

STAFF DESIGN COMMENT

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT NO. DP001153 – 521 HECATE STREET

Applicant / Owner: SATGUR DEVLEOPMENT INC.

Architect: ELLINS ARCHITECT INC.

Landscape Architect: VICTORIA DRAKEFORD LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Subject Property:

<i>Zoning</i>	R15 – Old City Medium Density Residential
<i>Location</i>	The subject properties are located on the east side of Hecate Street, between Selby and Prideaux Streets.
<i>Total Area</i>	818m ²
<i>Official Community Plan (OCP)</i>	Map 1 – Future Land Use Plan – Neighbourhood; Map 3 – Development Permit Area DPA No. 8 – Old City Neighbourhood; Development Permit Area DPA No. 9 – Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Multiple Family, and Mixed Commercial / Residential Development
<i>Relevant Design Guidelines</i>	General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines; and Old City Multiple Family Residential Design Guidelines

Site Context

The site is located in the Nob Hill Neighbourhood, close to Nob Hill Park. The subject property currently contains an existing single residential dwelling dating from 1908. The lot slopes downhill from west to east, away from Hecate Street. There is no rear lane access to the site.

Surrounding land uses include a mix of single residential dwellings, duplexes, and multi-family units. To the north is a 6-unit multi-family building, to the east and south are single residential dwellings, and on the opposite side of Hecate Street are former single residential dwellings converted into multi-family apartments. A three-storey, 33-unit condominium building is located northeast of the subject property.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The applicant is proposing to construct a three-storey, 10-unit multi-family rental residential building. The building will have a two-storey elevation facing Hecate Street and a three-storey elevation to the rear. Parking will be provided in the rear of the property, partially under the building. The gross floor area will be 695m² with a proposed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) equal to 0.85 which is the maximum allowable FAR in the R15 zone.

Site Design

The proposed building maximizes its lot coverage and is sited within the required minimum setbacks on the sides and rear. A front yard setback variance is requested for the front porches.

Driveway access will be provided from Hecate Street along the north side of the building and will lead to the parking area in the rear. Three parking stalls will be provided under-the-building and six parking stalls will be provided at-grade. Ten parking spaces are required. A one space variance is requested. Long-term and short-term bicycle parking is provided in excess of the Parking Bylaw requirements.

Pedestrian connections are provided by a ground level walkway along the south side of the building, an elevated walkway along the north side of the building, and a central walkway to the two front main-level suites.

Communal ground level amenity space is provided in the front yard.

Staff Comments:

- The site is well utilized.

Building Design

The proposed building has two bachelor suites on the lower level, and two 2-bedroom suites and two 1-bedroom suites on each of the main and upper levels. The two front suites on the main level have direct exterior access. The remaining suites are served by internal stairs and corridors accessed from entrances on the sides of the building. The entrance on the south side of the building is at ground level. The entrance on the north side (driveway side) is on the main level and is reached by an elevated walkway. Each suite has an individual outdoor amenity space – either a front patio with trellis, a front porch, or a balcony.

The building is clad in vinyl siding with horizontal planks on the upper level, board and batten on the main and lower levels, and shingles at various locations. Wooden trim is proposed for the windows, doors, corners, and along floor levels.

The building has a predominately hip roof with a gable end over the front suites on the north half of the building. Fiberglass shingles are proposed.

Staff Comments:

- Consider ways to give visual prominence to the main side entrance to foster way-finding to the interior units.
- Consider ways to differentiate the two front units such as stepping back one façade.
- Consider ways to further reinforce the historical context of the neighbourhood by adding more architectural detail. The existing house has an interesting sunburst detail on its front gable that could be reiterated on gable of the new building.

Landscape Design

The subject property is located in the “Old Nanaimo Landscape Character Area” which is described as “historical city with formal streetscapes” and specifies that the design layout must be “formal”. It suggests an emphasis on seasonal colour and display and encourages heritage planting styles.

The landscaping plan proposes the retention of a mature walnut tree and a number of shrubs in the front yard as well as three Hazel trees along the south property line. Sixteen new deciduous trees are proposed – a mixture of serviceberry, dogwood, apple and cherry. Additional fragrance, colour, and fruit is provided by shrubs some of which are evergreen. Perennials provide understory groundcover and are also a source of berries and fruit. Vines provide plant cover on the front patio trellises and a mixture of perennials and herbs provide additional fill and offer a food source.

The front yard has a historical layout with a symmetrical arrangement of lawn and two trees enclosed by a picket fence and foundation plantings in front of the porches and patios. Screening along the side and rear property lines is provided by deciduous trees and evergreen shrubs.

Staff Comments:

- Consider substituting some coniferous material along the property lines to assist with year-round screening particularly at the rear where balconies will overlook neighbouring back yards.
- Provide dimensions of landscape buffer width along the side and rear property lines.
- Provide details of the perimeter fence (if planned) and the picket fence.
- Provide details of site lighting and irrigation.

PROPOSED VARIANCES

Minimum Building Setbacks

The minimum front yard setback requirement is 6.0m. The proposed setback for the front porches is 5.62m, a variance of 0.38m is requested.

Parking

The minimum requirement is 10 spaces. Nine spaces are proposed, a one space variance is requested.