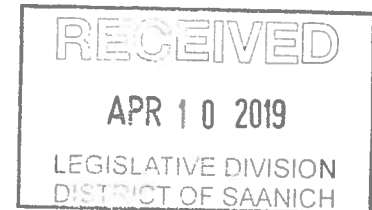




The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

To: Mayor and Council
From: Sharon Hvozdzanski, Director of Planning
Date: April 8, 2019
Subject: Rezoning and Development Permit Application
File: REZ00613; DPR00721 • 3447, 3449, 3451 and 3461 Cook Street



RECOMMENDATION

1. That Section 2 (Definitions) of the Zoning Bylaw 8200 be amended to include a revised definition for Attached Housing as follows:

Attached Housing - means three or more dwelling units on a lot at least two of which are contained within a common building and each dwelling unit with its own principal access directly from the outside.

2. That the application to rezone from the C-2 (General Commercial) Zone and the RS-6 (Single Family Dwelling) Zone to the RT-WA (Attached Housing Whittier Avenue) Zone be approved;
3. That Development Permit DPR00721 be approved;
4. That Final Reading of the Zoning Amendment Bylaw and ratification of the Development Permit be withheld pending consolidation of the lots and registration of a covenant to secure:
 - The project be certified with Built Green Canada as BUILT GREEN® Gold; and
 - Contribution of \$32,000 to the Cloverdale Child Care Society for playground and facility improvements.

Registration of a housing agreement to secure the following:

- That at no time shall there be any restrictions placed on the land, buildings or apartments that would restrict the availability of the apartments for rental use by a non-owner; and
- That the units be secured as rental for a period of ten years.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek direction from Council on the subject application. The subject application is to rezone from the C-2 (General Commercial) Zone and the RS-6 (Single Family Dwelling) Zone to the RT-WA (Attached Housing Whittier Avenue) Zone to construct four

three-storey buildings with 8 units each for a total of 32 residential units. Variances are requested for height, parking and road width. The applicant is Wayne Hopkins of Merdyn Group Holdings Ltd.

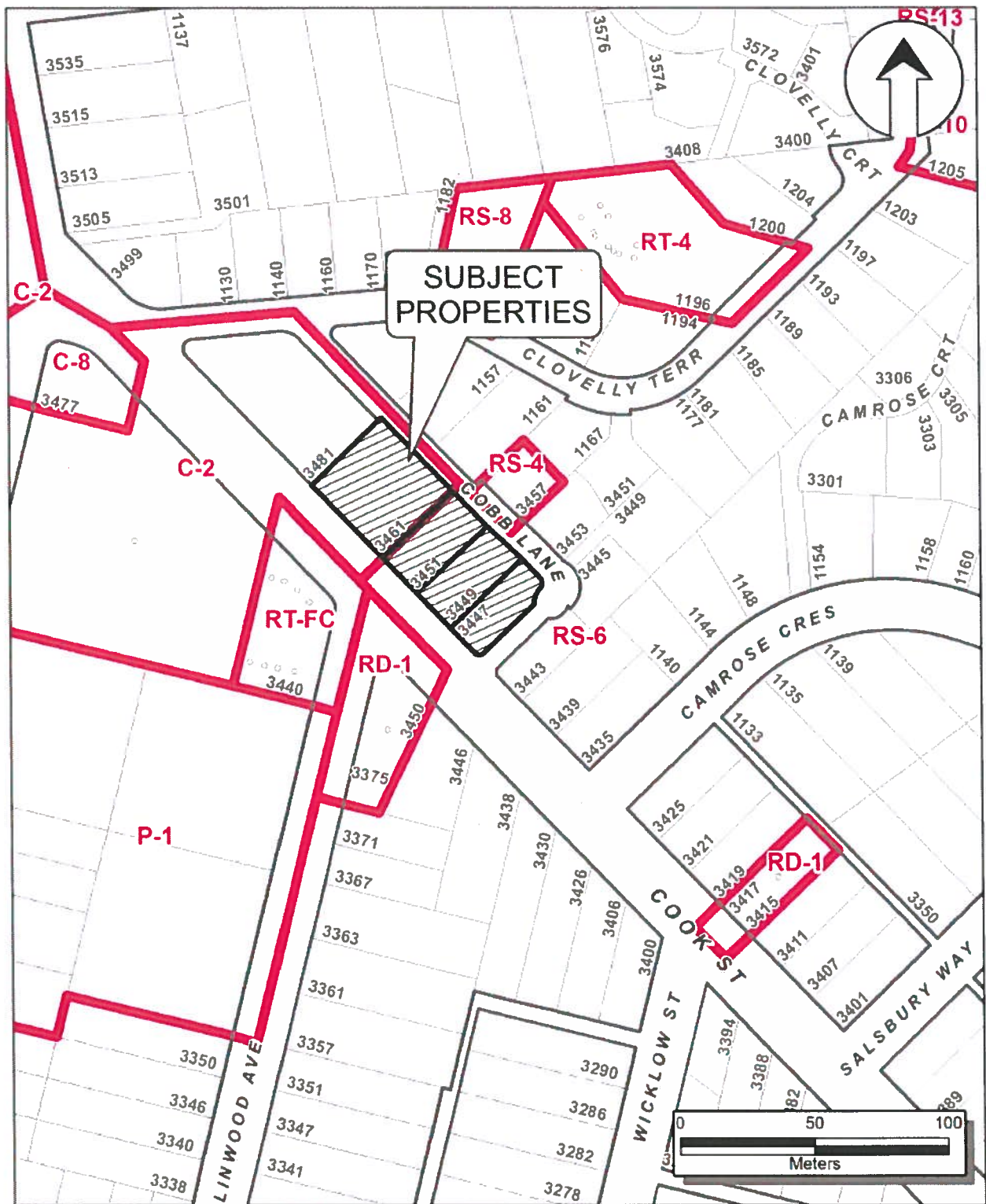


Figure 1: Neighbourhood Context

DISCUSSION

Neighbourhood Context

The 3028 m² site is located close to the Four Corners Village, on the north side of Cook Street, and is currently comprised of four parcels northwest of the intersection with Cobb Lane. Presently the northern parcel is zoned C-2 and contains a one storey medical building with surface parking. The three southern lots are zoned RS-6 and contain single family dwellings (see Figure 1).

To the north, on the same block as the subject properties, is "Backfit", a one-storey commercial building with surface parking. To the north and east are single family dwellings. Located across Cook Street is Thrifty foods, a one storey grocer with surface parking, and a townhouse development. Further south on Linwood Avenue is Cloverdale Traditional Elementary School.

Proposed Land Use

The proposed development would change the land use from commercial and single family residential to multi-family residential. The Official Community Plan (OCP) supports a range of housing types within Village "Centres", including townhouses up to three-storeys and low-rise residential and mixed use (commercial/residential) up to four-storeys. The Local Area Plan supports higher density housing near commercial nodes which respect the character of the neighbourhood and the scale of surrounding development.

Site and Building Design

The subject site has a gentle grade change of about 1.5 m from the northwest corner of the property sloping up to the intersection of Cook Street and Cobb Lane. Vehicular access to the site would be from Cobb Lane, via a two-way drive aisle that would be located at the rear of the site. A total of 38 parking spaces would be provided including 6 visitor parking stalls, and one disabled persons parking stall is located between Building 1 and Building 2 (see Figure 3).

The drive aisle would be surfaced with asphalt paving. The parking stalls would be defined by unit pavers. Permeable pavers would be used for the first three stalls off of Cobb Lane to minimize impacts on the critical root zone of the large Dawn Redwood tree at the corner of Cobb Lane.

The vehicular access off of Cobb Lane, allows for the majority of the existing mature landscaping along Cook Street to be retained. This includes the most significant arboricultural asset on the site, the Garry Oak trees located on Cook Street. All but one Garry Oak on Cook Street would be retained. A total of 32 trees are proposed to be planted on site, including Vine Maples and Sun Valley Red Maples.

The development proposes 4 buildings each containing 8 residential units for a total of 32 units. Each Building proposes four ground floor one-bedroom units, two two-bedroom units on the second floor and two two-bedroom units on the third floor. No internal circulation is proposed, and each unit would have direct access to the outdoors. The stacked townhouse buildings are proposed to be three-storeys in height.

The proposed exterior expression is similar to the character of a traditional single family house with a primary gable and dormers with a shared elevated porch on the second level which would provide a shared semi-private outdoor area for the four upper units. The materials proposed are consistent with the architectural expression of a traditional Craftsman single family home. The

four wood frame buildings would be clad with cementitious siding and cedar shingles with a high quality metal roof (see Figure 4).

Accessibility and the ability to age-in-place would be supported through the provision of the eight ground floor one-bedroom units. Each of these units would have access at grade along with a small patio composed of stamped, cast-in-place concrete.

The proposed landscaping would include a variety of trees and ornamental plants. The area between the buildings would be landscaped with lawn, rain garden and trees.

The applicant has committed to register a covenant requiring that the buildings are constructed to a BUILT GREEN® Gold level of energy efficiency. On December 3, 2018, Council adopted BC Energy Step Code. The Building Bylaw will be requiring all new Part 9 buildings to achieve Step 1 of the BC Energy Step Code as of June 1, 2019. On January 1, 2020 the Building Bylaw will be requiring Part 9 buildings, over 1,200 ft² to achieve Step 2.



Figure 2: Proposed Streetscape elevation (from Joe Newell Architect Inc.)

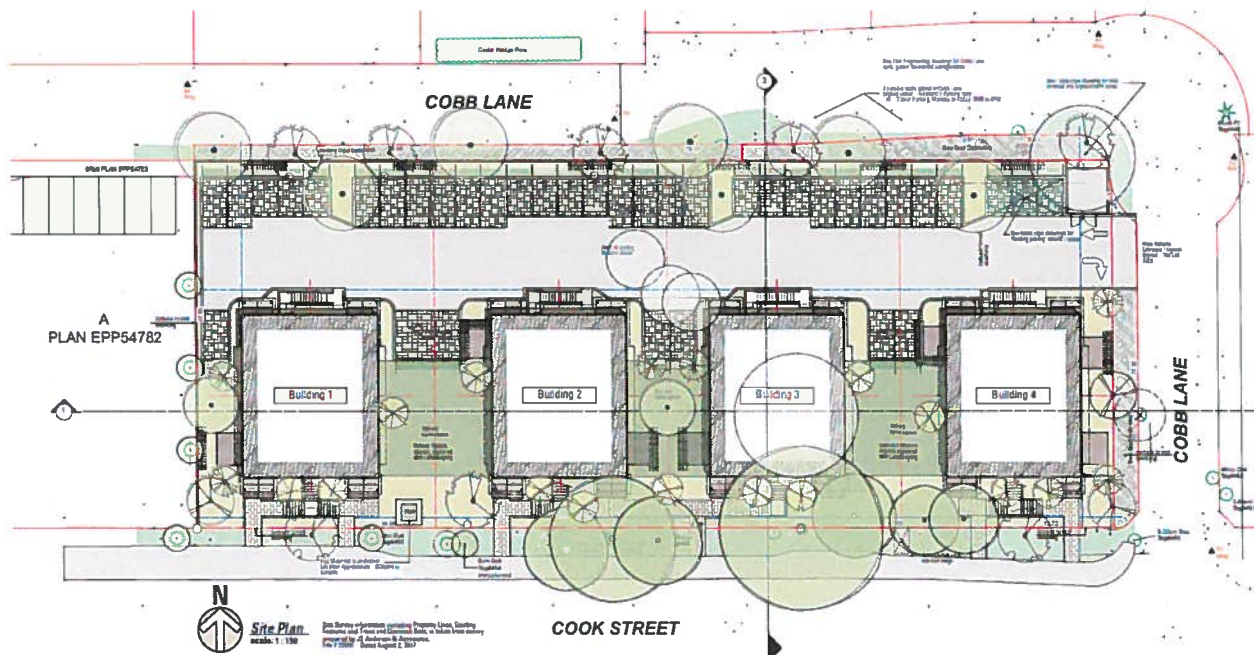


Figure 3: Site Plan (from Joe Newell Architect Inc.)



Figure 4: Front Elevation of Building 3 (from Joe Newell Architect Inc.)

Attached Housing Definition

The Zoning Bylaw identifies Attached Housing as a permitted use in all RT zones and defines 'Attached Housing' as the following:

Current - Attached Housing - means three or more dwelling units on a lot at least two of which are contained within a common building and each dwelling unit has its own principal access at ground level.

The current definition of Attached Housing does not allow the principal access of a dwelling unit to be raised above ground level. The proposed new definition would broaden the Attached Housing use to allow Stacked Townhouse developments, as proposed on the subject property. This new typology of housing is new to Saanich but is becoming more prevalent in the area.

Staff propose that the definition of Attached Housing be amended to read as follows:

Proposed - Attached Housing - means three or more dwelling units on a lot at least two of which are contained within a common building and each dwelling unit with its own principal access directly from the outside.

Consultation

Neighbourhood:

The applicant states that they have had two formal meetings with the Quadra Cedar Hill Community Associate (QCHCA) and multiple exchanges with members of the Board.

A referral was sent from the Planning Department to the Quadra Cedar Hill Community Association (QCHCA). In a letter the QCHCA stated their support for the proposed development, and had the following comments:

- The development will bring needed rental accommodation to the area;
- The only shared concern being raised by neighbouring residents is the potential increase in parking issues in an area already challenged in this regard. However, they do believe the rental nature of the housing and the access to public transit ameliorate this issue to a reasonable degree.

To date, four responses from neighbours have been received by the Planning Department. Two neighbours noted their support of more housing in the area but were concerned about the loss of the walk-in medical clinic, located on the C Zoned portion of the site. They also noted that the site should be utilized for a mixed-use development incorporating a medical clinic. Of the two received in non-support, one noted they do not support the application as they believe the development proposal is creating an underutilized site and a four-storey development would be more appropriate for the area.

Advisory Design Panel:

The Advisory Design Panel considered the application as Case #2019/01. At their meeting on February 13, 2019, the Panel recommended the following:

“That it be recommended that the design to construct a multi-family residential development be approved as presented considering panel comments.”

The panel noted that the development fits with the character of the neighbourhood and that the scale height and colours are acceptable. The panel remarked that more permeable paving would improve water penetration.

Community Contributions

The applicant has provided a community contribution statement and proposes to contribute \$1,000 per unit for a total of \$32,000 to the Cloverdale Child Care Society, a non-profit childcare center. These funds are intended to be used by the Society to contribute to new playground and other facility improvements. This commitment would be secured by covenant with payment required prior to issuance of a building permit.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That Council approve the recommendations as outlined in the staff report (Staff Recommend).

The implications of this alternative are outlined within the body of this report.

2. That Council reject the recommendations as outlined in the staff report.

Should Council decide to reject the recommendations contained in this report, the implications are that the proposed rezoning and Development Permit would not occur.

3. That Council provide alternate direction to Staff.

Should Council provide alternate direction to staff, such as a redesign of the proposal to address a specific issue for example, the implications are that staff would work with the applicant to address comments from Council. The applicant would undertake any necessary revisions to the plans, and would resubmit their proposal for review by staff and ultimately consideration by Council. This alternative would result in a delay in Council's decision regarding the rezoning application.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposal has no immediate implications related to the District of Saanich Financial Plan.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The proposal has no implications related to the District of Saanich 2015 - 2018 Strategic Plan.

PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

Policy

The following Saanich Planning Policies are most applicable to the subject proposal:

Official Community Plan (2008)

- 4.2.1.1 "Support and implement the eight strategic initiatives of the Regional Growth Strategy, namely: Keep urban settlement compact; Protect the integrity of rural communities; Protect regional green and blue space; Manage natural resources and the environment sustainably; Build complete communities; Improve housing affordability; Increase transportation choice; and Strengthen the regional economy."
- 4.2.1.2 "Maintain the Urban Containment Boundary as the principal tool for growth management in Saanich, and encourage all new development to locate within the Urban Containment Boundary."
- 4.2.1.16 "Encourage "green" development practices by considering variances, density bonuses, modified/alternative development standards or other appropriate mechanisms when reviewing development applications."

- 4.2.1.18 “Encourage new development to achieve higher energy and environmental performance through programmes such as ‘Built Green’, LEED or similar accreditation systems.”
- 4.2.1.20 “Require building and site design that reduce the amount of impervious surfaces and incorporate features that will encourage ground water recharge such as green roofs, vegetated swales and pervious paving material.”
- 4.2.2.3 “Consider the use of variances to development control bylaws where they would achieve a more appropriate development in terms of streetscape, pedestrian environment, view protection, overall site design, and compatibility with neighbourhood character and adjoining properties.”
- 4.2.3.1 “Focus new multiple family residential, commercial, institutional and civic development in Major and Neighbourhood “Centres”, as indicated on Map 4.”
- 4.2.3.2 “Support development in “Centres” and “Villages” that:
- Concentrate the greatest densities of residential and employment activity near the centre or focal area of each Centre/Village and locate lower densities and building heights near the periphery.”
- 4.2.3.9 “Support the following building types and land uses in “Villages”:
- Small lot single family houses (up to 2 storeys)
 - Carriage/coach houses (up to 2 storeys)
 - Townhouse (up to 3 storeys)
 - Low-rise residential (3-4 storeys)
 - Mixed-Use (commercial/residential) (3-4 storeys)
 - Civic and institutional (generally up to 3 storeys)”
- 4.2.9.15 “Ensure the pedestrian and cycling network in “Centres” and “Villages” is designed to accommodate projected population densities and associated activities such as, sidewalk cafes, public art, street furniture, and boulevard plantings.”
- 4.2.9.37 “Consider parking variances where one or more of the following apply:
- transportation demand strategies (TDM) are implemented;
 - a variety of alternative transit options exist within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development;
 - there is a minimal reduction in required parking;
 - the development is located in a “Centre”;
 - availability of on-street parking.”
- 5.1.2.2 “Evaluate applications for multi-family developments on the basis of neighbourhood context, site size, scale, density, parking capacity and availability, underground services capacity, school capacity, adequacy of parkland, contributions to housing affordability, and visual and traffic/pedestrian impact.”

Quadra Local Area Plan (2008)

- 4.2 “Consider infill housing only where the scale and massing is appropriate and the environmental, social, and traffic impacts would be within acceptable neighbourhood limits.”

Development Permit Area Guidelines

The proposed development straddles the boundary of the Saanich Core Development Permit Area, and as such the Development Permit Guidelines should serve as a guide for this application. Relevant guidelines include that multi-family housing should be in keeping with the general form and character of the surrounding development and as many of the existing trees, as practicable, should be retained as part of the overall landscape plan.

Analysis

The proposed rezoning application for four three-storey multi-family residential buildings is consistent with the land use policies in the OCP and Quadra LAP. Municipal objectives reflected in the Official Community Plan include:

- Keep urban settlement compact;
- Build complete communities;
- Improve housing affordability;
- Provision of rental housing;
- Fostering liveable neighbourhoods;
- Manage growth; and
- Enhance transportation choice.

Multi-family housing on this site would contribute to these objectives by locating density within walking distance to existing commercial and other services in the Four Corners Village. The proposed development is also close to public transit, parks and a public elementary school is within walking distance. The proposal is consistent with the Quadra Local Area Plan which supports consideration of multi-family housing within Quadra-Cloverdale Village. While market housing, the 32 new units would increase the stock of rental units in a more attainable price range within Saanich and would contribute to housing diversity in the area. The availability of a broad range of services within walking distance, and easy access to one of the best bus routes in the capital region would allow more renters to allocate less monthly expenditures to transportation.

The availability of a range of services within walking distance, and easy access to frequent transit service would allow residents of these new units to allocate less monthly expenditures to transportation. Proposed sidewalk improvements would improve the pedestrian realm and contribute to creating a walkable neighbourhood.

Both the Development Permit Guidelines and the Local Area Plan speak to new development having a contextual fit through being in the general form and character with the existing context. The Official Community Plan supports townhouses up to three-storeys. The proposed development of four stacked townhouse buildings would keep the development in scale with the existing single family neighbourhood to the north and east. The four separate buildings maintain the single family streetscape rhythm of the area (see Figure 2).

Variance Analysis

Variances are requested for building height and parking.

Building Height

A height variance is requested for each of the four buildings, 0.15m for Building One, 0.6m for Building Two, 0.35m for Building Three and 0.34m for Building Four. The most significant

variance is for Building Two which is proposed to be 11.1m, 0.6 m above the 10.5m required height.

The sloping of the site results in Building Two being the tallest relative to natural grade. As the buildings are sited to allow a significant separation between the single family neighbours to the north, no shadowing or massing impacts are anticipated. For this reason the proposed minor height variance is supportable.

Parking Variance

The parking requirement for Attached Housing is two spaces per dwelling unit. Based on the 32 residential units proposed, 64 parking stalls are required. The development proposes 38 parking stalls.

The Official Community Plan envisions focusing new development in “Centers” and “Villages” to make walking, cycling and transit more viable. The subject site is located adjacent to a frequent transit route. For these reasons, and given the proposed pedestrian and cycling public realm improvements, the requested parking variance is supportable.

Road Width

Section 4.7.2 of the Building & Plumbing Bylaw requires that an owner must upgrade all works and services on the site being developed and along the entire frontage of any road adjacent to the site in accordance with the standards and specifications of the Subdivision Bylaw. Section 3.7.1.1. of the Subdivision Bylaw No.7452 requires that Cobb Lane, fronting the property, must be widened to municipal residential road standard of 18m. A road dedication along the Cobb lane frontage is being sought to achieve a road width of 12m along with a 6.0m radius corner cut.

Staff believe that it would be too onerous on the applicant to achieve the 18m road width and the 12m road width proposed is consistent with the commercial development north of the site. For these reasons the variance is supportable by both the Planning and Engineering Departments.

Servicing

Land dedications along Cobb Lane and Cook Street fronting this proposal are required. This dedication would allow for public realm improvements on the Cobb Lane frontage to allow for three on-street parking spaces on Cobb Lane, north of the subject site.

Stormwater management must be provided in accordance with the requirements of Schedule H “Engineering Specifications” of the Subdivision Bylaw. This subdivision is within a Type II watershed area which requires stormwater storage, oil/grit separator or grass swale and sediment basin. The existing storm drain system on Cobb Lane would be extended to serve the proposed development.

Mobility

Cook Street fronting the development is classified as a Major Street and Cobb Lane at the rear of the site is classified as a residential Street. Just north along Cook Street is a significant intersection of three Major Streets: Cook Street, Quadra Street and Cloverdale Avenue.

Public transit stops, serviced by Route #6 (Royal Oak Exchange/Downtown) with service every 15 minutes or less on weekdays and Saturdays, are located on Quadra Street within 100m walking distance from the subject site.

Two Class I bicycle parking spaces per unit would be provided in the basement of each building exceeding the requirements of the Zoning Bylaw.

Environment

The key concern raised by Environmental Services is the minimal inclusion of native species. Staff encourage the applicant to consider the salvage or transplanting of the native ferns found on the site, as well as to increase the number of native species to maximize the ecosystem benefits. While the proposed rain gardens incorporate 67% native species, the majority of the landscaping proposed limited use of native species.

The site currently has a total of 32 trees, 9 of these trees are Bylaw protected. The proposed development would result in the removal of 22 trees, 7 of these trees are Bylaw protected. The applicant proposes to plant 32 trees on the property and 11 trees on the boulevard.

Climate Change and Sustainability

The Official Community Plan (OCP) adopted in 2008 highlights the importance of climate change and sustainability. The OCP is broadly broken down into the pillars of sustainability including environmental integrity, social well-being and economic vibrancy. Climate change is addressed under the environmental integrity section of the OCP and through Saanich's Climate Action Plan.

The following is a summary of the Climate Change and Sustainability features and issues related to the proposed development. It is important to note that this summary is not, and cannot be, an exhaustive list of issues nor a detailed discussion on this complex subject matter. This section is simply meant to ensure this important issue is a key part of the deliberations on the subject application.

Climate Change

This section includes the specific features of a proposal related to mitigation and adaptation strategies. Considerations include: 1) Project location and site resilience; 2) Energy and the built environment; 3) Sustainable transportation; 4) Food security; and 5) Waste diversion.

The proposed development includes the following considerations related to mitigation and adaptation:

- The proposal is an infill project located within the Urban Containment Boundary and Sewer Service Area, and is able to use existing roads and infrastructure to service the development;
- The proposal is located within the Four Corners Village "Centre" where a range of commercial and personal services are provided and employment opportunities exist;
- The development is readily accessible via all modes of alternative transportation including walking, cycling, and public transit;
- The site is across the street from the Cook at Quadra public transit stop, which is serviced by Route #6 (Royal Oak Exchange/Downtown) with service every 15 minutes or less weekdays and Saturdays. In general, a walking distance between 400 - 800 m is considered optimal to encourage the average person to walk to a service or access public

transit, instead of driving to their destination. Obviously, health, weather, comfort/ease of use related to alternative transportation, and purpose of the trip all play a role in a person choosing a particular travel mode;

- The site is within 64 m of Cloverdale Traditional Elementary School;
- Rutledge Park is located 770 m walking distance to the southwest, and Camrose Park is located 400 m to the southeast of the site; and
- The applicant has stated a willingness to commit the project to be certified as BUILT GREEN® Gold.

Sustainability

Environmental Integrity

This section includes the specific features of a proposal and how it impacts the natural environment. Considerations include: 1) Land disturbance; 2) Nature conservation; and 3) Protecting water resources. The proposed development includes considerations related to the natural environment, such as:

- The proposal is a compact, infill development in an already urbanized area without putting pressures onto rural areas.

Social Well-being

This section includes the specific features of a proposal and how it impacts the social well-being of our community. Considerations include: 1) Housing diversity; 2) Human-scale pedestrian oriented developments; and 3) Community features. The proposed development includes the following considerations related to social well-being, such as:

- Buildings front onto public streets and have active frontages that allow interaction between users of the private space and people on the street; and
- A range of outdoor, community, and recreation opportunities are available within reasonable walking/cycling distance. Nearby parks include Rutledge Park and Camrose Park.

Economic Vibrancy

This section includes the specific features of a proposal and how it impacts the economic vibrancy of our community. Considerations include: 1) Employment; 2) Building local economy; and 3) Long-term resiliency. The proposed development includes features related to economic vibrancy, such as:

- The proposed development would create local short-term jobs during the construction period;
- Home based businesses would be permissible in this proposed development; and
- The proposed development would site additional residential units within the commercial catchment/employment area for the businesses and services located within the Four Corners Village "Centre".

CONCLUSION

The application proposes to rezone from the C-2 (General Commercial) Zone and the RS-6 (Single Family Dwelling) Zone to the RT-WA (Attached Housing Whittier Avenue) Zone in order to construct four three-storey buildings with 8 units each for a total of 32 residential units. A

Development Permit is also required. The variances requested for height, parking and road width are supportable.

The subject properties are located within the Four Corners Village “Centre” and the Local Area Plan identifies a portion of the subject property as an area for consideration of Multi-Family housing. Similarly, the Official Community Plan also supports townhouses of up to three-storeys in Village “Centres”.

The proposed rezoning from general commercial and single family to attached housing is consistent with the Official Community Plan and Quadra Local Area Plan. The proposed development project would address sustainability objectives by providing moderately higher density housing within walking and cycling distance of commercial services, schools, and public transit.

While market housing, the 32 new units would increase the stock of rental units in a more attainable price range within Saanich and would contribute to housing diversity in the area. The availability of a broad range of services within walking distance, and easy access to one of the best bus routes in the capital region would allow more renters to allocate less monthly expenditures to transportation.

Multi-family housing on this site would contribute to the objectives of the Official Community Plan, such as building complete communities and fostering liveable neighbourhoods, by locating density within walking distance to existing commercial and other services in the Four Corners Village “Center”. The proposed development is also close to public transit, thus reducing the need to rely on travel by car to reach such services. Proposed sidewalk improvements would also improve the pedestrian realm and help contribute to the creation of a walkable neighbourhood. Considering the proximity to services and the expectation that residents would walk or utilize public transit to most destinations, the requested parking variance of supported by staff.

Overall, the proposal would provide 32 ground-oriented rental units with one parking space each. The size of the proposed units and the number of bedrooms would make them attractive to a variety of potential renters, from couples, to families, to seniors.

In order to support the stacked townhouse use proposed, an amendment to the definition of Attached Housing is required. As noted in the report, broadening the definition would allow similar developments to be constructed throughout Saanich, expanding the housing options available for residents.

Well-designed street-oriented developments in our “Centres” can encourage pedestrian activity and help create a sense of neighbourhood. The proposed height variance is considered minor in nature and staff do not anticipate any impacts on the adjacent context. The proposed architectural expression and the scale of the development is consistent in character with the single family context of the neighbourhood. As such, staff support the proposed development.

Prepared by: Gina Lyons
Gina Lyons
Planner

Reviewed by: Shari Saltzman
Shari Holmes-Saltzman
Manager of Current Planning

Approved by: Sharon Hvozdzanski
Sharon Hvozdzanski
Director of Planning

GL/jsp

Attachments

ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:

I endorse the recommendation from the Director of Planning.



Paul Thorkelsson, Administrator