

421 PRIDEAUX STREET | DESIGN RATIONALE /PROJECT DESCRIPTION

March 11, 2021

This 16 micro-unit multi-family residential building has been designed as a housing solution for the increasing demand for rental housing in Nanaimo. The design focuses on its relationship with the neighborhood's traditional characteristics and scale.

The building has been oriented towards Prideaux street, with the main entrance emphasized with a traditional porch. The efficient footprint is designed to maximize the number of units with southern exposure and natural light.

The positioning and massing of the building has been established to maintain the rhythm of the street. Varied rooflines and materials have been effectively utilised on all faces of the building to relate to the contextual quality of the existing street scape and traditional neighborhood character of the Nanaimo Old City Quarter residential community.

Contributing to the neighborhood Residential community:

- Respecting existing residential character by stepping the building's massing to respect the existing adjacent residential homes and streetscape.
- Traditional detail has been used to seamlessly blend the design into the neighborhood context.
- Providing smaller units to facilitate the affordable housing demands of the diverse population in the area.

Character & Form

- This design utilises multiple pitched roofs at varying heights with the idea of blending in with the neighbouring buildings.
- The façade of the building uses muted colours that match neighbouring buildings for a more seamless integration into the neighbourhood.
- Building design includes small balconies with operable French doors and strategically positioned windows to be able to provide ample light to the units.
- Exterior elements have been used to break the scale and give the building a residential character.
- Vinyl siding (lap, board and batten, shingle) will be used to create patterns and interest.
- Heavy trim around the rectangular windows

Proposed Building Design

- 16 micro-units designed in 1 building.
- The required parking has been provided in the rear yard of the property with single access from the rear lane.
- Landscape walkway directs tenants to the main doors of the building.

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Current Planning

- Trellis in parking directs tenants where to access the main entrance of the building.
- Bike storage provided with access from the side yard of the building.
- Lower units have direct access to the outside private patios.
- Small balconies create private outdoor space for upper units.
- Particular focus was paid to emphasize each occupant's ownership of their space and ownership of the street/sidewalk around them.
- Four units have windows that orient towards Prideaux and provide a visual connection with the public street.
- Multiple units are oriented on each side yard giving ownership to the private walkway.
- Two units face the parking/lane creating a safer environment to residents as they move around the site.
- The design provides proper lighting to the site for safety and also as a way to direct people properly around the building and to the main doors.

Variances Requested

- Setbacks

Variance requested:

Front 1.2 m (1st Story)

Front 0.22 m (2nd/ 3rd Story)

Side 0.85 m (North Side) Bike room & balcony project into setback

Side 1.10 m (South Side) Balcony projects into setback as main portion of building is setback to at least 3M from the property line.

Rationale: Being an extremely narrow site, these variances provide us the opportunity to develop 16 units with efficient design and appropriate interior room sizing. Additionally, the variances are used only in small sections for the balcony or trellis projections as the main portion of the building on both the north and south elevation sits 3M away from the property line.

- Landscape Buffer

Variance requested:

0.9 m (North and South side)

Rationale: The reduced landscape buffer size enables us to accommodate the complete parking requirement of 8 parking spaces, including appropriate small to standard car ratio (30:70) despite the narrow width of the site.

- Height Variance

Variance request:

.9m (measured at mid-point of main roof)

Rationale: The sloped site and steep roof pitch create height challenges. Only a portion of the main roofline is over height and the main portion of the roofline is located at the center of the site so it will have no impact on the neighbors.