

DATE OF MEETING July 5, 2021

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**SUBJECT DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. DP1212 AND
HOUSING AGREEMENT HA000006 - 285 PRIDEAUX STREET**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To present for Council's consideration, a development permit application and housing agreement for a proposed personal care facility with 51 supportive housing units to be located at 285 Prideaux Street.

Recommendation

That Council issue Development Permit No. DP1212 at 285 Prideaux Street, with the following variances:

- increase the maximum permitted building height from 12m to 16m;
- reduce the minimum required landscape buffer width from 1.8m to 0m on the front (east) property line, and to 0.75m on the north property line;
- reduce the minimum required setback for the garbage and recycling enclosure from 3.0m to 0.75m;
- reduce the minimum required landscape buffer on three sides of the garbage and recycling enclosure from 1.8m to 0m; and
- reduce the minimum number of required parking spaces from ten spaces to six spaces.

And that:

1. "Housing Agreement Bylaw 2021 No. 7327" (To secure unit affordability) pass first reading;
2. "Housing Agreement Bylaw 2021 No. 7327" pass second reading;
3. "Housing Agreement Bylaw 2021 No. 7327" pass third reading; and
4. Council direct Staff to register a covenant on the title of the land to reinforce the terms of the housing agreement.

BACKGROUND

A development permit application, DP1212, was received from S2 Architecture Interior Design on behalf of the Provincial Rental Housing Corporation (BC Housing) in conjunction with the property owner, the City of Nanaimo, for a four-storey personal care facility with 51 supportive housing units to be located at 285 Prideaux Street.

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>	1,796m 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>	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 property is located in a civic hub of community services with access to transit and public amenities. The adjacent property to the west is under construction with the redevelopment of Fire Station #1. 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.

DISCUSSION

Proposed Development

The applicant is proposing a four-storey personal care facility with 51 supportive housing units and accessory onsite office space at 285 Prideaux Street. This development is one of the supportive housing projects proposed in the memorandum of understanding with BC Housing and the City of Nanaimo.

Site Design

The front elevation of the building and primary building entrance 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. The building is set back 6m from the Fitzwilliam Street property line, and a raised patio with outdoor seating is proposed for this area. Driveway access to the property is provided on both Fitzwilliam Street and Prideaux Street. The driveway located along the west side of the property is shared with the fire station. The parking area and the garbage and recycling enclosure are located on the north side of the property and are screened by landscaping from the street and from the adjacent property to the north. A concrete sidewalk is provided around the perimeter of the building. The proposed building will have a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.48, less than the maximum permitted FAR of 2.3.

Building Design

A four-storey modular wood-frame building is proposed. The main floor of the building will contain accessory administrative offices, staff room, kitchen, laundry, lounge, dining area and

6 residential units. The upper three storeys of the building contains 45 residential units. Generous glazing is proposed for the first storey facing Prideaux Street, and a canopy with wood detailing extends along the length of the raised entry area, 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 helps break the massing of the building. The building elevation facing Fitzwilliam Street contains windows and a canopy for weather protection in the amenity area. The proposed design addresses the City's development permit area guidelines.

Landscape Design

The raised patio on the south elevation is programmed with picnic tables and benches and is located on a curved concrete retaining wall that is 0.45m in height. A curved wrought iron decorative fence is proposed to be located on the retaining wall to define the patio edge. Trees and shrubs are proposed between the public sidewalk and the retaining wall to provide a landscape buffer. Also, a landscape buffer and wood fence are proposed along the north property line to screen the garbage and parking areas from the adjacent property. Trees and shrub plantings are also proposed along Prideaux Street within the road right-of-way. Exterior lighting will be placed to illuminate the entrances, outdoor patio area, and the pedestrian walkways.

Design Advisory Panel

The Design Advisory Panel, at its meeting held on 2021-FEB-25, accepted DP001212 as presented with support for the proposed building height variance. The following recommendations were provided:

- Consider incorporating ways for the building to complement the adjacent neighbourhood character;
- Consider alternative treatments on the south elevation to enhance the building's form and character;
- Consider ways to better screen the garbage and recycling storage area; and
- Consider opportunities to increase the openness and transparency on the southeast corner.

The applicant responded to the DAP recommendations and modified the development plans as follows:

- To better relate to the character of adjacent buildings, and to improve the building presence at the corner of Prideaux Street and Fitzwilliam Street (southeast elevation), the length and scale of the raised wheelchair ramp and stairs leading to the primary building entrance on Prideaux Street was reduced.
- To improve openness and transparency, and to improve building character, several windows were added to the south elevation of the building.
- A wider area for shrubs was created along the property line to better screen the garbage enclosure and parking area from public view.

Proposed Variances

Building Height

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

The subject property falls within the 'Old City Commercial and Fitzwilliam Character Area #8' in the 'Downtown Urban Design Plan and Guidelines' and this plan supports up to six storeys at the corner of Prideaux Street and Fitzwilliam Street. In addition, due to the structural requirements of the individual modular units and their assembly, a modular building is generally slightly taller than a similar building using traditional construction methods.

The proposed building height will help frame the view corridor along Fitzwilliam Street similarly to Fire Station #1, which is currently under construction on the neighbouring property, and no negative impacts are anticipated to public view corridors.

Minimum Landscape Treatment Level

The "City of Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500" requires a minimum landscape buffer width of 1.8m along the front and north side property line; a variance from 1.8m to 0m is proposed along the front property line (Prideaux Street), and a variance from 1.8m to 0.75m is proposed along the north side property line.

In lieu of the required onsite landscaping along the front property line (Prideaux Street), the landscaping is proposed to be located between the property line and the public sidewalk within the road right-of-way area. This variance allows the building envelope to be maximized on a constrained site, while meeting the intention for landscape screening.

A landscape buffer variance is requested along the north side property line from 1.8m in width to 0.75m in width; however, screening of the parking spaces and garbage enclosure will be achieved along the north property line with shrub plantings and a wooden fence (1.5m in height) with vines.

Minimum Setback for Garbage Enclosure

The minimum required setback for the garbage and recycling enclosure is 3m from the north side property line, and the proposed setback is 0.75m; a proposed variance of 2.25m.

Due to the constraints of the site, including two driveway accesses, there is limited area for siting the garbage and recycling enclosure. The proposed location will provide functional access and screening.

Off-Street Parking

The minimum required off-street parking for the proposed development is ten parking spaces (0.2 spaces per sleeping unit). The proposed number of parking spaces is six; a proposed variance of four parking spaces.

In accordance with Council's 'Policy for Consideration of a Parking Variance', the proposed parking variance is supportable given the following justifications:

- The subject property is located in the Downtown Mobility Hub area (Nanaimo Transportation Master Plan), and several bus stops to various bus routes are located in the vicinity of the property to serve the transportation needs of the residents.
- There is limited space available on the property to provide more parking spaces due to the required driveway accesses, thus compliance with "Off-Street Parking Regulations Bylaw 2018 No. 7266" would unreasonably hinder the development.
- The proposed development has been discussed with the neighbourhood through the BC Housing community consultation process (described below).
- The proposed development is consistent with the Nanaimo Downtown Urban Design Plan and Guidelines (Fitzwilliam precinct).
- BC Housing has advised the proposed supportive housing development at 285 Prideaux Street will require two full-time staff and two to four visiting staff/professionals, and six parking spaces are provided on site.
- BC Housing also advises that the residents will not typically have the resources to own, insure, and operate a vehicle.

Staff support the proposed variances.

Community Consultation

Although not required, BC Housing provided several engagement opportunities for the neighbourhood in 2020 which included:

- i) Sending invitations to the neighbours of 285 Prideaux Street to participate in dialogue sessions and to complete an online survey; and
- ii) Hosting meetings with the Nanaimo Old City Association and the Old City Quarter Business Association to discuss development design options.

In response, the applicant revised the development plans for 285 Prideaux Street by selecting a horizontal wood-like siding as one of the primary exterior façade materials, and selecting a semi-circular shaped raised patio with wrought iron fence for the Fitzwilliam Street side yard area.

Housing Agreement Bylaw 2021, No. 7327

The applicant is proposing to enter into a housing agreement with the City to ensure that 100% of the units will be occupied by low-income individuals and that if, in the future, rent is charged to those individuals, the rent shall not exceed 30% of the tenant's annual income. This agreement aligns with the BC Housing Memorandum of Understanding to provide supportive housing on this site. Meeting this criteria is one of the steps required for eligibility for a development cost charge reduction in accordance with the "City of Nanaimo Development Cost Charge Bylaw 2017 No. 7252". The attached "Housing Agreement Bylaw 2021 No. 7327" would authorize the City of Nanaimo to enter into a housing agreement with the property owner to ensure the above-mentioned commitment. The housing agreement will be bound to the property once it is registered on the property title.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Development Permit Application No. DP1212 and “Housing Agreement Bylaw 2021 No. 7327” is for a personal care facility with 51 supportive housing units at 285 Prideaux Street.
- Variances are requested to allow an increased building height, a reduction in the garbage enclosure setback and landscape buffer widths, and reduced parking.
- The proposed development addresses the City’s design guidelines and Staff support the proposed variances.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Permit Terms and Conditions
ATTACHMENT B: Context Map
ATTACHMENT C: Location Plan
ATTACHMENT D: Site and Parking Plan
ATTACHMENT E: Building Elevations and Details
ATTACHMENT F: Building Renderings
ATTACHMENT G: Landscape Plan and Details
ATTACHMENT H: Aerial Photo
“Housing Agreement Bylaw 2021 No. 7327”

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