

Mixed Use Centre Zone Review

Planning Advisory Committee

January 17, 2023

Planning & Development Department



EAST HANTS

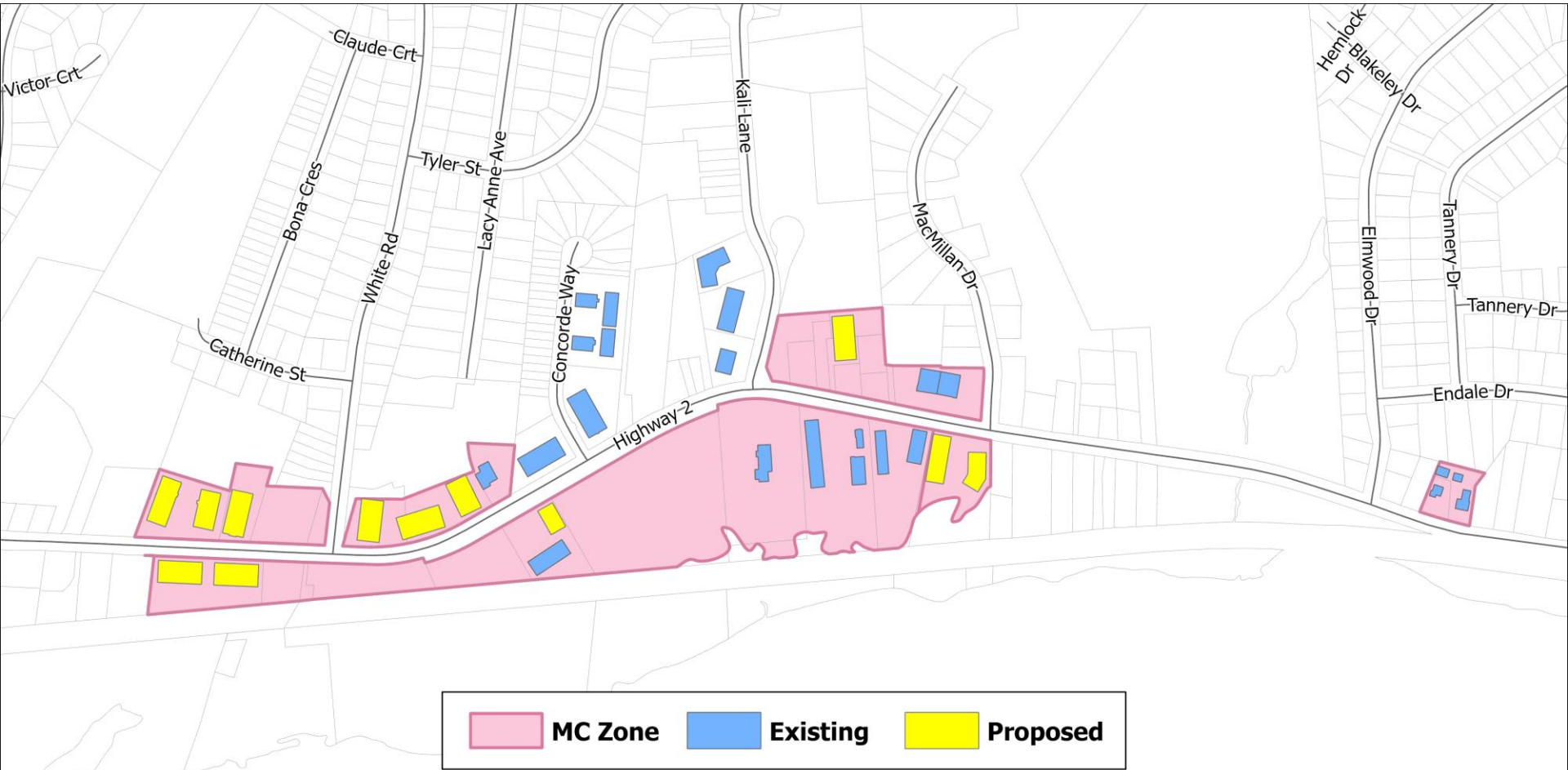
Background

- Through the current plan update project, Municipal Council requested a review of the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Designation and Zone in Enfield and Elmsdale.
- This review was initiated as a result of concerns related to the scale of development being proposed.
- In addition, the Economic & Business Development section of the municipality indicated concern with the lack of leasable commercial space in projects to date.
- Council subsequently directed that the review take place as a stand alone project outside of the current review process.

Mixed Use Centre Zone Creation

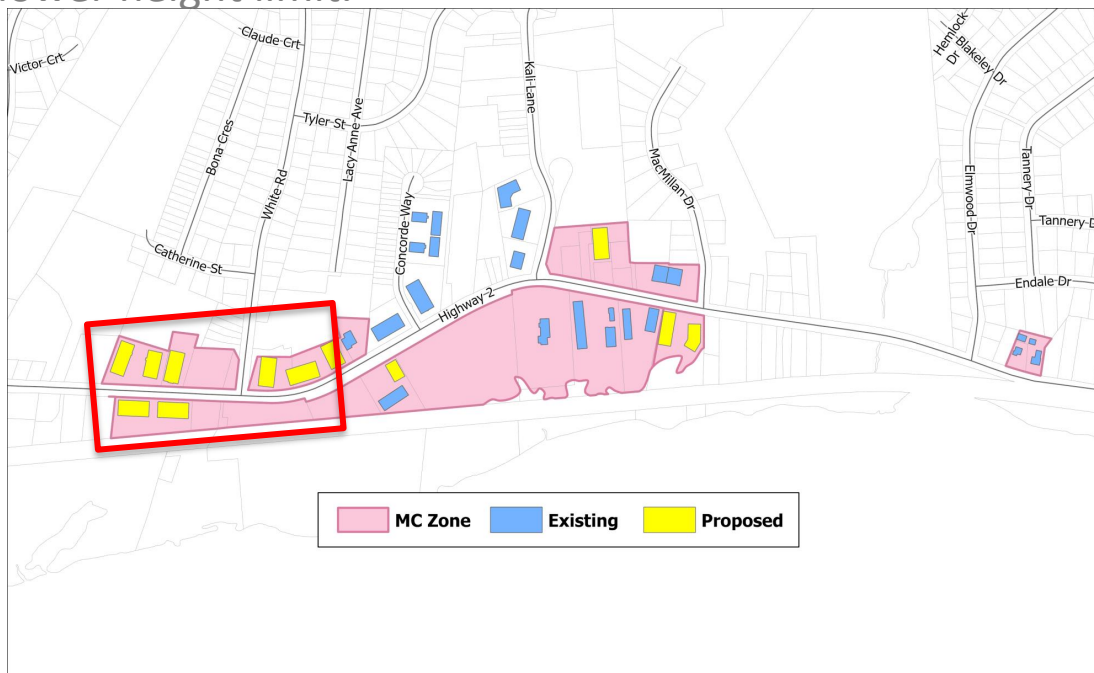
- Through the 2016 Plan review, the area along Highway 2 from Strides down to the Magnolia Care Facility was identified as an appropriate area for medium density mixed use growth.
- The review was also seen as an opportunity to remove zoning that could cause incompatible land uses to move into the area.

Current Mixed Use Centre Zoning



Height Limit

- Current regulations permit mixed use capable buildings up to 4 storeys or 15 metres where property does not abut a Residential Neighbourhood Zone.
- Limit is 3 storeys or 12 metres where property abuts a Residential Neighbourhood Zone and/or the proposed building is not mixed use capable.
- 12 m can accommodate a 4 storey building & 15 m can accommodate a 5 storey building.
- Concern is with the area highlighted in red below where Council is considering a lower height limit.



Commercial Space

- Of the approximately 12 proposed buildings in the MC Zone only one is planned to be mixed use with ground floor commercial and one other that is entirely commercial.
- EBD has identified a need for leasable commercial space so a second amendment would require at least 50% of the ground floor of new buildings to be commercial.
- This regulation would apply to all MC properties.



Proposed Amendments

MPS Amendment 1

MC - Mixed Use Centre

Policy Goal

Council's goal is to foster a consistent, walkable medium-scale growth pattern in Enfield's growing mixed use centre. ~~While commercial development is not required in the ground floor of developments in this designation, developments which have commercial potential at grade as well as dwellings will be permitted to have an additional storey of development compared to other building types in the area.~~ To foster mixed used development, commercial space will be required on ground floors of new buildings.

In the past, Council has permitted a number of developments in this area by comprehensive development district, or development agreement. This policy aims to bring predictability, and enact urban design requirements to enable a walkable, humanscaled, mixed use main street centre.

Proposed Amendments

MPS Amendment 2

UD25.

Council shall regulate height restrictions in the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Zone ~~by building typology, and the incorporation of commercial development potential at grade.~~ and will enable different height limits in different areas of the Mixed Use Centre Zone where deemed appropriate to foster compatibility with surrounding uses.

Mixed Use Centre Zone - Amendments

LUB Amendment 1

- Within the area outlined below, the *height of new buildings is limited to 12.2 m and 3 storeys.*



Mixed Use Centre Zone - Amendments

LUB Amendment 2

- Within all areas zoned Mixed Use Centre, a minimum of 50% of the ground floor area must be commercial space.

Citizen Engagement

- As part of the review process for MPS amendments, a Public Information Meeting (PIM) was required to hear input from the community.
- All owners of property zoned MC as well as those that own property within 300 m of an MC property were given written notice of the PIM held on Nov 1st.
- The meeting was also advertised in the *Chronicle Herald* and the municipal website/social media.
- 8 members of the public and 2 councillors were in attendance.
- Discussion included:
 - Whether development in process will have to comply with new regs
 - Concerns raised with Highway 2 traffic and needed improvements (lights)
 - Concerns raised with larger buildings near single unit dwellings
 - Questioned if the Province would freeze development along Highway 2
 - Concern about down zoning from existing MC Zone property owners (devaluing property values & reducing density)
 - Excitement expressed at a future walkable area with shops/services
 - Questioned whether developers would upkeep their properties long term
 - Questioned validity of traffic impact studies

Citizen Engagement

- Following first reading, a survey was circulated to all owners of property zoned MC as well as those that own property within 300 m of an MC property.
- 354 questionnaires were sent out and 19 (5.4%) responses were returned.
- Responses are posted with the report.



Citizen Engagement

- Questionnaire comments included:
 - Don't want to live in higher density community
 - Agree with 3 storey limit but not 50% commercial requirement
 - Current development exceeds infrastructure capacity - what's the plan?
 - 3 storey rule should be retroactive
 - Agree with height limit - want to keep current community feel
 - Enfield should be developed to maximum potential. High density development is the future
 - Concerned about amount and speed of traffic
 - Low income housing?
 - Will there be green space maintained in mixed use?
 - Development will be approved anyway
 - No jobs in area and rents are too high - Sackville, here we come
 - Agree with 3 storey limit and commercial space is needed.
 - Against changes that reduces the ease of growth
 - Community would benefit from restaurants, café's, etc.

Citizen Engagement

Comments con't:

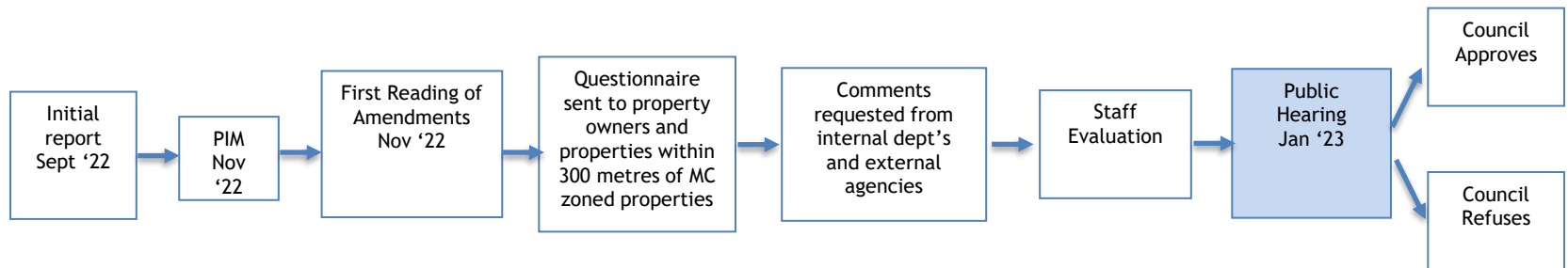
- Playgrounds /outdoor space needed & community gardens
- Turning lane and crosswalk needed at White Road & Concorde Way for pedestrian safety
- Oppose changes that will devalue my land. Being singled out and there is a housing crisis.
- There is a lack of commercial space
- Parking must allow 2 vehicles per apartment plus customer space
- Construction should be limited during day and should consider traffic management
- Trees should be preserved wherever possible
- Changes would limit growth and impact businesses. NS already has some of highest rents.
- Concerned about future traffic on Lacy Anne Ave
- Concerns at PIM were about properties on west side of Hwy 2. Therefore, regulations on east side of Hwy 2 shouldn't change.

Citizen Engagement

- In November Council authorized a public hearing.
- Public hearing is scheduled for Jan 25th and advertised in Chronicle Herald (Jan 10 & 17), Municipal website and social media.
- Letters will also be sent to all MC property owners and property owners within 300 m of MC zoned property.

Conclusion

- Amendments have been drafted that would:
 - ❑ restrict the height of new buildings in the southern end of the Mixed Use Centre Zone to 3 storeys.
 - ❑ Require at least 50% of ground floors to be commercial on all MC Zoned properties.
- A public information meeting has been held, Staff evaluation completed and the next step is a public hearing.



Recommendation

- That second reading be given to the amendments.

Recommended Motion

- *The Planning Advisory Committee recommends that Council give second reading to amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw which change the Mixed Use Centre (MC) Designation and Zone by:*
 - *Restricting the height of new buildings in a prescribed area to 3 storeys; and*
 - *Require a minimum of 50% of the ground floor area of all new buildings be commercial*