approved to occur under a development Agreement. However, the commercial component of the development is not supported by market need. The Client is seeking an amendment to the Development Agreement to allow moving the commercial square foot from the 4 storey building into the 6 storey building. Riverstone 214 Ltd has authorized Brighter Community Planning ("BCP") to submit information to support this DA amendment application.

Background

Nova Scotia's population has been steadily growing, and since the Municipal Planning Strategy was adopted in 2016, according to the East Hant economic profile 2023-2027 report, East Hant's population in 2021 grew to 25,631 people from 23,542 residents in 2016. East Hants has emerged as an attractive destination for newcomers due to various factors such as opportunities, amenities, and quality of life. Recognizing the increasing demand for residential properties and the extreme housing needs in East Hants and Nova Scotia. The Client wants to meet this need. Compared to residential development, there is less demand for commercial properties in the region. Despite active promotion for over a year, our client hasn't found tenants for the plaza, due to this lower demand. Additionally, there is plenty of commercial space in Elmsdale, much of which is anchored by national tenants, making it more attractive.

Below is the general information pertaining to the Subject Properties.

PIDs	45428802, 45428810 and 45416831
Property Owners	Riverstone 214 Ltd
Designation	Regional Commercial (RC)
Zoning	Regional Commercial (RC)

The Request

Riverstone 214 Ltd is applying to make substantive amendments to the existing DA to enhance the financial feasibility of the project and align it more closely with the demand for residential properties in the area.

Proposed amendments:

1. Relocation of Commercial Activities: The Client is applying to move all commercial activities from the four-storey building to the proposed six-storey building. This adjustment will enable the conversion of the four-storey building entirely to residential use, optimizing the residential aspect of the project. Given the availability of vacant commercial space nearby, mandating additional commercial space within the development would be redundant and limit project's flexibility and viability.

Specific Clauses to be Changed:

- Clause 2.4,2.5,2.6,2.7 (Section 2): Currently specifying the allocation of commercial space in the four-storey building and detailing parking requirements. Change to reflect the relocation of commercial activities to the six-storey building and Update to include revised parking requirements for both the four and six-storey buildings.
 - Clause 2.10 (Section 2): Currently detailing common amenity area requirements for four and six storey buildings. Update to include revised common amenity area requirements for both the four and six-storey buildings.
 - Clause 2.11 (Section 2): Currently detailing walkway requirements for six storey residential buildings. Update this to include four storey residential buildings.
2. Introduction of Short-term Rentals: The client is seeking to add a definition of commercial use into DA to includes short-term rental accommodations, such as Airbnb. If this change is made to the DA, it will allow flexibility to the Developer.

These proposed changes will not only improve the feasibility of the project but also serve the needs of the broader community by addressing housing demands and optimizing land utilization. Based on a review of the policies, there does not appear to be any restrictions on request 1. Request 2 is only required as the market for commercial space is weak and the Client is unable, after expending significant effort, to secure a commercial assessment. The client will not be able to proceed with construction without some flexibility in what is considered commercial. Given the housing crises, the Client is seeking this flexibility so that this additional housing can be constructed to meet the demand.

Sincerely,
Aastha Patel, MURP
Planner

Brighter Community Planning & Consulting

CC: Rachel Gilbert, Kelly Ash, Norval Mitchell