

STAFF DESIGN COMMENT

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. DP001190 – 1300 JUNCTION AVENUE

Applicant: WESTURBAN DEVELOPMENTS LTD.

Architect: THUJA ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

Landscape Architect: LAZZARIN SVISDAHL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Owner: 1228590 BC LTD.

SUBJECT PROPERTY AND SITE CONTEXT

<i>Zoning</i>	COR2 – Mixed Use Corridor
<i>Location</i>	The subject property is bound by Tenth Street to the north, Lawlor Road to the east, Eleventh Street to the south, and Junction Avenue to the west.
<i>Total Area</i>	1.52ha
<i>Official Community Plan (OCP)</i>	Map 1 – Future Land Use Plan – Corridor and City Commercial Centre Map 3 – 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 Design Guide: Chase River Town Centre

The subject property occupies a large block in the Chase River Town Centre in South Nanaimo. The property was rezoned from Single Dwelling Residential (R1) to Mixed Use Corridor (COR2) in 2019. The site is generally flat, cleared of natural vegetation, and was historically used for agriculture. Wexford Creek, a fish-bearing stream, crosses the northeastern section of the property.

The property lies within the Chase River Town Centre as identified in the Chase River Neighbourhood Plan and associated Design Guide. Lawlor Road is envisioned in the Design Guide as a commercial main street. The portion of the subject property abutting Lawlor Road, however, will not be developed for commercial use and will instead be rehabilitated into a natural riparian state through a future City of Nanaimo project.

Surrounding land uses include commercial retail centres (Southgate Shopping Centre and South Parkway Plaza) across Lawlor Road to the northeast and east, Chartwell Malaspina care residence across Eleventh Street to the south, single residential dwellings across Junction Avenue to the west, and Wexford Creek Seniors' Community care residence across Tenth Street to the north.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The applicant is proposing to construct three 4-storey multi-family rental residential buildings with a combined total of 213 dwelling units. Each building will have a gross floor area of 5,380m² and will consist of 71 dwellings units with a unit mix as follows:

- 39 one-bedroom units, approximately 57m² in area;
- 24 two-bedroom units, between approximately 66m² and 78m² in area; and
- 8 three-bedroom units, approximately 86m² in area.

The proposed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 1.06, which is below the maximum permitted FAR of 1.25 in the COR2 zone.

Site Design

The proposed development will feature three buildings sited in the central and western portion of the lot. The eastern portion of the property is protected by a statutory right-of-way for future restoration of Wexford Creek.

Building A is sited in the northwest corner of the property, oriented to align with Tenth Street and with its entrance facing an interior surface parking lot. Building B is sited in the southwest corner of the property, facing Eleventh Street. Building C is oriented on a north-south axis in the interior of the lot, with its entrance facing the central parking lot. All three buildings will have additional underground parking accessed via ramps from the central parking lot. Two vehicle entrances are proposed to the site, one from Junction Avenue and one from Eleventh Street. Multiple pedestrian access points are proposed from Tenth Street, Junction Avenue, and Eleventh Street.

The interior surface parking lot will include 135 parking stalls while each of the proposed buildings will have 44 underground parking stalls. Long-term bicycle parking will be provided in each building's underground parking level. One garbage and recycling facility is proposed at the north end of the lot, adjacent to Building A's underground parking ramp.

Staff Comments:

- Connect primary entrances for all three buildings with pedestrian walkways across the internal parking lot, with accessible parking provided in close proximity to entrances. A second building entrance for Building B may be required to face the internal parking lot.
- Provide direct pedestrian connections from ground-level units to Junction Avenue and Eleventh Street, and other elements to identify individual units, where possible.
- Avoid siting parking spaces immediately in front of the entryways of all three buildings, facing the interior parking lot. Consider providing pick-up/drop-off areas or short-term loading stalls.
- Look at providing other opportunities for direct pedestrian connections between the site and the sidewalk on Tenth Street.
- Consider providing separate garbage enclosures for each building, to reduce the distance for residents to travel.
- Provide site lighting details.
- Explore opportunities for more developed on-site common amenity spaces.

Building Design

The three proposed buildings are similar in form and character, and reflect the Finnish Agrarian style as recommended by the Chase River Town Centre design guidelines. A rhythm of unique typologies is repeated across all building facades, through a mix of different massing styles which provides visual interest. Elements of the façade reflect the community's heritage with references to former agricultural uses.

Individual units will have open balconies, covered balconies, or ground-level patios. An entrance canopy will provide weather protection at each building's primary entrance. The ends of each building will feature prominent raised pitch roof overhangs.

A mix of exterior materials will add further visual interest along all building façades. Prominent materials include fibre cement panels, fibre cement lap siding, and corrugated metal siding. The siding colour scheme is varied on each building to help distinguish the different buildings.

Staff Comments:

- Consider options for further differentiating the three buildings, perhaps with unique entrance canopies.

Landscape Design

The proposed landscape plan includes screening around the perimeter of each building consisting primarily of English laurel. Significant planting areas are proposed along the north side of Building A, at the east ends of Buildings A and B, and to the south and northeast of Building C. Street trees are proposed along the Junction Avenue and Eleventh Street frontages, along with a seeded grass boulevard.

An outdoor space to the east of Building of C will feature an open lawn for resident use and a stormwater detention pond with perimeter gravel path. To the east of the outdoor area is the protected Wexford Creek right-of-way which will be rehabilitated as a riparian habitat by the City.

Staff Comments:

- Ensure that Minimum Landscape Treatment Levels along the Junction Avenue and Eleventh Street frontages are met. Incorporate a more robust planting scheme between the property lines and building face.
- Consider landscape islands to break up the parking area in front of Building C.
- Explore opportunities to further blend and integrate riparian landscaping between the Wexford Creek buffer and the stormwater detention area.
- Provide details for the garbage enclosure and the required landscape buffer.

PROPOSED VARIANCES

There are no proposed variances.