

## Preliminary Staff Report

**Subject:** Zoning By-law text amendment to Mixed Use height requirements in the Downtown Business District

**File Number:** 24-1188

**Meeting Date:** September 23, 2024

**From:** Lori Bickford, Planning Manager/Planner

### General Information

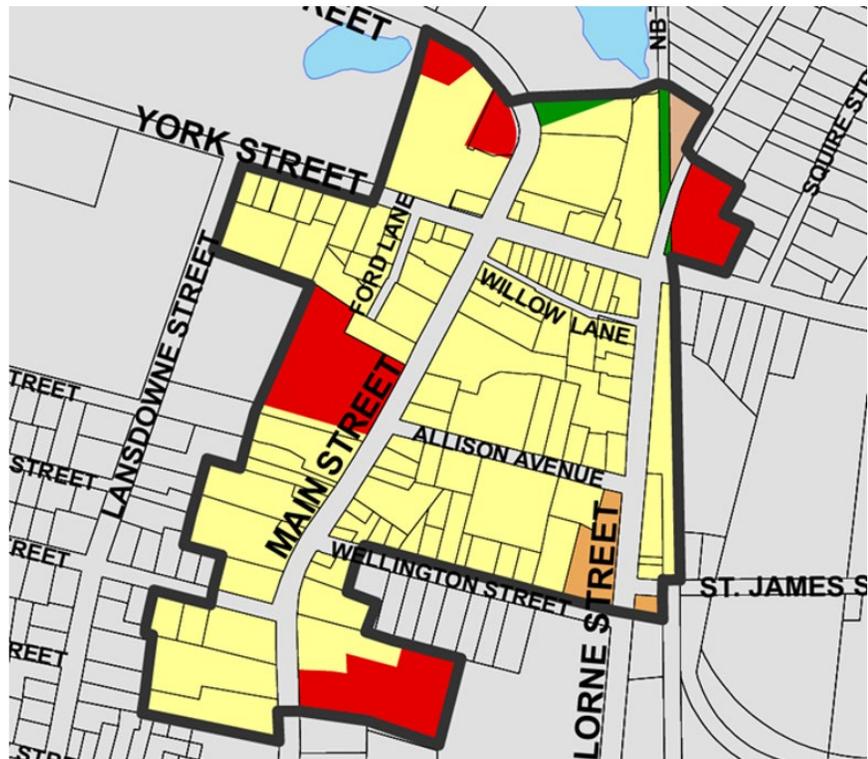
**Applicant:** J.N. Lafford Realty & Mike Wilson

**Proposal:** To change the maximum building height in the Downtown Business District (Mixed Use Zone) from 15.25m (50 ft) to 22.86m (75 ft).

### Site Information

**Future Land Use:** Town Centre

**Zoning:** Mixed Use (yellow)  
Institutional (red)  
Agriculture Conservation (green)  
Industrial/Business Park (orange)



## **Background**

The applicants are proposing a 7-storey mixed use building in the Downtown Business District (corner of York Street and Ford Avenue). The proposed building would be 22.86 m (75') in height from the grade to the top of the roof. Under the Zoning By-law the maximum height of a building in the Mixed Use zone in the Downtown Business District is set at 15.25 m (50'). The proposed building exceeds the maximum height permitted under the Zoning By-law.



*Figure 1 – Proposed building concept for corner of York St & Ford Ave*

The Municipal Plan includes the following policies that demonstrate the Town aims to concentrate businesses and mixed use development in the Downtown Business District:

*“3.2.1.3 It is a policy to establish a “Downtown Business District” to accommodate existing businesses and promote new commercial development within the central core of the Town.”*

*“3.2.1.4 It shall be policy of Council to strengthen the downtown’s image as a vibrant centre of the community by encouraging businesses servicing the local population to locate within the Downtown Business District and by promoting mixed use development which incorporates institutional, commercial and residential uses, as well as promoting cultural, artistic, and recreational uses.”*

Due to increased construction costs and land values, it is not surprising that development trends have been moving towards building higher to increase density on property footprints. In 2023 Council adopted a text amendment to increase the maximum height in the Urban Residential 3 zone from 15.3 m (50') to 19.8 m (65'). This proposed text amendment proposes an additional 3 m (10') maximum height in the Downtown from those of the R3 zone. It should be noted however, that although the proposed amendments would apply to all the MU zoned properties in the DBD there are other regulations within the Zoning By-law which will limit all developments from reaching the maximum height, such as the requirements to provide parking.

In looking at surrounding municipalities in the Southeast, larger municipalities tend to set maximum heights in the community core higher ranging from 18m to 25m. It is difficult to directly compare heights between municipalities as each municipality can calculate height differently. However, in general the community centre heights in surrounding neighbouring communities tend to be the areas where taller buildings are encouraged and suggest the current height in Sackville's Downtown Business District is low.

The proposed text amendment to the height requirements in the Downtown Business District would allow for the core of the community to accommodate higher density and encourage mixed use development in Town where services and activities are concentrated.

## **COUNCIL ACTION**

*A resolution will be presented to the Council of Tantramar at the next regular council meeting for their consideration of the proposed text amendment. During this meeting Council may choose to:*

- 1. Pass the resolution and start the process of public engagement if they wish to consider the proposed text amendment , or*
- 2. If Council does not wish to entertain the text amendment, the resolution may be denied.*