

# Spring Garden Area

## Summary:

This is the smallest of the proposed Primary Growth Areas in the Regional Centre Plan. It has the second most severe servicing constraints, indicating that the sewer system cannot handle much additional population. In the four block area, 20 of the 44 properties are protected by the Heritage Property Act. A number of other properties merit consideration as heritage properties. One block has been requested to be considered as a heritage conservation district. Other properties are better considered as “Established Residential Areas”, as they provide affordable housing; their demolition and replacement by new housing would require substantially increased rents. Staff has suggested this area could accommodate an additional 400 residents. They could be accommodated in an apartment already approved but not constructed, in one five-storey apartment building, and in secondary suites in backyards. There is no need to change height or zoning rules.

## Background:

The first map at the right shows the proposed Spring Garden Corridor, presented by HRM staff in 2012. The land at the southeast corner has been developed by Dalhousie University, and is removed in the new staff proposal, shown in the second map.



The area is bounded by Camp Hill cemetery on the north, by Summer Street, the Public Gardens and the Convent of the Sacred Heart on the east, by College Street and Dalhousie University on the south and by Robie Street on the west. Spring Garden Road runs diagonally from west to east through the area, and Carlton Street runs north to south. This is a residential and cafe/service area that draws foot traffic from the university and hospitals.

This area has 7,872 square metres of land available for development, according to Board 15, presented by HRM staff at the public meeting on June 27, 2016.<sup>i</sup>

**The area has the second most serious servicing problems of all of the proposed growth areas,** according to Board 19 from the public meeting. The



details of these servicing constraints have not been made public.

Staff Board 21 proposed that this area could accommodate one ten-storey building and three five-storey buildings, or two ten-storey buildings and one five-storey building, for an additional 400 residents.

A tower has already been approved for the parking lot behind Spring Garden Terrace. This would have 18 storeys and would accommodate about 70% of the targeted additional density.

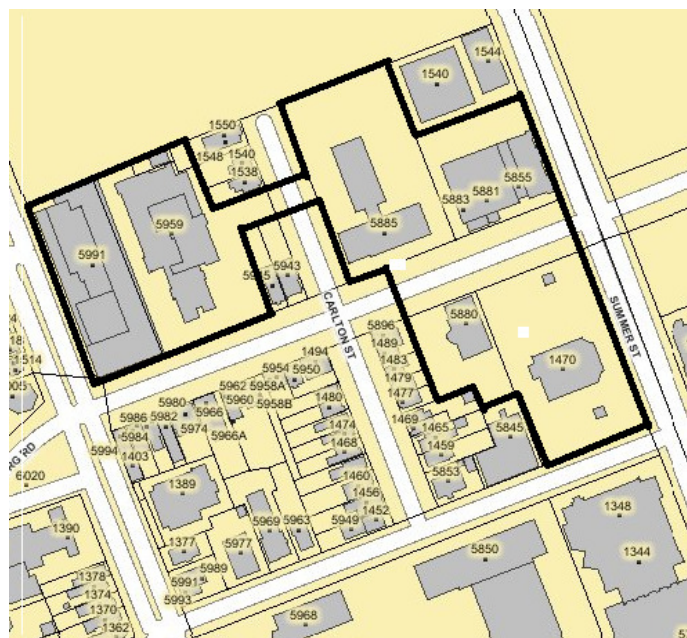
There are 44 properties in the four block area. Twenty of these are registered heritage properties. Fifteen are shown in white and grey on the second map, and are intended to be excluded from the Primary Growth Area, but five properties are included in the orange area. In 2012 the Heritage Trust asked that the buildings in the block bounded by Carlton, Spring Garden, Robie and College Streets be considered as a potential conservation district.

### Recommendation:

Under the existing height limit of 45 feet, a five-storey apartment building could replace the professional centre at 5880 Spring Garden and accommodate about 30% of the 400 residents in the staff target. The tower behind Spring Garden Terrace and a three-storey building behind 5960 to 5972 Spring Garden Road could accommodate the remainder. **There is no need to change the zoning or height limits in this area to achieve the targeted population.** Secondary suites in the larger backyards could provide additional housing.

The boundary of the proposed Primary Growth Area should be redrawn to exclude the registered heritage properties, the proposed heritage conservation district, and the existing low-rise housing. The proposed boundary is shown here:

More information on individual properties is provided in the Appendices.





## Appendix I: Registered Heritage Properties

There are many registered heritage properties, including two registered streetscapes, in this area. Here is a list, with a recommendation for each property or group of properties.

1. Early Victorian Streetscapes, 1452 to 1494 and 1459 to 1489 Carlton Street and



5896 and 5950 Spring Garden Road: (1480 and 1484 Carlton Street are shown above.) All these houses are now zoned R-2 with a 35-foot height limit. Some of them were shown in grey in the map from the June open house, and were omitted from the Primary Growth Area, but 1494 and 1489 Carlton Street and 5896 and 5950 Spring Garden Road were shown as orange and included in the area. This may put them at risk, even though they are currently protected by a development agreement. 5950 Spring Garden (left), with a hipped roof and box dormer, was built in 1891 by Hugh and Tina Little. The yards and ells are integral and important parts of the other properties, and should retain their current zoning and height limits. The R-2 zoning and 35-foot height limit should be retained.



2. William Barnstead House, 5945 Spring Garden Road (left): This two-storey house with a mansard roof is zoned R-3. It is part of an attractive Victorian enclave at the northwest corner of Spring Garden and Carlton. The Heritage Trust recommended in 2012 that the R-2 zoning and 35-foot height limit of the properties to the north along Carlton Street be extended south to this property, in order to protect it.

3. Gold Cure Institute Building, 5969 College Street (left): This property is now zoned R-3 with a 50-foot height limit. The existing building covers much of the lot. This property and its neighbours near the corner of College and Robie should be taken out of the area under consideration. The 50-foot height limit should remain in place.



4. Garden Crest Apartments, 1544 Summer Street: This property is now subject to a development agreement, which protects the front façade and the form of this building. The property is already very densely developed. This property should remain under the control of the present development agreement, and should be taken out of the area under consideration.

## Appendix II: Potential heritage properties

The following buildings in this area deserve consideration as potential heritage properties. A recommendation is given in each case.



1. 5963 College Street: A two-and-a-half-storey dwelling with a gable end and gingerbread trim. This now has a 50-foot height limit, which could be retained or reduced.

2. 5977 College Street (left): An early, three-storey apartment building from World War I, which appears in television advertisements. This now has a 50-foot height limit, which should be retained.

3. 5993 College Street: A two-storey corner dwelling has verandahs and gingerbread. This now has a 50-foot height limit, which should be retained or reduced.
4. 1377 Robie Street: A two-and-a-half-storey dwelling has bay windows and interesting shingle patterns. This now has a 50-foot height limit, which should be retained or reduced.
5. 1403 Robie Street (below): A three-storey Edwardian apartment building, Coburg Apartments, with classical pediments and pilasters. This now has a 35-foot height limit, which should be retained.



6. 5980 Spring Garden Road: A two-storey shop with projecting box bay windows. This now has a 35-foot height limit, which should be retained.
7. 5960-66 Spring Garden Road: A two-and-a-half-storey apartment with a projecting central section, dentils and ear mouldings. This now has a 35-foot height limit, which should be retained.
8. 5954 Spring Garden Road: An attractive two-and-a-half-storey dwelling with Scottish dormers. A classic "Halifax house". This now has a 35-foot height limit, which should be retained.

9. 1538 Carlton Street: A two-storey house with a bay window and turret, a Mansard roof, dentils, a projecting entrance with transom and sidelights. The property is zoned R-2 with a 35-foot height limit, which should be retained.
10. 1540 Carlton Street: A two-storey house with a bay window and transom. The property is zoned R-2 with a 35-foot height limit, which should be retained.
11. 5953 Spring Garden Road: A spectacular two-and-a-half-storey corner house with two turrets and multiple bay windows. The 35-foot height limit of the properties to the north should be extended to this property.

### **Appendix III: Potential heritage conservation district and context**

The buildings in the block bounded by Carlton, Spring Garden, Robie and College Streets should be considered as a potential conservation district or part of a conservation district. As was seen above, most of these buildings are registered or merit individual registration. The height limits should be maintained at the present values.

This area is adjacent to the east and west Carlton Streetscapes, between College and Spring Garden, and the Public Gardens. Building envelopes should be carefully regulated to be consistent with the building envelopes in the Carlton Streetscape.

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<sup>i</sup> Centre Plan Growth Scenarios: Where and How Should We Grow? Halifax Regional Municipality, 2016, [http://shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/system/documents/attachments/7ab0c0ac40f34c22300394a90346a9fbef255d68/00/003/595/original/boards\\_july6.pdf?1467807944](http://shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/system/documents/attachments/7ab0c0ac40f34c22300394a90346a9fbef255d68/00/003/595/original/boards_july6.pdf?1467807944).