



MINUTES

DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL MEETING

Thursday, May 9, 2024, 5:00 p.m.
Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre,
411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC

Present: Marie Leduc, Chair*
Councillor Eastmure
Hector Alcala, AIBC*
Johnathan Behnke, BCSLA/CSLA*
Angela Buick, At Large*
Kevin Krastel, At Large*
Nathan Middleton, At Large*

Absent: Kaein Shimuzu, At Large

Staff: L. Rowett, Manager, Current Planning
K. Mayes, Planner, Current Planning *
A. Bullen, Steno, Planning
B. McCallum, Community Development Clerk
J. Vanderhoef, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Design Advisory Panel Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

It was moved and seconded that the Agenda be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Design Advisory Panel meeting held in the Boardroom of the Service and Resource Centre, 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Thursday, 2024-MAR-14 at 5:02 p.m. be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

4. PRESENTATIONS:

a. Development Permit Application No. DP001334 - 1740 Dufferin Crescent

Introduced by Kristine Mayes, Planner, Current Planning.

- Application is for a five-story multi-level apartment building over an underground parkade
- The application is comprised of 86 dwelling units
- Proposed variance is to increase the height of the principal building from 14.00m to 16.91m

Presentations:

1. Daryoush Firouzli, Architect AIBC, presented the neighbourhood context, site characteristics, renderings, building materials, site plans, elevations, future site access, project data, requested variances, and architectural features. Highlights included:

- The proposed building follows the curve of the property
- The property is sloped from the south side to the north
- There are a mixture of different uses in the area including commercial, single-family residential, and apartments
- Primary entrance to the building is located on Dufferin Crescent
- There is a large underground parkade under the building
- The proposed development will achieve a density bonus for the provision of underground parking
- The building includes 86 dwelling units consisting of one and two-bedroom units
- The north corner of the building has been set back to respect neighbouring properties
- The design of the building is primarily white with a mix of wood siding, Hardie panel, and plank material in a smooth finish

2. Cara MacDonald, Landscape Architect, MacDonald Gray, presented the landscape plan. Highlights included:

- The landscape plan provides screening for the building foundation
- Planting plan includes indigenous cascading kinnikinnick as well as other drought tolerant deciduous and evergreen species
- The use of a block wall was used to complement those used in neighbouring developments
- Street tree planting is planned along Dufferin Crescent

- Foundation planters and raised planters along the north side of the building will provide shade and screen headlights into ground floor units
- Amenity space at the rear of the property includes a pergola with a seating and picnic area
- The lawn area to the east side of the property is a fenced dog area
- Noted the location of bike racks at the front and rear entrance of the building
- The underground parkade and site grading do not allow for the retention of existing trees

Daryoush Firouzli, Architect AIBC, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- The design will include letdowns for accessibility in the parking area and marked crossing areas
- Recent changes to the BC Building Code require that all entrances be accessible
- The archway at the entrance can be pushed back
- The railing surrounding the fifth floor amenity space has been setback from the edge of the building to provide privacy for the neighbouring properties

Marie Leduc, Chair, opened the floor for questions to Staff.

Panel discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The form and character design of the building works well
- Desire to enhance the entrance on Dufferin Crescent to make it more noticeable
- Preference for concrete or boulders in lieu of the lock blocks for the retaining wall
- Adding weather protection for bike storage areas
- Need for a shadow study to determine impacts on neighbouring properties
- Access to ground floor units from the street level is challenging due to the change in grade
- Potentially moving the rooftop amenity space to the other side of the building for views of Mt. Benson and more sunlight
- Concern regarding the turning radius for parking stalls located near the dog area and potentially eliminating those parking stalls to expand the dog area

- Concern regarding the curved shape of the building and ensuring a smooth transition of materials
- Considering a pedestrian connection from the outdoor amenity space to the dog park area
- Potentially providing ground floor units access through their patio areas
- Suggestion to have plants overhanging the retaining wall to break it up and adding plantings to the river rock area
- Choosing bike racks that provide two points of contact to connect to bike frames
- Looking for opportunities to include more pavers in the landscape plan instead of all concrete
- Concern that honey locust trees sometimes struggle in this region
- Clarification that the picket fence surrounding the dog area will be a dark colour and a suggestion to include furnishings in that location
- Suggestion to use different materials, or adding a covered area, to the front entrance on Dufferin Crescent to make it stand out more. Potentially moving it closer to the building
- Suggestion to add a second rooftop amenity on the other side of the building
- Suggestion to use plants to increase screening for the first floor units
- Desire to see three-bedroom units and accessible units
- Increasing the shrubs and greenery along the rear of the building to provide more of a buffer for neighbours

It was moved and seconded that Development Permit Application No. DP001334 - 1740 Dufferin Crescent be accepted as presented, with support for the variances. The following recommendations were provided:

- Consider a different approach to the building entries
- Consider alternatives to the lock block retaining along Dufferin Crescent
- Consider adding more plantings to the river rock border between the public path and the parking lot at the back of the property
- Consider reducing some of the extra parking to improve the site circulation and/or amenity space
- Consider adding gated access where feasible to the patios of the ground floor units
- Consider using a type of bike rack with two points of contact
- Consider adding some other paving materials to vary the concrete surface of the outdoor amenity space
- Consider using a different tree species other than honey locust
- Consider adding furnishings such as benches to the dog park

- Consider screening the ground floor suites with some planting

The motion carried unanimously.

b. Development Permit Application No. DP001340 - 350 and 398 Franklyn Street

Introduced by Kristine Mayes, Planner, Current Planning.

- Application is for a five-story multi-family rental tenure residential apartment building over a partial underground parkade
- The application consists of 53 dwelling units and one ground floor commercial unit which is located on Wesley Street
- Two proposed variances are associated with this application. The first is a request to increase the maximum height of the building from 12.00m to 17.85m and the second is to increase the percentage of small parking spaces required from 40% to 70%

Presentations:

1. Bryan Gartner, ACE Architect, presented the neighbourhood context, site characteristics, renderings, building materials, site plans, elevations, future site access, project data, requested variances, and architectural features. Highlights included:
 - Meeting the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) with the proposed 53 units (7 micro-units, 22 1-bedroom units and 24 2-bedroom units)
 - Developer is proposing 44 parking stalls
 - The property is bordered on three sides by three streets with a four-meter drop in grade from Wesley Street to Robson Street
 - The design is stepped with a one-storey Commercial Retail Unit (CRU) fronting Wesley Street and residential units stepping up towards Robson Street
 - The City has registered a statutory-right-of-way (SRW) on the sidewalk along Robson Street
 - An amenity space is proposed for each floor of the building
 - Considering weather protection options along the CRU
 - A light coloured roof is planned to be incorporated

2. Cara MacDonald, Landscape Architect, MacDonald Gray, presented the landscape plan. Highlights included:

- Incorporating evergreens, grasses, and stepped planters along Franklyn Street
- Used stonescape where patio or stair covers did not allow for planting
- Decorative paving on the corner of Franklyn Street and Robson Street
- Using shade-loving indigenous plant for screening
- Private patios will include raised planters with evergreen hedging to screen between the units
- Could look at some trellising possibly on the Franklyn Street side of the building

Bryan Gartner, ACE Architect, reviewed the material palette and noted the use of a fiber cement panel that will look like brick on the main level of the building, corrugated metal panel on the front facing sides, and Hardi panels on the interior facing sides.

Marie Leduc, Chair, opened the floor for questions to Staff.

Clarification regarding the height variance and whether the rooftop area would be included in the height variance. Staff noted that the enclosures for sustainable building structures located on the roof would exceed the 10% allowed and would need to be reduced or would require a variance to the height exemption.

Panel discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Suggestions to use real brick instead of fiber cement panels on the lower portion of the building to build urban interface
- Suggestion to incorporate public art
- Incorporating columnar trees or a climbing vine to provide more vertical planting
- Consider adding a rooftop amenity space or green roofs
- Consider bike racks with two points of contact for securing bikes
- Potentially recessing the balconies or alternate design so they do not jut out
- If possible, consider enclosing stairs and making them straight
- Consider including shower and change facilities for traveling employees
- Suggestion to use a green roof on top of the one-story parkade roof instead of solar panels
- Ensure appropriate lighting is provided at the rear of the building
- Potentially changing the micro-units into three-bedroom units

- Signage in diagram appears to be neon and does not fit with the rest of the building
- Consider alternatives to the boulders under the stairs
- Challenge for architects to meet the Step Code standards without getting boxy looking buildings; however, a nice balance of colours in this design
- Adding a green roof to the upper floor could require that area to be incorporated into the height restriction
- Wesley Street is a treelined street and this project would require the removal of two large trees due to the roots extending under the current parking lot area
- Potentially retain the two trees and modify the design
- The wood material being proposed on the balconies should be weather resistant
- Concern regarding venting from the CRU and how it might impact the residential unit above
- Retaining the trees may impact the project which provides much needed housing in the area
- Potentially replace the trees with something that can mature over time

It was moved and seconded that the applicant for Development Permit Application No. DP001340 - 350 and 398 Franklyn Street return to the Design Advisory Panel, at a future date, with a revised landscape plan to protect the two trees on Wesley Street. The motion carried.

Opposed: *Kevin Krastel and Nathan Middleton*

Staff clarified that the two trees are off-site and would be addressed through the detailed design at the building permit phase.

Panel discussion took place regarding the previous motion, potentially accepting the application pending a revised landscape plan, and the removal of the trees being reviewed during the building permit process.

It was moved and seconded that the Design Advisory Panel rescind the following motion:

“It was moved and seconded that the applicant for Development Permit Application No. DP001340 - 350 and 398 Franklyn Street return to the Design Advisory Panel, at a future date, with a revised landscape plan to protect the two trees on Wesley Street.”

The motion to rescind carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded that Development Permit Application No. DP001340 - 350 and 398 Franklyn Street be accepted, with support for the variances. The following recommendations were provided:

- Consider using a more durable finish on the CRU façade and base
- Consider adding public or decorative art to the building and/or landscape features
- Consider including some columnar trees or climbing vines in the planting palette
- Consider a rooftop amenity space
- Consider a bike rack with two points of contact
- Consider shower and change facilities for employee cyclists in the CRU
- Consider a different landscape treatment under the balconies on Franklyn Street
- Consider vertical stairs to the first-floor units directly from Franklyn Street
- Consider green roofs on the garage and the commercial unit
- Consider modifying the extent or design of the parkade in an effort to retain the existing trees

The motion carried.

Opposed: *Hector Alcala and Marie Leduc*

5. OTHER BUSINESS:

Panel discussion took place regarding the topic of trees located outside of property lines and having a future discussion on that topic.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 7:29 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

RECORDING SECRETARY