

STAFF DESIGN COMMENT

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. DP001212 – 285 PRIDEAUX STREET

Applicant / Architect: S2 ARCHITECTURE INTERIOR DESIGN

Owner: CITY OF NANAIMO

Landscape Architect: WSP LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

SUBJECT PROPERTY AND SITE CONTEXT:

<i>Zoning</i>	Fitzwilliam Zone (DT2) and Old City Mixed Use (DT8)
<i>Location</i>	The subject property is located on the corner of Prideaux Street and Fitzwilliam Street.
<i>Total Area</i>	1,796 m ²
<i>Official Community Plan (OCP)</i>	Map 1 – Future Land Use Plan – Neighbourhood Map 3 – Development Permit Area No. 8 – Old City Neighbourhood; Development Permit Area No. 9 - Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Multiple Family and Mixed Commercial/Residential Development; and Heritage Conservation Area (HCA 1)
<i>Downtown Nanaimo Plan</i>	Old City Commercial and Fitzwilliam Character Area #8
<i>Relevant Design Guidelines</i>	Old City Multiple Family Residential Design Guidelines Nanaimo Downtown Urban Design Plan and Guidelines (Fitzwilliam precinct) General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines

The subject property is located in the Old City neighbourhood, on Fitzwilliam Street which is a gateway to downtown Nanaimo. The existing community services building will be demolished to allow for redevelopment of the site. The adjacent property to the west is the City's new fire hall, which is currently under construction. The Nanaimo detachment of the RCMP is located across Fitzwilliam Street to the south. The surrounding neighbourhood is a transitional area between more intensive commercial uses to the east and residential uses to the west. Nearby properties include single residential dwellings, low-density commercial uses, multi-family residential buildings, and commercial services.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The applicant is proposing a four-storey personal care facility with 51 supportive housing units.

Site Design

The building is set back 5.9m from the Fitzwilliam Street property line, and the front elevation and entrances face Prideaux Street. The grade of the property slopes down towards the northeast corner, causing the entrances to the building to be raised, with steps and/or a wheelchair ramp to provide access. A shared driveway (with the fire hall) is located along the west side of the property. Driveway access to the property is provided on both Fitzwilliam Street and Prideaux Street. Six parking spaces and the garbage/recycling enclosure are located on the north side of the property. A landscaped amenity area is located on the south side of the building, within the setback area

between the building and the Fitzwilliam Street public sidewalk. A concrete sidewalk is provided around the perimeter of the building. A bike rack is provided near the building entrance.

The proposed building will have a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.48, less than the maximum permitted FAR of 2.3.

Staff Comments:

- Due to the statutory right-of-ways registered on the property title (noted as access easement on the plans), the proposed site plan makes efficient use of the developable area of the property.

Building Design

A four-storey modular wood frame building is proposed. The main floor of the building will contain offices, staff room, kitchen, laundry, lounge, dining area and 6 residential units. The upper three storeys of the building contains 45 units. Generous glazing is proposed for the first storey facing Prideaux Street, and a canopy with wood detailing extends along the length of the front façade, which defines the ground floor and provides interest and weather protection for the primary building entrances. The exterior façade materials consist of fibre cement paneling and wood like fibre cement plank. The arrangement of the white fibre cement panel on the south and east façade provides interest and breaks the massing of the building. The building elevation facing Fitzwilliam Street contains windows and a canopy for weather protection in the amenity area.

Staff Comments:

- Consider ways to better differentiate the ground floor amenity area and the south elevation, such as a change in material or contrasting colour to break the continuous use of wood like material on this elevation.
- Provide details of screening for any rooftop equipment.
- While the canopy identifies the building frontage, consider additional detailing or visual cue to accent the front entry doors.

Landscape Design

A raised amenity area with trees and picnic tables is proposed on the south elevation facing Fitzwilliam Street, and is located on a curved concrete retaining wall that is 0.45m in height. A curved wrought iron decorative fence, 1.56m in height, is proposed to be located on the retaining wall to enclose the amenity area. Trees and shrubs are proposed between the sidewalk and the retaining wall to screen the retaining wall. Also, a landscape buffer and wood fence are proposed along the north property line to screen the parking spaces. Trees and shrub plantings are proposed along Prideaux Street. Exterior lighting will be placed to illuminate the entrances and the pedestrian walkways.

- Provide landscape screening along the east side of the garbage/recycling enclosure to screen from the street, and along the west side if possible.
- The proposed trees and plantings in the boulevard areas will be reviewed by the City's Engineering Department.
- Consider a textured retaining wall facing the Fitzwilliam Street sidewalk, to contribute to the heritage character of the neighbourhood.

- Ensure lighting is provided on the building elevations, and within the landscaped areas on both the Fitzwilliam Street and Prideaux Street frontages, to create an attractive evening urban environment (i.e. lighting under the canopies, and within the retaining wall).

PROPOSED VARIANCES

Building Height

The maximum allowable building height is 12m, the proposed building height is 16m, a proposed variance of 4m.

Parking

The Parking Bylaw requires 0.2 parking spaces sleeping unit for the Personal Care Facility use. Ten parking spaces are required onsite and 6 parking spaces are provided, a proposed variance of 4 parking spaces.