Dalhousie University
LeMarchant Mixed-Use Building Community Meeting
Tuesday, August 30 at 6:30 p.m.
Lord Dalhousie Room

1.0 Introductions: Jeff Lamb introduced the Dalhousie team, the architect and the project manager. Nine community members attended the meeting. Jillian Maclellan, the HRM planner assigned to Dal’s rezoning application was also in attendance.

There will be a HRM public meeting next Wednesday, Sept. 7 at 7 p.m. regarding Dalhousie’s rezoning application.

2.0 Overview of the project:
The building was shared as part of the master planning process. It was also shared through the DUCC meetings over the past year and at the President’s Annual meeting in January.

Architectural sketches were shared with the community members present. The building will house 310 students. The first two floors will hold student service functions including recruitment and health and counseling services. This multi-use building concept was recommended during the campus master planning process. The entrance for residence will be across from Risley Hall. The garbage is on South Street but will be fenced in.

The building design comes from the reference to the stone (the upper floors are to reinforce the colours of the stone), the bottom two floors are creating a reference to the neighbourhood (colour and lively) -- abstract treatment. The upper floors are a paneling product that create the reference to stone. The colours on the bottom two floors are coloured glass.

The second floor of the podium was presented. The residence floors were presented, including the new room styles and accessible rooms. There are two common rooms on each floor, they alternate between each floors. What do we expect the student make up for this residence to be -- all first year? We are planning a second residence. We’d like to have 25 to 30% on each floor to be returning students but we need additional space to meet the demands. There are 66 beds on each floor in a mix of accessible, double, three and four bedroom units. There will be RAs on each floor.

3.0 Schedule:
The objective is to have the building complete for occupancy in September 2013.

There is a rezoning application before council. We will need to do site prep, so a fence will go up in late September. The four houses on LeMarchant will be demolished as part of the site preparations. If everything goes well (rezoning) then we hope to start construction in January.
We are hoping to have the construction manager hired in the next few weeks. Once hired we will arrange a follow up meeting with the project manager and construction manager and provide their contact information. At that meeting we will share more details regarding the construction schedule.

4.0 Communications:
We are setting up an email distribution list. Please provide your email address if you are interested in getting news/updates relating to the project or email communications.marketing@dal.ca

5.0 Q&A/Discussion:

How many feet is it set back from South Street? 50 ft., the required amount. It is actually set back further than the arena.

Will the Risley lot remain in its current use? Yes.

Will the parking all be gone? Some of the parking will be lost to the new building. The desire was to have parking included under the building but it would cost $90,000/spot, which is not sustainable.

Is the parking that is being lost by this building being replaced somewhere else on campus? We're currently working on this, there is a study that is happening. Looking into options. One option presented in the campus master plan was to create a parking garage on the Dalplex lot but this would require rezoning. We're looking into options.

What is the number of parking spots that will be lost -- 40.

When this is finished will Eliza Ritchie come down? Yes. There are 90 students housed in this residence.

Are the residences full? Yes, they've been full. There may be extra room this year but we've been operating at full capacity. The goal is to have additional room to accommodate returning years.

How much is Dal hoping to increase enrollment? The target identified in the campus master plan is 17,500, we're nearing that number now. As per the president's strategic focus we are growing.

There is concern about a lack of consultation and wondering why the rezoning hasn't been completed. Jeff explained the issue around the Cranston Lot -- it's taken over six months to deal with the property issue. This is part of over two years of a consultative process resulting from the Campus Master Plan.
Is the garbage a major loading dock? No, there isn’t a cafeteria. Will the garbage trucks come at 6:30 a.m.? This is a problem at Risley Hall. Bylaw is 7 a.m. Please let us know if they are not respecting the bylaw. Will the garbage trucks come at 6:30 a.m.? This is a problem at Risley Hall. Bylaw is 7 a.m. Please let us know if they are not respecting the bylaw. Where will students eat? At this point, one option is to go to Risley. No dining hall in this building so investigating other options.

What about green roofs? There are solar panels on the roof but there are green roofs on the lower courts.

Will there be any changes to the busses? They are very loud. Mr. McRae indicated he had a decibel meter. There is a problem because it is 300x’s louder than what is needed to sleep when they turn onto LeMarchant. Dal paid for 1/2 of the hub, near Risley to accommodate the student u-pass, however, Metro Transit selected the location.

There is a problem with busses idling. Ms. Miller requested that the hub be moved to the other side of the SUB. Jeff responded that it would be best to follow up with Metro Transit directly, as it was their decision where to locate the hub.

Will the building have any effect on wind, snow, leaves on South Street? We have the results from the snow impact study. It showed where the snow would impact on the arena. We didn’t do testing for wind tunnels but the snow study would give insights. We can go back and look at this.

Is this building being designed to be part of the existing Dal architecture? Dal is very diverse in terms of architectural appearance. We asked the architects to tie into what we see on the campus but we have moved away quite some time ago from the architecture of the Hicks, Macdonald Building, etc. We have two buildings on the go and two separate firms provided similar approaches.

A neighbour was concerned that the new design doesn’t tie into anything, based on the sketches. It looks distinct from anything he’s ever seen. Peter, the architect, responded - the campus shows a great variety of buildings. This building is not intended to look like everything else but be sensitive to a variety of issues. The building materials selected are intended to be sensitive to the older buildings on campus (colour is reflective of the older stone buildings) while the glass selected for the bottom two floors was intended to connect to the surrounding neighbourhood. Jeff indicated that the Mona Campbell had similar concerns in the conceptual phases, and we’ve heard very positive things upon its completion. Residents are concerned with the different colour of the building -- while Dal may feel that there is connection between LSRI, Rowe and Mona Campbell, they feel that this is completely different -- much lighter than Risley.

How does this sit in terms of environmental standards. We’re aiming for LEED gold. You don’t get it until six months after (which is why we say aiming). Mona Campbell was high gold, we’re still targeting LEED gold. Low energy consumption, sustainable building products.
Do the windows open? -- yes but we will be building with air conditioning.

How to access the residence floors -- LeMarchant only.

When is Dal making the decision about the roof and the arena? We need to have it addressed before the building gets higher than the current height of the arena. Need to have work done by summer 2012. One option is to rebuild a facility, if it costs 3M to replace the roof.

A resident, who used to be on the Board of Governors, indicated that the university committed to the residents that we wouldn't be building south of Dalplex -- it was a commitment made by Hicks during the build of Dalplex to residents. He was on the board at that time and wants it on record.

Concerned about the exterior -- is there a possibility to change the current exterior? Peter explained the rationale. The sketches represent concepts. Is it possible to survey the neighbours to ask them what they'd like. There is a feeling that the building would not age well. Is there anything can be changed? At this point, the colours could potentially change. The schematics have been presented to the BOG and approval has been given to build as presented.

Property value impact on all of this? Jillian (from HRM) can look into this.

Will we survey for damage? Yes -- we do this when needed. Will there be much rock breaking? Some, won't know until construction manager is hired. Mona Campbell is a similar project and would be a similar.

Neighbours indicated the desire for a sub-committee with the construction manager and building project manager. Jeff explained the process that we did with the Mona Campbell building and indicated that we'd be following a similar approach - provided the good neighbourhood plan with the project manager and on-site manager contact information to each of the neighbours. Our goal is to communicate with neighbours in advance and make sure the construction firms know about the bylaws. This is a much different build process than Risley. Dal will have a contract with all construction firms through our construction manager. Maxium held the contract, so they had the contract. We'll have an additional meeting with the construction manager and the neighbourhood members. Maxium is not on the list.

Any major ventilation systems venting onto South Street? We have roof-top units but they will be shielded. They're not directed to South Street.

Discussion regarding U1 and U2 with HRM. Trying to determine how high compared to Risley this building will be (and could be). Jillian provided a quick overview and then referenced she'll have more detail and illustrations next week on the 7th.
What is the density permitted under the current zoning. There is no density requirements. U1 is concerning hight. What is permitted in U1 vs U2. Jillian will address this in the meeting on the 7th, she will look into that.

How many feet is Dal over? 20 ft. If council doesn’t approve could Dal shave 20 ft. and go ahead. Yes. Another option is to step the building down and go closer to South Street.

Will be consulting be done on landscaping and lighting? Yes, happy to have another meeting with neighbours once construction manager is on board. Exterior lighting -- not into that level of design but it will be similar to the Mona Campbell. There will be down lighting. Exterior lighting affects neighbours.

Why will South Street have three residences? This asks a lot of South Street neighbours. There is a similar situation on Coburg. What about Coburg and Oxford lot -- couldn’t you build there? Trying to generate more interest and activity in the heart of the campus. This centralizes traffic towards University Ave.