

MINUTES
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL MEETING
Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room No. 2
August 03, 2016 at 3:00 pm

Present: Ron Drane, Chair; Eric Barker; Art Beck; Sorin Birliga; Pat Danforth; Illarion Gallant

Staff: Andrea Pickard, Planner; Penny Masse, Senior Committee Clerk

Regrets: Cory Lee; John Gauld

ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

MOVED by A. Beck and seconded by I. Gallant: "That the minutes of the Advisory Design Panel meeting held on June 15, 2016 be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED

CASE #2016/007

Application by Miko Betanzo and John Gauld, City Spaces Consulting Ltd., to rezone the property at 1780 TOWNLEY STREET from RA-1 (Apartment) Zone to RM-6 (Residential Mixed) Zone in order to construct a 4-storey, 51-unit apartment for affordable seniors / persons with disabilities housing and 16 attached housing units for families. Variances are requested.

Legal(s): Parcel A (DD 387967-I), of Lot 33, Section 26, Victoria District, Plan 11000,
Except that Part in Plan 32539
Planning File(s): DPR00634 / REZ00565
Planner: Andrea Pickard

Miko Betanzo, City Spaces Consulting Ltd.; Kaye Melliship, Steve Deglow, Raymond Moss, Greater Victoria Housing Society; Adam Fawkes, Carl Jan Rupp, Francesca Joyce, HCMA Architecture + Design; and Paul De Greeff, Murdock De Greeff Landscape Architecture attended to present design plans and answer questions from the Panel.

Ms. Pickard briefly outlined the proposal:

- The application includes replacing an existing 39-unit apartment building constructed in 1967 with a four-storey, 51-unit apartment building for seniors and persons with disabilities and 16 townhouse units for low to moderate income families.
- The subject property is located in the Shelbourne Local Area near the south end of the panhandle midway between the Royal Jubilee Hospital and Hillside Shopping Centre.
- A zoning amendment is required to allow the proposed density and mix of housing forms.
- The requested variances are as follows:
 - Front Lot Line Setback reduced from 7.5 m to 4.5 m;
 - Interior Side Lot Line Setback reduced from 7.5 m to 6.0 m;
 - Building Height increased from 7.5 m to 9.9 m for the townhomes and from 11.5 m to 14.4 m for the apartment building;
 - Required parking (total) reduced from 50 to 44;
 - Required visitor parking reduced from 21 to 7; and
 - Required building separation between buildings reduced from 6.0 m to 3.5 m and from living room windows reduced from 15 m to 12 m.

The applicant highlighted:

- The Greater Victoria Housing Society (GVHS) is a registered, charitable non-profit that houses 1,200 seniors, people who require assisted living and families. The GVHS owns the subject property.
- The current building does not effectively meet the needs of the tenants; there is no elevator, the bathrooms are too small and there is noise transference. Additionally, there is a current housing crisis in the region; this underutilized land should be used more efficiently by increasing the number of units provided. The GVHS would like to build a new, modern facility as opposed to upgrading the existing, outdated building.
- The GVHS is working with Townley Lodge tenants on a case-by-case basis to create customized moving plans. Opportunities also exist for tenants to move to alternative and comparable GVHS housing stock.
- The proposal includes designing to the Passivehouse Standard, which may be the first of its kind in the region. Passivehouse Standards produce high-performance, durable and resilient buildings with up to 90% reduced energy use below code compliance, provide improved air quality levels and result in an increase in comfort by regulating temperature fluctuations.
- All proposed buildings are sited as far south as possible in order to provide more space to the neighbours on the north side of the subject property.
- Internal green spaces, common areas, paths, a play area and gardening opportunities are proposed. Some units will be provided private outdoor patio areas.
- Access and egress will be from Townley Street.
- One storey of underground parking is proposed with additional surface parking, including visitor parking, located to the rear of the property.
- While there will be some shadow impact in the winter, cloud cover will help to minimize the effect. Attempts have been made to minimize shadow impacts to north neighbours.
- Townhouses will include windows facing east and west to allow for sunshine in the a.m. and p.m.
- All north-facing windows will be smaller in size and will be treated with frit to ensure privacy.
- The covered main entrance of the apartment building will be highlighted by including a three storey stucco installment with exterior wood siding bringing activity and animation to the street.
- The apartment building plans were reduced by two units in order to step the fourth floor back and reduce impacts to the north. The fourth floor would be stepped back on the south side to provide an exterior, outdoor common terrace on the south roof deck. The asymmetrical roof shape is intended to allow for shorter walls.
- The apartment building will include two storeys of a lighter coloured stucco than used on the main entrance installment to reduce the perceived size of the building and will be off-set with preformed metal panel. Asphalt roof shingles are proposed.
- The townhouses are proposed at two (B and D) and three storeys (C), will incorporate fibre cement paneling, and will include a common roof and stucco aesthetic to create a design rhythm with the apartment building. Wood privacy screens and different coloured front doors are planned for townhouse entrances.
- The Bowker Creek 100 Year Plan includes the necessity to reduce impervious surface areas for new developments as it can seriously degrade stream quality and fish habitat. Townley Lodge currently contains approximately 40% impervious surface areas, the new proposal would achieve close to 100% of effective pervious surface areas; this would represent an important improvement.
- Stormwater management will be achieved through landscape based principals using rain gardens and absorbent soils and would achieve a high level of water quality and volume treatment.
- Tree plan retention and replacement includes a proposed replacement ratio of 4:1; 10 trees are being retained, 12 trees are being removed and a total of 52 trees are proposed for the site.

- A 2 m sidewalk is proposed along Townley Street and plans are to extend the sidewalk to the Victoria Pacific Rim Alliance Church driveway, which adds to neighbourhood safety.
- The planting plan is fairly aggressive with a mixture of plantings creating a rich and textured landscape.
- A curved property line and attempting to balance the positioning of buildings made opening up the entrance to the development a challenge. Quality of space has been a goal throughout all plan revisions.
- All townhouse units will have at-grade access to the main level.

Comments from Panel members:

- Infill housing, especially in relation to GVHS properties, is encouraging.
- There are no units which take into account that an individual may require a caretaker; all units are either bachelor or one-bedroom.
- All paths of travel must be hardscape to ensure ease of travel to those with mobility difficulties.
- Truly affordable housing is appreciated, especially in light of the target demographics.
- More available walking opportunities within the site would be appreciated.
- The proposed rain gardens are a benefit.
- If Townhouse B were reversed, the front of the home would face the parking lot in the rear and would create a central commons to provide a sense of community.
- The concept of building a community with varying age groups and financial ability is admirable.
- The proposed exterior of the development is attractive and appropriate as is the well-positioned siting.
- The parking plan may be too large for how many cars will realistically be on-site; the parking lot at the rear of the property looks slightly out of place beside the common gathering area.
- This is a commendable and thoughtful project; Passivehouse Standards are a great achievement.
- The position of Townhouse C is not parallel to the street and limits space between the two townhouses, perhaps it could be repositioned parallel to the street in order to mitigate spatial inconsistencies and retain visual continuity.
- The asphalt shingle roof would create a lot of visible surface, a better quality material should be investigated if the budget allows.
- Larger windows on the upper floor at the rear of the townhouses could help break up the linear impression given by the use of stucco.
- Quality of space was obviously considered for this supportive housing project, it is appreciated.
- There is some visual frustration with the current building; the façade is monolithic and visual penetration through the site is a challenge. This would be improved with the proposal but is still limited; however, it is understandable that the site needed to be as utilized as much as possible.
- The rear edge and northwest corner of the property could be enhanced using correctly sized plantings, trees and trellis. It can be a challenge to work around existing trees, sometimes replacing them rather than trying to retain them is better in the long run.

MOTION:

MOVED by S. Birliga and Seconded by A. Beck: “That it be recommended that the construction of a 4-storey, 51-unit apartment for affordable seniors / persons with disabilities housing and 16 attached housing units for families at 1780 Townley Street be approved as presented and that the comments from the Panel be considered”.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.

NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting date is August 17, 2016.



CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.



Committee Secretary