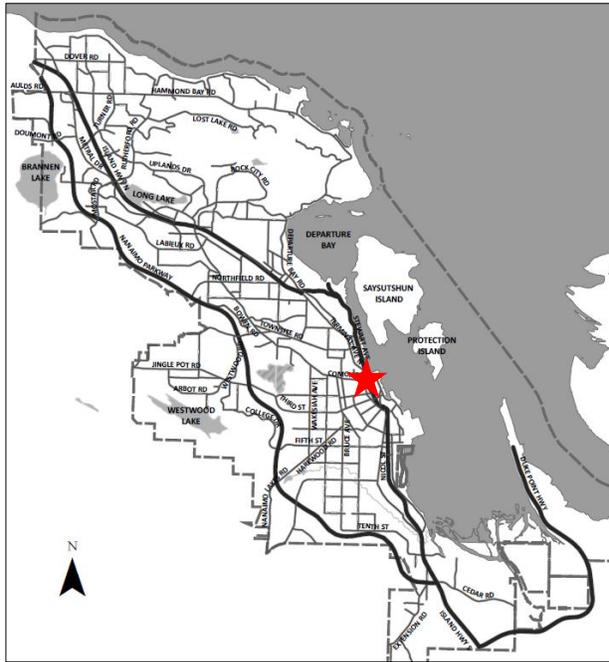


DATE OF MEETING | April 17, 2023

AUTHORED BY | GEORGE FUJII, PLANNER, CURRENT PLANNING

SUBJECT | DEVELOPMENT PERMIT NO. DP1256 – 77 CHAPEL STREET



Proposal:

A 157-unit multi-family development

Current Zoning:

DT-5 Chapel Front

City Plan Land Use Designation:

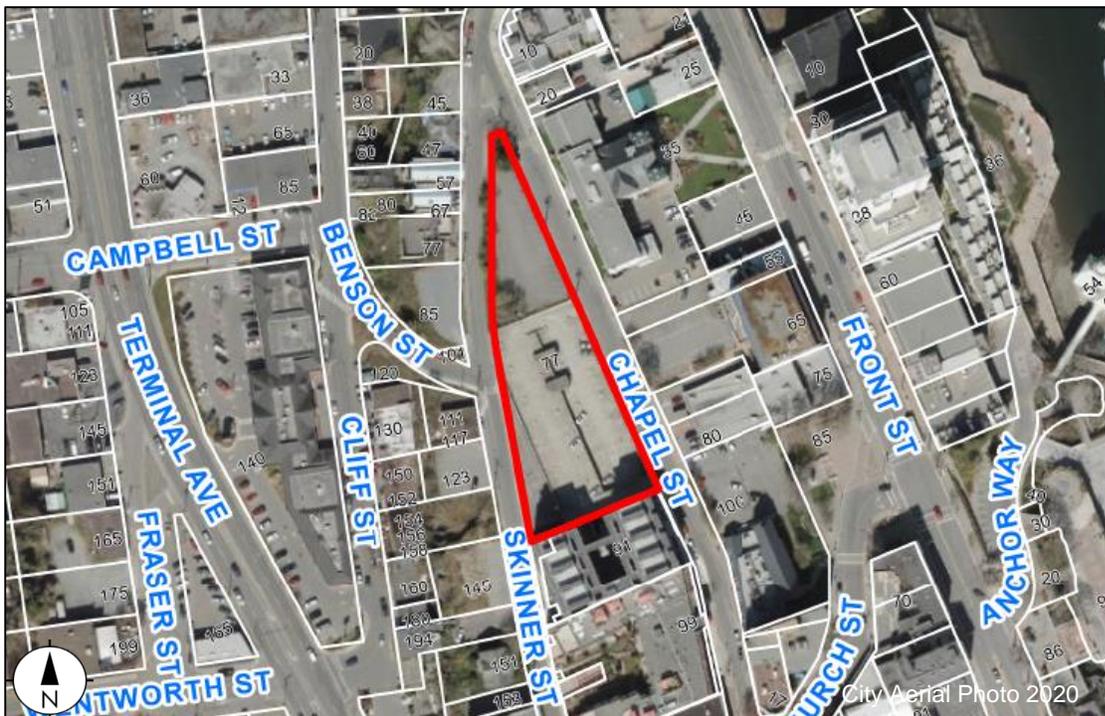
Primary Urban Centre

Development Permit Areas:

- DPA8 – Form and Character
- DPA4 – Abandoned Mine Workings Hazards

Lot Area:

4,206 m²



OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To present for Council’s consideration a development permit application for a multiple family development at 77 Chapel Street. |

Recommendation

That Council issue Development Permit No. DP1256 for a multiple family development at 77 Chapel Street with a variance as outlined in the “Proposed Variance” section of the Staff Report dated 2023-APR-17. |

BACKGROUND

A development permit application has been received from Primex Investments Ltd. on behalf of 6577 Nanaimo Holdings Ltd. to permit a multiple family development consisting of three six-storey buildings with a total of 157 units.

Subject Property and Site Context

The subject property is situated in the Chapel Front precinct of Downtown Nanaimo, located between Skinner Street and Chapel Street. The property is triangular in shape and currently contains a parkade structure which will be removed. A previous development permit, DP1117, for a 24-storey mixed-use building with 109 dwelling units and commercial space was approved for the property in 2019. The development permit subsequently expired and the property has since been sold. The site slopes downhill significantly from northeast to southwest.

The surrounding neighbourhood contains a mix of uses, including, a 24-unit mixed-use building at 10 Chapel Street to the north (completed in 2016), the Nanaimo Law Courts and offices across Chapel Street to the east, a 61-unit multi-family building at 91 Chapel Street to the south (completed in 2020), a parking lot and offices across Skinner Street to the southwest, and restaurants and residences across Skinner Street to the northwest. A number of other commercial services and amenities are available within walking distance, and Commercial Street is approximately 100m south of the subject property. |

DISCUSSION

Proposed Development

The applicant is proposing to construct three 6-storey buildings including one purpose- built rental building and two strata titled buildings, with a combined total of 157 dwelling units, as follows:

Unit Type	Building 1 – Harbour View	Building 1 – Benson View	Rental Building
Studio	1	1	12
One-Bedroom	36	15	51
Two-Bedroom	8	12	21
Total	45	28	84

The proposed total gross floor area is 11,951 m² and the total Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 2.84, which is below the maximum FAR of 4.25 permitted under the site specific DT5 zoning of the subject property. The building floor area breakdown is as follows:

- Rental building (north) – 6,145 m²
- Strata Building (“Benson View”, southwest) – 2,241 m²
- Strata Building (“Harbour View”, southeast) - 3,565 m²

Site Design

The proposed buildings will be sited parallel to the adjacent streets, with the rental building in the north portion of the lot facing Chapel Street. One strata building (“Harbour View”) will be sited in the southeast portion of the lot facing Chapel Street, and the second strata building (“Benson View”) will face Skinner Street. A three-level underground parking structure will be shared between all three buildings. The two strata buildings will be separated by an internal private courtyard and connected by a storage space, with elevated exterior walkways on every floor.

A public plaza is proposed to the south of the rental building’s principal entry, facing Chapel Street. A gate for private access will separate the internal courtyard from the public plaza, and a private staircase will connect the internal courtyard with Skinner Street. A public art component will be incorporated into the site design on the north exterior face of the Harbour View strata building overlooking the public plaza.

Vehicle access to the underground parking is proposed from Skinner Street. A total of 165 parking stalls are proposed across three parking levels, greater than the 95 parking stalls that would be required by the City’s “Off-Street Parking Regulations Bylaw 2018 No. 7266”. All required bicycle parking (15 short-term and 79 long-term) is proposed onsite. A garbage/recycling room is provided in the underground parkade.

Building Design

The building design reflects the development’s residential use and there is a strong balance of materials on all three buildings with a distinctive base and upper levels. The massing of the strata buildings will continue the aesthetic form established by 91 Chapel Street to the south. Two-storey townhouse units are proposed on the west side of the Benson View building with individual connections to strengthen the street presence along Skinner Street and conceal the southern portion of the parking structure. The massing, form, and character of the rental building will complement the strata buildings. Private rooftop patios are proposed on the strata buildings, and a common rooftop amenity space is proposed on the rental building. All units will include either a deck or patio.

The exterior building materials will include a mix of fibre-cement panel siding and wood-like metal siding, grounded by a brick veneer at the base of the buildings. Wood-like metal soffits are proposed for the uppermost overhangs, and balconies will have aluminum guardrails. The exposed exterior of the parking levels below the rental building will be cast-in-place concrete.

The proposed design meets the intent of the City’s General Development Permit Guidelines and the Downtown Urban Design Plan and Guidelines for the Chapel Front North precinct. These include densification of the site with underground parking; continuous building presence along streets with street trees and improved public realm (plazas).

In addition to the design plans, the applicant submitted a number of technical studies in support of the application including a traffic impact assessment and servicing study which were accepted by Staff.

In addition, a geotechnical report was also provided. In accordance with the DPA4 exemption guidelines, the applicant will be required to submit further geotechnical assessment at the time of a building permit application and demolition permit, when further site investigation can be achieved, to secure any recommendations for the proposed construction in order to address potential hazards from undermining from abandoned coal mines.

Landscape Design

The landscape design reflects the urban nature of the development and includes a private courtyard at ground level between the two strata buildings with seating and a Maple tree; a public plaza facing Chapel Street with tree and shrub plantings, as well as bench seating; and a small public plaza situated at the intersection of Chapel and Skinner Streets anchored with a significant flowering tree, bench seating, and a pathway connecting the two streets.

A landscape buffer with a combination of Maple and Tupelo trees will continue along the west edge of the site abutting Skinner Street.

The landscape plan also includes a rain garden feature with a stepped waterfall feature along the north portion of the Skinner Street building façade.

Public Art

As a condition of a rezoning in 2018 of the subject property, a restrictive covenant was registered requiring the property owner to provide public art as an onsite amenity with a minimum value of \$38,000, prior to the issuance of an occupancy permit by the City. The applicant has proposed a public art budget of \$200,000 and is in the process of selecting an artist.

Through the review of the development permit application, the location for the public art has been identified as the north façade of the strata building located along Chapel Street. This location offers high visibility, accessibility and engagement opportunities for a wide audience including residents and visitors travelling along Chapel Street.

Design Advisory Panel

The Design Advisory Panel (DAP), at its meeting held on 2022-FEB-10 accepted DP1256 as presented, with support for the proposed underground parking setback variance and provided the following recommendations:

- Consider enhancing the north elevation in terms of landscape hierarchy, public art and the form and character of the north end of the rental building;
- Consider ways to soften the concrete wall on the Skinner Street elevation; and,
- Consider enhancing the south elevation of the rental building.

The applicant subsequently revised the development proposal in response to the DAP recommendations with the following changes and comments:

- The massing and character of the north side of the rental building has been adjusted through the creation of a strong “prow” which projects outwards providing a unique end to the building.
- The landscape and planting around the north end of the building has been enhanced with casual seating separating the private outdoor amenity space from the public plaza and sidewalk.
- The design of the exposed concrete parkade facing Skinner Street has been enhanced through the addition of a coloured pigment additive to provide contrast and better frame the entrance. This supplements a rain garden feature with a stepped waterfall feature which further screens this portion of the parkade.
- The same coloured concrete is provided at the parkade entry as well as a horizontal canopy and signage to identify the entry to the project on Skinner Street. Below the canopy and wrapping into the parkade entry, the concrete formed walls will be articulated with a wood board form texture. Additional landscaping is also proposed at this location to soften the parkade wall at street level.
- The south façade of the rental building has been further articulated with windows and a change of materials along a portion of the facade from fibre cement siding to wood look metal siding.

Proposed Variance

Projections Into Yards

The Zoning Bylaw requires a minimum front yard setback of 1.8m for an underground parking structure from a front lot line. The proposed parking structure setback from Chapel Street is 0.0m, a requested variance of 1.8m.

The parkade structure is proposed to be extended into the front yard setback along Chapel Street to create the appropriate width for a parking module in accordance with the City’s Off-Street Parking Bylaw. In addition, portions of the existing parking structure along Chapel Street will need to stay in place to retain stability of the street and existing services during demolition, and the new parking structure will reinforce the street as part of the new development. All buildings and structures above grade have been sited in accordance with the setback requirements of the Zoning Bylaw.

Staff support the proposed variance.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Development Permit application No. DP1256 proposes three, six-storey multi-family buildings with a combined total of 157 units.
- The site, building and landscape design meets the intent of the General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines and the Downtown Urban Design Plan and Guidelines.
- A variance is requested to reduce the minimum front yard setback from Chapel Street for an underground parking structure from 1.8m to 0.0m. Staff support the proposed setback variance.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Permit Terms and Conditions
ATTACHMENT B: Subject Property Map
ATTACHMENT C: Site and Parking Plans
ATTACHMENT D: Building Elevations and Details
ATTACHMENT E: Building Sections
ATTACHMENT F: Building Renderings
ATTACHMENT G: Landscape Plans and Details

Submitted by:

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Director, Development Approvals

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Deputy CAO