

DATE OF MEETING | March 29, 2021 |

AUTHORED BY | CALEB HORN, PLANNER, CURRENT PLANNING |

**SUBJECT | DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. DP1190 –  
1300 JUNCTION AVENUE |**

## **OVERVIEW**

### **Purpose of Report**

To present for Council’s consideration, a development permit application for a multi-family development at 1300 Junction Avenue. |

### **Recommendation**

That Council issue Development Permit No. DP1190 at 1300 Junction Avenue with a variance to reduce the watercourse setback for Wexford Creek from 15.0m to 9.7m. |

## **BACKGROUND**

A development permit application, DP1190, was received from Westurban Developments Ltd. on behalf 1228581 BC Ltd. to permit a multi-family rental development at 1300 Junction Avenue. The property was rezoned from Single Dwelling Residential (R1) to Mixed Used Corridor (COR2) in 2019 (RA400).

### **Subject Property and Site Context**

<i>Zoning</i>	COR2 – Mixed Use Corridor
<i>Location</i>	The subject property is bounded 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. 1 – Watercourses; and 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 site is generally flat, cleared of natural vegetation, and was historically used for agriculture. Wexford Creek crosses the northeastern section of the property.

The Chase River Neighbourhood Plan and Design Guide (1999) envisions Lawlor Road as a commercial main street; however, the portion of the subject property abutting Lawlor Road has since been identified as a riparian restoration area for Wexford Creek. As such, the Lawlor

Road frontage will not be developed for commercial use but instead is expected to be rehabilitated into a natural riparian state through a future City of Nanaimo Development Cost Charge (DCC) 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.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Proposed Development**

The applicant proposes 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 5,380m<sup>2</sup> and will consist of 71 dwelling units with a total unit mix as follows:

- 118 one-bedroom units, approximately 57m<sup>2</sup> in floor area;
- 71 two-bedroom units, between approximately 66m<sup>2</sup> and 78m<sup>2</sup> in floor area; and
- 24 three-bedroom units, approximately 86m<sup>2</sup> in floor area.

The proposed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 1.06, which is below the maximum permitted base 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 (SRW) for future restoration of Wexford Creek. Building A is sited in the northwest corner of the property, oriented to align with Tenth Street; Building B is sited in the southwest corner of the property, facing Eleventh Street; and Building C is oriented north-south adjacent to an outdoor amenity area and the protected restoration area.

All three buildings will have primary entrances facing an interior surface parking lot, with additional underground parking accessed via ramps from the parking. 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. Painted crosswalks will provide pedestrian connections between the buildings and through the site.

The City of Nanaimo "Off-Street Parking Regulations Bylaw 2018 No. 7266" requires 269 parking stalls for proposed development, and all required parking is provided onsite. The interior surface parking lot will include 134 parking stalls, while each of the proposed buildings will have 45 underground parking stalls. The required long-term bicycle parking will be provided in each building's underground parking level. Two garbage / recycling / organic waste enclosures are proposed: one at the north end of the lot adjacent to Building A's underground parking ramp, and one on the east side of Building B near the drive aisle entry from Eleventh Street.

### *Building Design*

The three proposed buildings are similar in form and character, and reflect the Finnish agrarian heritage of the neighbourhood as outlined 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 forms that provide visual interest. Elements of the façade reflect the community's heritage, with references to agricultural architecture, including farm-building-inspired rooflines.

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

A mix of exterior materials will add further visual interest to the building façades, including 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.

### *Landscape Design*

The proposed landscape plan includes planting around the perimeter of each building, consisting primarily of English laurel. Significant planting areas are proposed along the north side of Building A facing Tenth Street, at the east ends of Buildings A and B, and to the south and northeast of Building C. Street trees are also proposed along the Junction Avenue and Eleventh Street frontages, along with a seeded grass boulevard. Allan block retaining walls are proposed to support the buildings where there is a grade change onsite.

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.

### **Design Advisory Panel**

The Design Advisory Panel (DAP), at its meeting held on 2020-JUN-25, accepted DP1190 as presented and provided the following recommendations:

- Look at ways to create more definition for building entrances and consider facing the courtyard;
- Consider parking variance to increase the amount of landscaping;
- Consider removing parking stalls in front of entrance ways; and
- Consider the addition of trees into the parking area islands.

The applicant subsequently responded to the DAP recommendations with design revisions including the following:

- A second entrance was added to Building B to face the interior parking lot;
- The surface parking lot was broken up with landscape islands; and
- Pedestrian walkways were added across the interior parking lot to connect the buildings and the onsite amenity spaces.

The applicant reviewed options to further reduce the amount of surface parking, but determined that a parking variance was not desirable and that the underground parking levels for each building were already at their maximum feasible amount of stalls.

## Proposed Variances

### *Watercourse Setback*

The minimum required watercourse setback from the top of bank for Wexford Creek is 15.0m, as identified in 'Schedule C' of "City of Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500". The requested watercourse setback is 9.7m; a proposed variance of 5.3m.

Wexford Creek is fish-bearing and is currently above-ground for approximately 70m in the northeast portion of the site before entering a culvert under Lawlor Road. Through the previous rezoning for the property, a 30m-wide SRW was secured for a future City project to realign and daylight a portion of Wexford Creek within the subject property and restore its riparian area. The SRW and realignment will create a functional riparian area in the eastern portion of the property and Wexford Creek will be extended above ground to the intersection of Lawlor Road and Eleventh Street.

A small portion of the proposed development will encroach into the watercourse setback for Wexford Creek, as measured from its existing top of bank. The driveway ramp for Building C will encroach 5.3m into the setback at its closest point, while Building C itself will encroach 2.62m into the setback. Upon completion of the City's realignment project for Wexford Creek, which will establish a new top of bank location, it is anticipated that the development will no longer be sited within the watercourse setback.

The existing functional riparian area onsite is presently limited to below the top-of-bank, as the area within the 15m setback has been previously disturbed for historic agricultural purposes. The proposed development is not within the Provincial Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area (SPEA), which is measured at 10m from the high water mark of the creek and will be located outside of the SRW secured for future riparian restoration.

Staff support the proposed watercourse setback variance as the development will not negatively impact the riparian habitat that will be retained, enhanced, and expanded through the realignment and restoration of Wexford Creek.

### **SUMMARY POINTS**

- Development Permit Application No. DP1190 is for three 4-storey multi-family residential buildings with a combined total of 213 dwelling units.
- The property was rezoned from Single Dwelling Residential (R1) to Mixed Used Corridor (COR2) in 2019 (RA400).
- A variance is requested to reduce the watercourse setback for Wexford Creek from 15.0m to 9.7m.
- Wexford Creek will be realigned and its functional riparian area enhanced through a future City of Nanaimo project, and Staff support the proposed variance.

**ATTACHMENTS**

ATTACHMENT A: Permit Terms and Conditions  
ATTACHMENT B: Context Map  
ATTACHMENT C: Location Plan  
ATTACHMENT D: Site and Parking Plans  
ATTACHMENT E: Building Elevations  
ATTACHMENT F: Building Rendering  
ATTACHMENT G: Landscape Plan and Details  
ATTACHMENT H: Site Survey  
ATTACHMENT I: Aerial Photo |

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