

Willow Tree Tower design criticized at public meeting

Residents say 29-storeys is too tall for neighbourhood

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The Willow Tree Tower would overlook the Halifax Common and Quinpool Road. (W.M. Fares)

A 29-storey condo proposed for Quinpool Road and Robie Street was heavily criticized at a public meeting Thursday night, with residents saying the design shows a building too tall for their neighbourhood.

"This development has no heart," said Judy Haiven, one of around 80 people who attended the meeting at Dalhousie University.

"It has no heart for people in this community and it totally doesn't conform to any of the existing rules and the benefit is only to the developers."

The Willow Tree Tower development from Armco Communities and W.M. Fares would include 209 residential units, 199 parking spaces and 10,614 square feet of commercial space on the ground floor.

Concerns range from the height of the building to the length of the shadow it could cast on nearby streets.



This parking garage and office building would be torn down to make room for the 29-storey Willow Tree Tower. (Anjali Patil/CBC)

Tanya Dutton, who lives near the site, pointed out **there is a 25-storey building proposed next to the Willow Tree Tower on Robie Street.**

"We're going to have two skyscrapers next to Victorian homes and beautiful gardens," said Dutton.

"I don't think it will add anything to the community."

But others say they approved of the development. The Quinpool Road Main Street District Association presented a letter to the District 7 and 8 planning advisory committee expressing support for the Willow Tree Tower.

"The proposed plan of a mixed use development is in keeping with the overall HRM planning strategy vision that our board see for Quinpool," said Karla Nicholson, general manager for the Quinpool association.

It could be a while before the Willow Tree Tower moves forward. The District 7 and 8 planning advisory committee needs to review the proposed project and then make a recommendation to city staff.