

STAFF DESIGN COMMENT

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. DP001379 – 1850 BOXWOOD ROAD

Applicant: ALTUS GROUP

Owner: PROVINCIAL RENTAL HOUSING CORPORATION

Architect: RYDER ARCHITECTURE

Landscape Architect: MDI LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

SUBJECT PROPERTY AND SITE CONTEXT

<i>Zoning</i>	High Tech Industrial (I3)
<i>Location</i>	The subject property is located on the northeast side of Boxwood Road, between Dufferin Crescent and Madsen Road.
<i>Lot Area</i>	2,581m ²
<i>City Plan (OCP)</i>	Future Land Use Designation – Light Industrial Development Permit Area DPA8 – Form and Character
<i>Relevant Design Guidelines</i>	General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines

The subject property is located in Central Nanaimo at the edge of the Green Rock Industrial Park along Boxwood Road. The property was created through subdivision in 2018 when it was cleared of vegetation and has been vacant since that time. A public walkway and staircase along the east property line was also dedicated through the subdivision. The lot slopes downhill from north to south. A concurrent rezoning application has been received to permit the “Personal Care Facility” use on the subject property (RA522).

The surrounding neighbourhood consists of a mix of industrial, residential, and commercial uses. Adjacent uses include a vacant industrial lot and indoor climbing gym to the west, moving and storage businesses across Boxwood Road to the southwest and south, a small residential neighbourhood around Kerrisdale Road to the east including a 9-unit townhouse development, and commercial uses along Bowen Road and Dufferin Crescent to the north.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development is a three-storey complex care housing building with 22 units. The proposal is a partnership between BC Housing, the Ministry of Health, and Island Health, and the proposed project will offer enhanced support to individuals at risk of experiencing homelessness. The use is considered a Personal Care Facility in the City of Nanaimo “Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500”.

The proposed unit composition will consist of 22 studio units ranging in size from 33m² to 47m². The proposed gross floor area is 1,890m² and the total Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 0.73. There is no maximum FAR in the I3 zone.

Site Design

The proposed development is organized around the building's "boomerang shape" footprint to create a functional outdoor courtyard for residents to the northwest of the building while maximizing access to sunlight. The building's front entry will face a surface parking lot on the south side of the property with access from Boxwood Road. All required parking will be provided on-site with 12 parking stalls for staff in addition to loading spaces. A pedestrian connection is proposed to the existing public walkway on the east side of the site. Additional accessory structures are proposed along the west property line including a waste collection room, bicycle and scooter storage, and a smoking shelter.

Staff Comments:

- Consider relocating the smoking shelter to provide a buffer from the property line with the vacant lot to the west.

Building Design

The proposed building design is residential in nature with a rowhouse aesthetic defined by gable roofs and alternating cladding. Metal guards and sun shades with a mix of colours provide visual interest on windows along all elevations. Exterior materials include vertical metal cladding and both horizontal and vertical cementitious cladding. Wood-like vertical cladding will highlight the common and shared areas of the building, and the front entry will be framed by dark metal cladding.

Staff Comments:

- Consider defining the front entry with strong visual cues (e.g. distinctive vertical columns or raised canopy).
- Consider reducing the amount of colours on the window metal guards for consistency, while maintaining a mix and contrast of shades.

Landscape Design

Landscaping throughout the site will include a mix of indigenous and ornamental species. A stormwater retention pond with rain garden planting is proposed at the southern end of the property, in front of the surface parking lot. Terraced retaining walls will provide a transition from the existing concrete retaining wall at the north property line. A wood fence is proposed around the perimeter of the rear of the site, to enclose the shared outdoor courtyard.

Amenity features in the courtyard will include a dining patio with a trellis, a seating nook, a lawn, and raised garden beds. An edible planting palette is proposed for landscaping around the edge of the courtyard.

Staff Comments:

- Consider outdoor seating at the entry plaza for the building.

PROPOSED VARIANCES

No variances are proposed.