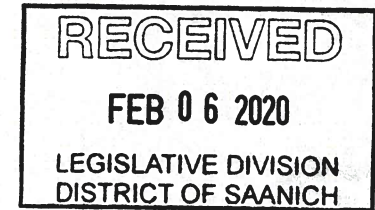




The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

To: Mayor and Council
From: Sharon Hvozanski, Director of Planning
Date: February 6, 2020
Subject: Development Permit Amendment Application & Development Cost Change Waiver Request
File: DPA00939 • 880 Vernon Avenue



RECOMMENDATION

1. That Development Permit Amendment DPA00939 be approved.
2. That Council direct Staff to prepare a development specific bylaw that enables a 50% reduction in the Development Cost Charges due for this project.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek direction from Council on the subject application. The application is to amend Nigel Valley Master Development Permit DPR00665 in order to construct a 6-storey residential building comprising a total of 88 units including 41 licensed care units, 37 assisted living units, and 10 affordable housing apartments.

As Council is aware, the initial rezoning and "master" development permit process set in place the permitted land uses, and the general design parameters for the Nigel Valley. The subject Development Permit Amendment simply outlines in greater detail what will be built on this particular site within the Nigel Valley.

Variations are requested for siting and driveway location. The application also includes a request to waive the Development Cost Charges due on this project. The applicant is Broadmead Care Society (Laurie Macdonald).

DISCUSSION

Neighbourhood Context

The 2882 m² site is located within Nigel Valley on the north side of Vernon Avenue between Nigel Avenue and Nigel Gate (see Figure 1). The site was recently cleared of all buildings and structures as the first step toward realization of the Nigel Valley vision which includes provision of 800+ units of affordable/supportive non-market and market housing, and related programs and services within Nigel Valley. The process to subdivide Nigel Valley to create nine individual development sites, close existing roads and dedicate new roads, provide new and upgraded

services, dedicate and develop land for a park and a plaza, and construct new multi-family rental housing to replace the existing housing is ongoing and will be phased over a number of years.

Nigel Valley is part of the Uptown Major "Centre" which includes a diverse range of regional commercial uses as well as the municipal administrative precinct. The Lochside Regional Trail is 280 m west of the site with the municipal precinct across the trail. Saanich Plaza shopping centre is to the south across Vernon Avenue. Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary is northwest of the site.

A range of services are available within the Uptown Major "Centre", including the Emily Carr Library. Cedar Hill Community Recreation Centre is approximately 3 km travel distance.

Proposed Use

The Nigel House Redevelopment project would provide serviced accommodation for persons with significant complex needs and programs designed to assist them to participate more easily in the greater community. The proposed building would accommodate three housing types: residential care, assisted living, and self-contained affordable housing units.

Site and Building Design

The proposed building would have 7719 m² gross floor area, 62% site coverage and a maximum height of 45.5 m which is generally consistent with the requirements of the CD-6NV (Comprehensive Development Nigel Valley) Zone.

The building would be organized into two wings: the four-storey east wing would contain residential care spaces while the six-storey west wing would contain assisted living spaces and affordable housing units. Both wings of the building would be fully integrated with each other to share services but would have distinct identities and their own main entrances.

Vehicle and secure bicycle parking for staff, visitors and affordable housing residents would be provided underground with access from Nigel Avenue near the intersection with Vernon Avenue. End of trip facilities for staff would be provided on the ground floor level. An entrance plaza with passenger loading functions for the residential care wing would be located at the northeast corner of the building with access from Nigel Avenue. A separate entrance to the assisted living space and affordable housing units would be provided at the west end of the building from Nigel Gate.

The proposed gathering spaces in the building would include main residential care lounges and dining room, as well as the administrative functions and staff areas which would be located on the ground floor. The large gathering spaces would be connected to the outdoor patio spaces with easy access to the main entrance. These areas would include large amounts of glazing that would provide views between the interior and the surrounding exterior public spaces, thereby providing visual connection to the more social activities of the residents and providing oversight to the sidewalks.

The floors above the ground floor would be private. Starting at the second floor, the wings of the building are differentiated from each other by subtle visual differences in window pattern, cladding and building height. The wings are also offset from each other, providing articulation in the wall plane that effectively divides the scale of the building into two smaller forms. The offset also makes possible the windows at both ends of circulation spaces of each wing, bringing in natural light and views.

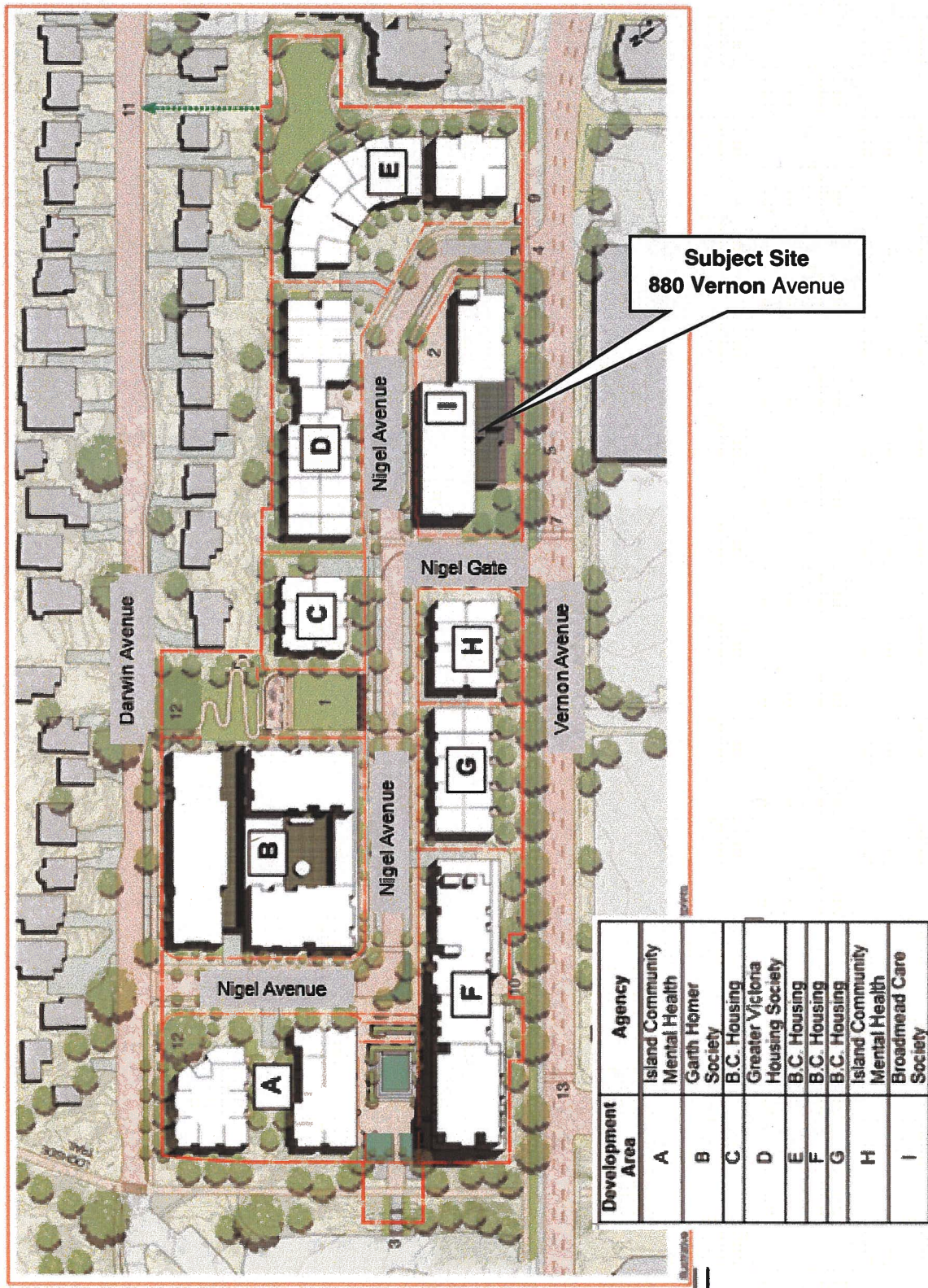


Figure 1: Nigel Valley Illustrative Site Plan (from plans by D'Ambrosio Architecture and Urbanism)

The building expression is urban and contemporary. The palette of exterior materials combines prefinished metal, architectural concrete, stucco and aluminum-framed windows. The cladding materials would be a range of warm grays. Accents of wood-toned paneling would be incorporated at covered balconies and soffits.

The landscape is designed to connect residents with nature and aims to harness the restorative benefits it has to offer. Raised planters would provide opportunities for residents to connect with the landscape and experience the other senses, such as fragrance, feel and visual interest. Evergreen foundation plantings would provide a comfortable backdrop to outdoor patio spaces. The creation of these qualities helps to establish a sense of well-being as part of the everyday experience. Rain gardens, rain planters and absorptive landscapes have been integrated into the design.

In 2018, Council adopted BC Energy Step Code. The Building Bylaw requires all new Part 3 buildings to achieve Step 3 of the BC Energy Step Code.

Variations are requested for siting for the entrance canopy at the Nigel Gate entrance and for the location of the underground parking access relative to the Vernon Avenue/Nigel Street intersection. Requested variations are addressed later in this report.



Figure 2: Perspective View of Proposed Building from Nigel Avenue (from plans by D'Ambrosio Architecture and Urbanism)

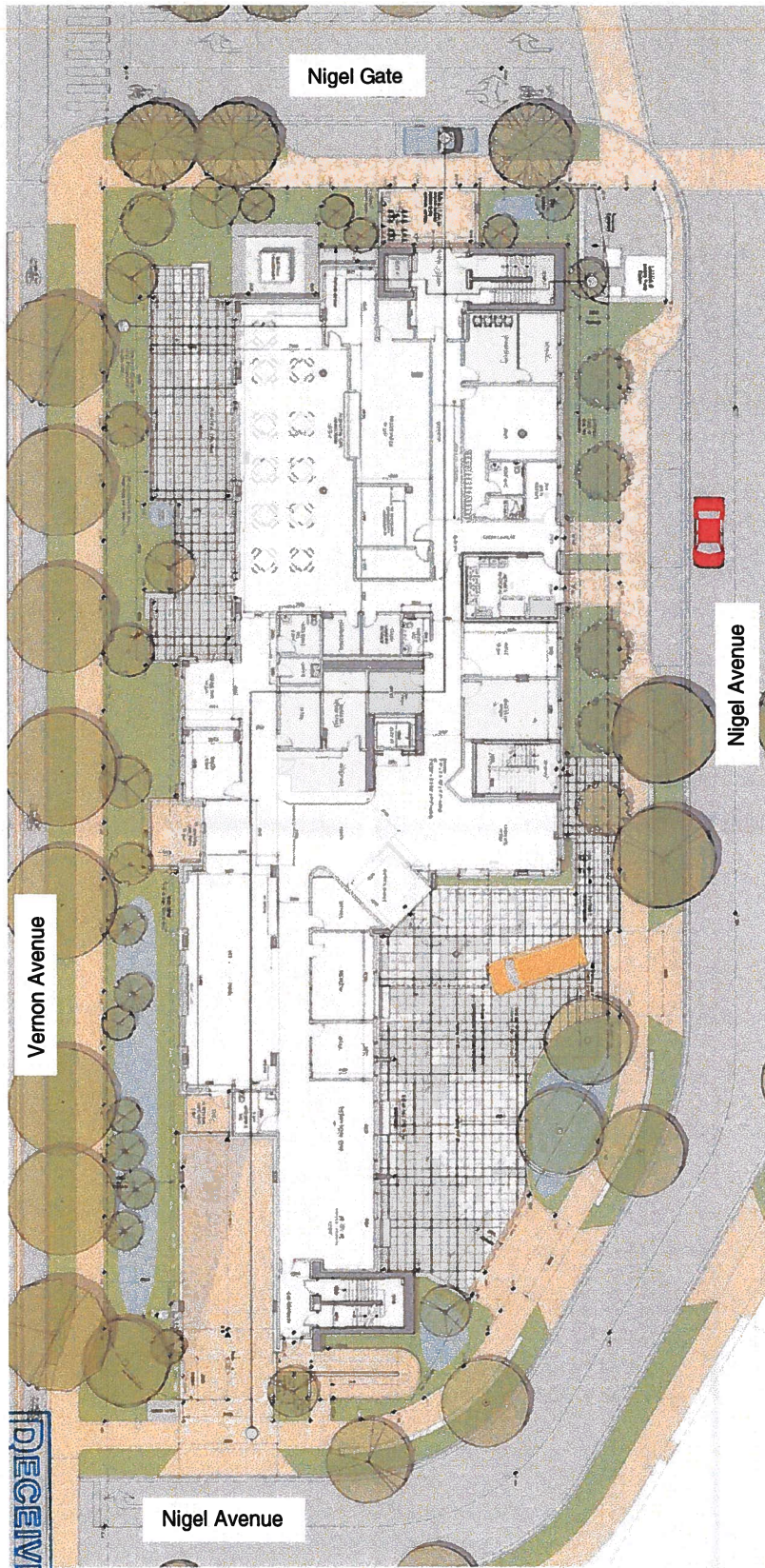


Figure 3: Proposed Site Plan (from plans by D'Ambrosio Architecture and Urbanism)



South Elevation (Vernon Avenue)



North Elevation (Nigel Avenue)



East Elevation (Nigel Avenue)



West Elevation (Nigel Gate)

Figure 4: Proposed Elevations (from plans by D'Ambrosio Architecture and Urbanism)

Consultation

The applicant has stated that on-going liaison has been maintained with the community association and with tenants and families of Nigel House. A presentation was made to the Mount View Colquitz Community Association at their meeting on January 16, 2019. Extensive community consultation about the Nigel Valley Redevelopment also took place as part of the initial rezoning and development permit process.

Community Association

Planning sent a referral to the Mount View Colquitz Community Association. A response was received indicating full support for the project and encouraging that the application be processed in a timely manner. A copy of the detailed referral comments from the Mount View Colquitz Community Association is included in the agenda package.

Advisory Design Panel

The Advisory Design Panel considered the application as Case #2019/10 at its meeting held December 4, 2019. The Panel recommended that the application “be approved with the following requests:

1. The applicant consider creating access from the outside patio to the washroom and;
2. The applicant ensure there is adequate space surrounding the accessible parking spots.”

The applicant has stated that these requests would be considered at the Building Permit stage.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That Council approve the recommendation as outlined in the staff report (Staff Recommend).
2. That Council reject the recommendations as outlined in the staff report.
3. That Council provide alternate direction to Staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The applicant has requested a Development Cost Charge (DCC) waiver (100%) for the Nigel House Redevelopment project. A DCC waiver would have financial implications for the District as the District is responsible for making up for any DCC revenue resulting from the implementation of a Development Cost Charge Reduction Bylaw through secure alternate (i.e. non-DCC) revenue sources. Making-up the loss of potential DCC income is one of the primary concerns with waiving or reducing DCCs for developments.

Depending on when the Building Permit is issued for the subject development, the total value of DCC's due for this development would be approximately: \$86,303 based on the current DCC Bylaw; or \$568,656 based on the proposed new DCC bylaw, year one.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The proposal has no implications related to the District of Saanich 2019 - 2023 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 bonusing, 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.”
- 4.2.2.1 “Support quality architectural and urban design that: uses local, durable and eco-friendly building materials; works with the topography and protects the natural environment; reflects our west coast design; enhances a “Sense of Place”; respects local history and heritage structures and landscapes; creates pedestrian friendly and safe streets and neighbourhoods; incorporates and supports the use of alternative transportation; and ensures that our community is physically accessible.”
- 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.”
- 4.2.2.9 “Implement the initiatives outlined in the “Access to Transit” study.”
- 4.2.2.10 “Liaise with private and public agencies to address the needs of people with physical challenges.”
- 4.2.3.1 “Focus new multiple family residential, commercial, institutional and civic development in Major and Neighbourhood “Centres”, as indicated on Map 4.”
- 4.2.3.3 “Through the development review process consider the use of variances, housing agreements, covenants, phased development agreements and density bonusing to secure public amenities such as; open space, playgrounds, landmarks, focal points, activity centres or cultural features.”
- 4.2.3.7 “Support the following building types and land uses in Major and Neighbourhood “Centres”:
- Townhouses (up to 3 storeys)
 - Low-rise residential (up to 4 storeys)
 - Mixed-use residential (up to 8 storeys)
 - Live/work studio & Office (up to 8 storeys)
 - Civic and institutional (generally up to 8 storeys)

- Commercial and Mixed-Use (generally up to 8 storeys).”
- 4.2.9.10 “Encourage publicly accessible open spaces in new developments, such as plazas, walkways or small park nodes.”
- 4.2.9.6 “Encourage and support non-vehicular transportation by providing a safe, interconnected, accessible and visually appealing cycling and walking network.”
- 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.”
- 5.1.2.16 “Integrate seniors and special needs housing into the community where there is good access to public transit and basic support services.”

Saanich Core Local Area Plan (1999)

- 6.1 “Encourage protection of indigenous vegetation, wildlife habitat, and riparian environments within Saanich Core when considering applications for change in land use.”
- 6.5 “Seek opportunities to use native species for landscaping boulevards and other public lands to reduce maintenance costs.”

Draft Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan

The draft Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan (September, 2019) designates the site for mixed-residential development up to six-storeys, consistent with the Nigel Valley Illustrative Site Plan (see Figure 1). Nigel Valley is part of the Nigel Valley – Municipal Campus Neighbourhood. Nigel Valley is envisioned to be a vibrant, inclusive neighbourhood that is fully integrated with the broader community and provides a range of housing and services that contribute to a healthy community.

Development Permit Area Guidelines

The Nigel Valley Master Development Permit includes urban and architectural design guidelines to guide the form and character of future development. Specific guidelines respecting the subject site (Development Area I) include ground floor activity that relates to the street and vehicle access and main entrance oriented to Nigel Avenue.

Policy Analysis

The proposal is consistent with the Official Community Plan which focuses the majority of future growth to “Centres” and “Villages” and supports the establishment of more compact, walkable neighbourhoods that address a variety of local resident needs. The Nigel Valley is part of the Uptown Major “Centre” which includes a diverse range of regional commercial uses as well as the municipal administrative precinct. In accordance with the Official Community Plan, the proposed development would provide a range of housing types that can accommodate people of different ages, income, and physical and social needs. It would allow people with special needs to become or remain part of the community in new, customized accommodations. This proposal fosters the development of a community that is safe, diverse and inclusive, and where social interaction, physical activity, sense of place, and neighbourliness are actively promoted and supported.

The proposal is also consistent with the draft Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan which designates the site for mixed-residential development up to six-storeys, consistent with the Nigel Valley Illustrative Site Plan (see Figure 1). In accordance with the Nigel Valley Urban Design Guidelines, the development would contribute to a vibrant, inclusive neighbourhood that is fully integrated with the broader community and that provides a range of housing and services that contribute to a healthy community.

Servicing

The provision of new and upgraded roads and services for Nigel Valley is being undertaken in phases in accordance with the Master Development Agreement. Servicing requirements specific to this development include the provision of new or upgraded sanitary sewer, water and storm drain connections and construction/improvement to, Nigel Avenue, Nigel Gate and Vernon Avenue fronting this development. Stormwater management must be provided in accordance with the requirements of Schedule H "Engineering Specifications" of the Subdivision Bylaw. This development is in a Type 1 watershed area which requires stormwater storage, construction of a treatment train and sediment basin.

Mobility

Off-street parking for 39 vehicles is proposed in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw requirement. Thirty-six stalls would be located underground. Three surface stalls for short-term parking would be located in the entry plaza to the residential care wing. Five on-street parking spaces are also proposed fronting this development; two spaces on Nigel Gate and three spaces on Nigel Avenue. On-street parking bays are supported by the Engineering Department. In addition, 14 Class 1 and 8 Class 2 bicycle parking spaces would be provided in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw requirement. End of trip facilities for staff would also be provided.

Environment

As part of the overall redevelopment of Nigel Valley nearly all of the existing trees will need to be removed and replacement trees would be required. A revised Arborist Report and Tree Replacement Strategy was prepared for the Nigel Valley Project by Talbot Mackenzie & Associates Consulting Arborists. Based on this strategy, the subject site requires 16 replacement trees. The proposed landscape plans show 32 trees which meet the Bylaw requirements for size and species. Of these 32 proposed trees, 7 are native trees (*Acer circinatum*).

In 2010 Saanich Council adopted the Urban Forest Strategy. A key goal is "To Protect and Enhance the Urban Forest". Further to this goal is the "No Net Loss" canopy policy. The policy will ensure that every public or protected private tree removed is replaced with a minimum of one tree. The current proposal exceeds the intent of this important policy.

Requested Variances

Variances are requested for:

- The proposed siting for the entrance canopy; and
- The proposed driveway location for the underground parking ramp.

Entrance Canopy

The entrance canopy at the west end of the building would be sited 0 m from the lot line adjacent to Nigel Gate whereas the CD-6NV Zone requires a minimum 3.5 m setback. The entrance canopy would provide weather protection for people entering and leaving the building

and is an important element of the overall design. The requested variance of 3.5 m is not anticipated to negatively impact future development across Nigel Gate or the streetscape.

Driveway Location

Schedule 'C' of the Saanich Driveway Access Bylaw states the following:

"2. A driveway access will not be permitted within 7.5 m of the point of intersection of two highways when they intersect at an angle of 135 degrees or less".

The applicant has requested a variance of 2.2 m to allow the driveway to the underground parking structure to be located 5.3 m from the Nigel Avenue/Vernon Avenue intersection. In order to provide the required functional clearances the applicant proposes modifications to the sidewalk crossing at the intersection of Vernon Avenue and Nigel Avenue.

The ramp to the underground parking is located on Nigel Avenue to take advantage of the natural grades of the site as well as to locate the access point off the lower volume roadway. The eastern portion of the site has an irregular shape, tapering down to a narrow east facing frontage. The building has been designed to fit into the tapered property boundary with a slender wing that houses residential care amenities on the ground floor, and residential care private rooms on the upper floors. The wing faces onto the landscaped Vernon Avenue frontage to the south and the residential care entrance court to the north. The ramp has been located on the south side where it is clear of the curving portion of Nigel Avenue. The location also places more active building uses on the north side, where they overlook the entrance court.

The position of the ramp is constrained by functional and structural requirements, and moving the ramp would result in significant negative impacts to the building's functionality and livability.

Proposed modifications to the sidewalk crossing at the Vernon Avenue and Nigel Avenue intersection would provide additional separation between the ramp and sidewalk; significantly improving the right-turn vehicle movement while providing sufficient clearance for a vehicle to stop on Nigel Avenue without obstructing the ramp driveway. Saanich Engineering has reviewed the proposal and has no objection to the variance request.

For the above-noted reasons staff can recommend that the two variances be supported.

Development Cost Charge Waiver Request

The applicant has requested a Development Cost Charge (DCC) waiver (100%) for the Nigel House Redevelopment project. As a not-for-profit provider of healthcare and housing services, Broadmead Care has noted that they are making a significant financial commitment with this project and there is concern about rising construction costs. The society indicates that a waiver from DCCs would help mitigate these rising costs and would make a significant positive difference to the project budget.

It has not been Saanich's practice to provide DCC relief for individual projects that advance Municipal objectives, however, as part of the Development Cost Charge Bylaw review process, Council requested staff to give consideration to waivers and reductions for not-for-profit and affordable housing.

Interim Measures

As part of the Development Cost Charge Reduction Bylaw report that came before Council on February 10, 2020, staff indicated that applicants proposing development application that

include supportive or affordable housing units can legally request a “project specific” DCC reduction in advance of Council adopting a District wide bylaw. It was noted that any such requests would be included in the Staff Report on the relevant development application, for Council’s review and deliberation. In that report, Staff recommended a 50% reduction in DCCs for not-for-profit rental housing, including supportive living housing.

Current DCCs would be \$980.72 per unit with the total amount for the 88 units included in this project totaling \$86,303.36. DCCs are payable at the time of Building Permit issuance. In January, 2020 Council gave third reading to a revised Development Cost Charge Bylaw and the Bylaw has been referred to the Inspector of Municipalities for approval. Based on the proposed bylaw, DCCs would increase to \$6462.00 per unit (\$568,656.00 total) at the date of Bylaw adoption and increase annually to a high of \$7605.00 per unit (\$669,240.00 total) four years following Bylaw adoption.

In an effort to assist with the development of much needed supportive housing while also addressing the financial obligations of the District to replace this reduced DCC revenue through a secure alternate (i.e. non-DCC) revenue source, staff recommend that Council approve a 50% reduction in the DCC due for this specific development.

CONCLUSION

The proposal is consistent with the Official Community Plan which focuses the majority of future growth to “Centres” and “Villages” and supports the establishment of more compact, walkable neighbourhoods that address a variety of local resident needs. In accordance with the Official Community Plan, the proposed development would provide a range of housing types that can accommodate people of different ages, income, and physical and social needs. It would allow people with special needs to become or remain part of the community in new, customized accommodations. This proposal fosters the development of a community that is safe, diverse and inclusive and where social interaction, physical activity, sense of place, and neighbourliness are actively promoted and supported.

The proposal is also consistent with the draft Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan which designates the site for mixed-residential development up to six-storeys. In accordance with the Nigel Valley Urban Design Guidelines, the development would contribute to a vibrant, inclusive neighbourhood that is fully integrated with the broader community and that provides a range of housing and services that contribute to a healthy community.

Variances are requested for the proposed siting for the entrance canopy and the proposed driveway location for the underground parking ramp. The requested siting variance for the entrance canopy is not anticipated to negatively impact future development across Nigel Gate or the streetscape. The location of the ramp is constrained by functional and structural requirements and moving the ramp would result in significant negative impacts to the building’s functionality and livability. Proposed modifications to the sidewalk crossing at the Vernon Avenue and Nigel Avenue intersection would provide additional separation between the ramp and sidewalk; significantly improving the right-turn vehicle movement while providing sufficient clearance for a vehicle to stop on Nigel Avenue without obstructing the ramp driveway. For these reasons, staff recommend that the variances be supported.

The applicant has also requested a Development Cost Charge waiver for the Nigel House Redevelopment project. Staff are recommending a 50% reduction in Development Cost


Charges which is consistent with Development Cost Charge Reduction Bylaw Report that came before Council on February 10, 2020.

Prepared by: 
Neil Findlow

Senior Planner

Reviewed by: 
Shari Holmes-Saltzman

Manager of Current Planning

Approved by: 
Sharon Hvozdzanski

Director of Planning

NDF/jsp

Attachments

ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:

I endorse the recommendation from the Director of Planning.



for Paul Thorkelsson, Administrator