

STAFF DESIGN COMMENT

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT NO. DP001146 – 3201 LAUREN MARY PLACE

Applicant / Architect: G3 ARCHITECTURE INC.

Owner: BARRINGTON TOWNHOMES LTD.

Landscape Architect: FRED BROOKS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Subject Property:

<i>Zoning</i>	R6 – Townhouse Residential
<i>Location</i>	The subject property is located along Lauren Mary Place southwest of the Barrington Road/Rock City Road intersection.
<i>Total Area</i>	4897.54m ²
<i>Official Community Plan (OCP)</i>	Map 1 – Future Land Use Plan – Neighbourhood; Map 3 – Development Permit Area DPA No. 5 – Steep Slope Development; DPA No. 9 – Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Multiple Family and Mixed Commercial/Residential
<i>Neighbourhood Plan</i>	N/A
<i>Relevant Design Guidelines</i>	Steep Slope Guidelines General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines

Site Context:

The subject property is situated along the north edge of a phased townhouse development, located at 3401 Barrington Road, which is still under construction. Mariposa Drive, a private strata road which bisects 3201 Lauren Mary Place (servicing 3401 Barrington Road); and, will connect Barrington Road with Lauren Mary Place.

The properties on either side and across from the subject property are developed as single and/or duplex residential dwellings in a well-established neighbourhood. The property behind the subject property is 3401 Barrington Road.

The subject property slopes steeply downwards from south to north, and has a downward cross-slope (east to west) along Lauren Mary Place. Lauren Mary Place curves uphill from the northwest corner of this site where it intersects with Barrington Road, and terminates in a cul-de-sac.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The applicant is proposing to construct a 13-unit townhouse development. Building Blocks 1 and 2 each contain 4 units, and Block 3 contains 5 units. The units range in size from 143.93m² to 166.80m². There are ten 3-bedroom units and three 2-bedroom units. The proposed Floor Area Ratio is 0.43 which complies with R6 density requirements.

Site Design

The low point of the site at the northwest corner is undevelopable as it must be used for a storm retention pond. The applicant has provided an Environmental Assessment Report that identifies a number of natural features such as a rock cliff, wildflower meadow, and two “significant” trees in this area. The remainder of the site is steep and requires rock removal, a vegetative cover, and trees to facilitate the development.

The three buildings are sited to follow the curve of Lauren Mary Place. Units 1 to 4 of Block 1 have a somewhat staggered placement. Units 5 to 8 of Block 2 and Units 9 to 13 of Block 3 are uniformly sited with consistent front facades. Each building (Block) consists of a three-storey front elevation and two-storey rear elevation. Blocks 1 and 2 require rear yard setback variances.

Access to the site is via Mariposa Drive. A drive aisle off Mariposa Drive and individual driveways give access to the at-grade garages of each unit. Each garage provides two parking spaces which meets the Parking Bylaw requirements.

Pedestrian connections are provided from the front doors of the units to the drive aisle. Five pedestrian accesses are provided from the drive aisle to the city sidewalk.

Unit amenity spaces consist of a patio located between the rear of each unit and the hillside face.

There are two garbage receptacle areas. One is located next to the visitor parking spaces the other is located between Blocks 2 and 3.

Staff Comments:

- Consider creating more unit variation by staggering the unit placements in Blocks 2 and 3.
- Consider reducing the amount of hard surfaces on-site; and, prevent cars from obstructing the drive aisle, by reducing the length of driveways.
- Consider creating more pedestrian connections (pathways, paving surface treatments, etc.) throughout the site such as an informal sidewalk connecting the units.

Building Design:

Each building is three-storeys at the front and two-storeys at the rear. The front facades are well articulated with the stairwell portion of the unit set back while the garage and the third floor and the third floor bay project forward. The bay projection is topped by a slanted roof and this is reiterated by the roof over front entry which is supported by two angled posts from the ground to the upper edge of the roof. The applicant is requesting height variances for all three buildings.

Unit designs are identical and use three different materials for the front facades. These appear to be synthetic stone on the first floor, horizontal plank on the middle floor and a board and batten siding on the upper-most floor and bay.

Staff Comments:

- Consider ways to de-emphasize the verticality of the building elevations such as:
 - wrapping the stone façade treatment to the side (the entire length);
 - demarcating the floor levels with a band or overhangs;
 - lowering the angle of the entry porch roofs to reduce the length of the support posts;
 - wrapping porch treatments around the corner;
 - enlarging the windows in Units 4 and 5 in order to put “eyes on the street” along Mariposa Drive; and
 - managing the slope along the sides of the buildings with broad and shallow steps/retaining walls combined with landscaping.
- Consider ways to create unit differentiation such as using exterior materials that are varied in design, colour and texture.

Landscape Design

The subject property is located in the “North Nanaimo Landscape Character Area” which is described as “north suburbia with forest backdrop” and specifies that the design layout must be “informal”. It further states that the landscape plan should:

maintain stand of native evergreens where feasible. Include at least 50% evergreen trees in planting scheme. Accent natural features such as rock outcrop.

The landscape requirements in the zoning bylaw also specify that a minimum 1.8m wide landscape buffer must be provided along the street front and the “treatment level” (which specifies the density of plantings) should be level 1d.

The landscape plan shows that existing trees and vegetative cover will be retained at the top of the rock face behind all three buildings. Landscaping around the rear and sides of the buildings consists of planting beds surrounded and connected by a wildflower meadow groundcover. Arbours and privacy lattices along with small shrubs, trees and perennials are proposed for the individual amenity areas. At the front of each unit beside the sidewalk is a planting bed with a pin oak, columnar spruce, a deciduous tree and a groundcover. In the landscape buffer and boulevard along a portion of the front property line are regularly spaced pink flowering dogwood trees and rhododendrons along with spreading blue juniper shrubs. The proposed landscaping is ornamental in style with many flowering deciduous trees and plants and has a formal layout along the street front.

Staff Comments:

- The landscape buffer along the front property line is not dimensioned but scales off at approximately 1.2m. Trees are planted on the property line instead of within the landscape buffer. The boulevard space is quite intensely planted and contains an extensive flight of stairs. This may not be feasible.
- The landscape plan has not included the northwest storm retention area of the site. The Environmental Assessment submitted by the applicant provides specific information concerning the natural features on this portion of the site.

- A revised landscaping plan for the whole site should be developed that meets the landscaping requirements in the zoning bylaw and addresses the constraints, opportunities and recommendations in the Environmental Assessment.
- Consider landscaping the storm retention area to provide passive recreational enjoyment that supplements the individual amenity spaces and contributes to the development's identity at this prominent corner in the neighbourhood.
- Consider ways to make the individual amenity spaces more functional.
- Applicant to provide design details of the patio areas and garbage enclosure.

PROPOSED VARIANCES

Minimum Building Setbacks

The minimum rear yard setback requirement is 7.6m. The proposed setback at the corner of Units 1 and 5 is 7.24m and 7.44m, proposed variances of 0.26m and 0.06m respectively.

Maximum Building Height

The maximum building height is 9.0m, the anticipated building height is approximately 9.7m, a proposed variance of 0.7m. The applicant is requesting a 1.0m variance in order to allow for some flexibility at build-out.