

# Riverview council approves apartment building

HF - Development  
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■ **Though council didn't get everything it wanted, new building will be 'good addition' to town**

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TIMES & TRANSCRIPT STAFF

No doubt it took a little longer than the developer may have anticipated, but Riverview town council finally gave the green light last night for the construction of a 71-unit apartment building at 230 Coverdale Rd.

Council approved third and final reading for a rezoning and an amendment to the town's Municipal Development Plan, both of which were needed for the apartment complex to be constructed. The land in question, sometimes referred to as the "gravel pit," is located at the corner of Coverdale Road and Golf Club Road.

However, before voting on them, council tacked on a number of terms and conditions, evolving from concerns they had about the structure.

Economic development officer Brenda Orchard, along with Mark Cormier of the Greater Moncton Planning District Commission and Riverview Fire Chief Doug Hamer, met with the developers and came up with six recommendations for last night's meeting to address their concerns.

Council's major concern was the wooden balconies which they, along with Hamer, felt might present a fire hazard, especially when people have barbecues on them. They also did not think they were esthetically pleasing and preferred metal balconies that were painted in a co-ordinating colour to the building.

So, the first recommendation in Orchard's report was to keep the wooden balconies, but to paint them a co-ordinating colour and stain them within 18 months of construction. As for the safety aspect, it was agreed the fire department would vigorously enforce the rules restricting barbecues on balconies.

The fire chief has also expressed concerns regarding the single driveway access to the building, although it meets the standards of the building code. But with assurances from the developer the building would have sprinkler systems and that a turn-around for emergency vehicles would be provided at the main entrance to the facility, he supported this option.

Coun.-at-large Ann Seamans noted that Hamer said earlier that he had concerns about wooden balconies being fire hazards, and asked him if he changed his mind about it.

The fire chief said he had not, adding there were two incidents recently of fires being started on balconies by cigarettes. "But they do meet national building standards," said Hamer.

"You mean the best minimum standards," she said.

"Yes, that's right," replied the chief.

Among the other recommendations regarding terms and conditions were that — the concrete retaining wall shall be sand-blasted and include a minimum 1 ½ -metre landscaped strip with a tree planted every three metres; the retaining wall shall have a safety fence constructed in height and design to enclosures for swimming pools; and the wall will be designed and stamped by a professional engineer.

Finally, it was recommended that a snow removal plan be submitted to the development officer at the time of construction. On a motion by Ward 2 Coun. Bill McBeath, it was amended from "at the time of" to "prior to" construction.

McBeath said council did not get everything it wanted, but the developer did respond to their concerns and the apartment building will be a good addition for the town.

"The town's development team should be congratulated for their efforts," said Ward 4 Coun. Clarence Sweetland. He said they raised the concerns of council with the developer and the developer showed he was willing to work with them to find solutions.

Coun.-at-large David Burrell, the lone councillor who voted against both the rezoning and amendment, noted that 71 apartment buildings for 125 lots is just too many. "I don't think it is the best use of the land. It is too big of a project for it," he said.

Seamans, who voted for the rezoning but joined Burrell in voting against the municipal plan amendment, said she is still concerned about the safety aspect of wooden balconies. "When I think about happened at Mapleton Road (in Moncton), I can't support it," she said, referring to a recent balcony fire there.

Although he voted for the rezoning and amendment. Ward 1 Coun. Gordon Cowan cited the Chicago disaster a few weeks ago, in which several people were killed when a balcony collapsed. He said he would have preferred the metal balconies.