

DATE OF MEETING July 6, 2020

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**SUBJECT DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. DP1169 –
1125 SEAFIELD CRESCENT**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To present for Council's consideration, a development permit application for two rental residential buildings with a total of 124 units at 1125 Seafield Crescent.

Recommendation

That Council issue Development Permit No. DP1169 at 1125 Seafield Crescent with the following variances:

- increase the maximum permitted building height from 14m to 16.13m for Building A, and 16.67m for Building B;
- reduce the minimum required landscape buffer width from 1.8m to 1m for a portion of the east property line; and
- reduce the minimum required number of parking spaces from 137 to 126.

BACKGROUND

A development permit application, DP1169, was received from Daryoush Firouzli Architect Inc. on behalf of the Woodgrove Senior Citizens Housing Society to permit the development of two rental apartment buildings, funded by BC Housing, for low- to moderate-income seniors. The subject property is owned by the Woodgrove Senior Citizens Housing Society and currently contains two residential buildings for seniors. Building 1 will remain on the west side of the property and contains 25 residential units. Building 2 (with 30 units), on the east side of the property, will be demolished and replaced with the proposed buildings.

Subject Property and Site Context:

<i>Zoning</i>	Hospital Urban Centre (CC5)
<i>Location</i>	The subject property is located one block south of the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital (one block from Dufferin Crescent).
<i>Total Area</i>	5,760m ²
<i>Official Community Plan (OCP)</i>	Map 1 – Future Land Use Plan – Urban Node Map 3 – Development Permit Area No. 9 - Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Multiple Family and Mixed Commercial/Residential Development Hospital Area Plan – Map 1 – Multi-Family High Density
<i>Design Guidelines</i>	General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines Hospital Area Plan

The subject property is located adjacent to a school on the east side, Beaufort Park is located to the south (rear), a multi-family building is located to the west side, and single family residential homes are located just north of the property across Seafield Crescent. The site is centrally located within walking distance of a number of commercial and health-related services.

DISCUSSION

Proposed Development

The applicant proposes to construct two five-storey residential buildings in two phases. Each building will contain 62 affordable rental units for seniors. Phase 1 includes the construction of Building A (62 units), and the demolition of existing Building 2 with 30 units. Phase 2 includes the construction of Building B (62 units), and completion of the raingarden amenity area. The intent is to move existing residents into the new Building A while Building 2 is demolished. The subject property would contain a campus of three buildings and a total of 149 residential units for seniors. The residential unit composition is as follows:

Unit Type	Building A	Building B	Existing Building 1 to remain	Total
One bedroom	54	53	25	132
Two bedroom	8	9	0	17
<i>Total</i>	62	62	25	149

The Hospital Area Plan designates the properties as 'Multi-Family High Density' and supports a density of 50 to 150 units per hectare (uph) and buildings up to six storeys in height. The proposed development would achieve a density of 108uph in a five-storey building form. The permitted base Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in the CC5 Zone is 1.00 and an FAR of 0.85 is proposed.

Site Design

Proposed Building A is sited at the rear of the property adjacent to Beaufort Park, and proposed Building B provides street presence along Seafield Crescent. The primary building entrances are oriented to face one another to allow a convenient pedestrian connection between the two buildings. Pedestrian paths, 1.8m in width, are proposed to provide a connection from the building entrances and to Beaufort Park at the rear of the property.

Underground parking will be provided for Building B, and the surface parking for Building A is predominantly located to the rear and side of Building B so as to maximize building presence along the street frontage. The existing two driveways will remain generally in the same locations, and the existing parking areas are proposed to be reconfigured to accommodate more parking spaces. Two screened garbage enclosures will be provided to accommodate the development.

With the proposed phased development and changes to the parking configuration, at the end of Phase 1, the property will include three residential buildings with a total of 87 residential units and 73 parking spaces. At the end of Phase 2 the property will consist of three residential buildings with a total of 149 residential units and 126 parking spaces. The location and number of accessible parking spaces has been considered for both phases.

Building Design

The new buildings have recessed columns to accommodate the decks, and bold horizontal features provide interest and shading for the decks. Exterior façade materials are proposed to be Hardie panel and Hardie horizontal siding, with stone accents, vinyl windows and aluminum railings. The residential units range in size from 52m² to 68m². Most units include a covered deck or patio area that is approximately 5m² in size. A total of 20 units are proposed as accessible units. An amenity room and laundry room is provided on all floors of both buildings. The new buildings will be constructed to meet the requirements of B.C. Energy Step Code 3.

Landscape Design

The front yard area of Building B will be landscaped with lawn and ornamental trees adjacent to the sidewalk and a variety of shrubs to accent the ground-level patios. In the area between Buildings A and B, landscaping is provided to define the primary building entrances and to screen ground-level patios from the parking area. A landscaped rain garden amenity area is provided on the east side of Building A that will contain benches, picnic tables, and an arbour with gate leading to Beaufort Park. A landscaped rain garden and black chain link fence will be provided along the rear property line.

Design Advisory Panel

At its meeting held on 2020-FEB-13, the Design Advisory Panel accepted DP1169 as presented with support for the proposed building height and minimum landscape treatment level variances. The following recommendations were provided:

- It is suggested the project team work with Staff to address Staff comments;
- Consider alternate ways to reduce parking further and create more landscaped areas;
- Look at ways to enhance the entranceways;
- Look at improving pedestrian circulation/connectivity and the width of the sidewalks/pathways;
- Consider enhancing the proposed gate details; and
- Consider reversing Building B to face Building A such that the building entrances to both buildings face one another.

Staff worked with the applicant to address a number of design comments. The applicant has made revisions to off-street parking, improved pedestrian circulation, enhanced the gate to Beaufort Park, and reversed Building B such that the primary building entrances to Buildings A and B face one another.

Proposed Variances

Building Height

The maximum building height in the CC5 zone is 14m. The applicant proposes a height of 16.13m for Building A a variance of 2.13m; and a height of 16.67m for Building B, a variance of 2.67m.

The buildings are five storeys in height, and the Hospital Area Plan ‘Multi-Family High Density’ designation supports a height of six storeys for this property. Building A is sited adjacent to Beaufort Park and school district property and is well separated from existing residences. The proposed height variance for Building B will allow underground parking for this building, and the façade incorporates strong horizontal features and lighter colored finishes on the fifth storey to break the vertical building mass. The proposed development addresses the City’s design guidelines. Staff support the proposed variances.

Minimum Landscape Treatment Level

The “City of Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500” (the “Zoning Bylaw”) requires a minimum landscape buffer width of 1.8m along the full length of the east property line (adjacent to the school). A variance to the required landscape buffer width, from 1.8m to 1m, is proposed for a portion of the east property line (adjacent to eight parking spaces).

A cedar hedge will be planted between the school property and the eight parking spaces to create a robust landscape screen for this section along the east property line.

Off-Street Parking

The minimum required off-street parking for the proposed development is 137 parking spaces. The proposed number of parking spaces is 126; a variance of 11 parking spaces.

The Woodgrove Senior Citizens Housing Society states there are currently 52 residential units for seniors on the subject property and that 38% of the residents utilize parking spaces. The applicant is proposing 149 affordable rental units for seniors, and 92% of the units would have access to a parking space. Thus, the applicant states the proposed off-street parking would accommodate the residential users and their guests or caregivers.

The proposed variance has also been reviewed in relation to the ‘City of Nanaimo Policy for Consideration of a Parking Variance’ and can be supported with the following rationale:

1. The subject property is located within the Hospital Area Mobility Hub in accordance with the Nanaimo Transportation Master Plan (NTMP). The proposed parking variance is consistent with the NTMP goal to support denser land uses within the City’s mobility hubs.
2. The proposed parking variance is also consistent with the transportation objectives of the Hospital Area Plan for increased densities to support pedestrian, cycling, and transit use throughout the area.

3. The property is located within walking distance of commercial and health-related services, and several bus stops are located on Dufferin Crescent, which is within 100m of the subject property.
4. A parking study is not required for minor variance proposals that are less than 15% of the required total parking spaces; and the proposed parking variance represents an 8% reduction in the required total parking spaces.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Development Permit Application No. DP1169 is for a development with 149 residential units for seniors at 1125 Seafield Crescent.
- Variances are requested to allow an increased building height, a reduction in the landscape buffer width, and reduced vehicle parking spaces.
- The proposed development addresses the City's design guidelines and Staff support the proposed variances.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Permit Terms and Conditions
ATTACHMENT B: Location Plan
ATTACHMENT C: Site Plans
ATTACHMENT D: Underground Parking Plan
ATTACHMENT E: Building Elevations
ATTACHMENT F: Building Renderings
ATTACHMENT G: Landscape Plans
ATTACHMENT H: Aerial Photo

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