

**MINUTES**  
**ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL**  
Via MS Teams  
Wednesday December 7, 2022

A/Chair: Greg Gillespie

Present: Andy Guiry; Brad Forth; Jacy Lee; Illarion Gallant; Dorian Resner

Guests: Adam Cooper, Nicholas Standeven, Kari Gandi, Colin Harper and Sean Leogreen, applicants.

Staff: Gina Lyons, Senior Planner; Megan MacDonald, Senior Committee Clerk

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**CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**MOVED by A. Guiry and Seconded by J. Lee: "That the Minutes of the Advisory Design Panel meeting dated November 2, 2022 be adopted."**

**CARRIED**

**4011 RAINBOW STREET**

Application by Abstract Developments Inc.  
This application is to construct a multi-unit, multi-building townhome project.

**Legal Description:**

**Planning File:** DPR00889/REZ00701  
**Planning Staff:** Gina Lyons, Senior Planner

**Comments from the Planner:**

- Rezoning and development permit application for a 26 unit townhome in North Quadra and within the Christmas Hill Slope Action Plan (CHSAP).
- The Official Community Plan (OCP) designates this parcel for up to 4 storeys.
- The CHSAP Policy identifies a Garry Oak ecosystem with specimen trees and identifies the site for mixed use residential with the retention of specimen trees.
- Variances for setbacks, building separation, parking and visitor parking are requested.
- Planning is seeking input from the panel on form, character, massing, site planning and landscape design.

**Comments from the applicant:**

- The application will preserve the sizeable Garry Oak specimen trees on site.
- Subject property is 1.3 acres, which is currently zoned RS-6 Single Family; a subdivision could yield between 5-10 lots.

- This property is in the Agricultural Land Reserve; however it is exempt as it is under 2 acres.
- OCP designation of “neighborhood” considers forms of development from single family up to 4 storeys. The site is located less than 100m from McKenzie, so it may fall within the Centres, Corridors and Villages planning framework currently underway with staff.
- Christmas Hill Slopes Action Plan – Policy Context:
  - Future Land Use Map: Mixed Residential considers cluster housing, townhomes, and small lot subdivision at a density beyond 18 units per hectare when Garry Oak’s are preserved;
  - Preserve Garry Oak ecosystems and maintain rocky character and other environmentally significant features;
  - Consider buffers and secure additional open space;
  - Acknowledge the potential for development; and
  - Consider housing that is innovative/high density and preserves open space.
- The application is in line with Saanich Housing Strategy Action 3.1A - Develop a “Missing Middle” Housing Program within neighbourhoods that fills the gap between single family dwellings and larger scale apartments and implement through tools such as policies, bylaw amendments, and design guidelines. There has been a lack of townhome developments in Saanich in recent years. More townhomes are needed to support the missing middle.
- The neighbouring property to the east are two concrete high rise buildings. Traditional single-family dwelling (SDF) are located to the west; and modern SFD to the north. A 6 Storey development is currently being proposed to the south.
- The proposal will create a transition from higher density multi-family on perimeter of the neighbourhood to the 2 and 3 storey single family homes to the north and west.
- To align with the CHSAP, the proposal plans to preserve Garry Oak ecosystems, maintain rocky character and other environmentally significant features; consider buffers and secure additional open space. The original layout resulted in a loss of a cluster of Garry Oaks in the centre of the site; this was not supported by the community association. Further revisions have allowed for better retention of trees, more buffers and additional open space.
- Site Design: The Final Concept
  - 26 three bedroom, family friendly townhomes with 1 or 2 car parking;
  - 32% lot coverage with 25% open space;
  - 5 on site visitor car parking spaces;
  - 4 new on street parking stalls;
  - A new sidewalk along the frontage;
  - Specimen Garry Oaks preserved; and
  - A natural state covenant area with Garry Oak meadow restoration efforts.
- Landscape Design: The Special Features Final Concept
  - Two new natural state covenant areas with restoration efforts, retention of specimen Garry Oaks and protection via split rail fencing;
  - A crushed aggregate walking loop on the hill, with timber steps and retaining wall, providing access to Building B and recreation for residents;
  - Picnic tables at the top of the hill for resident use, providing mountain views;
  - Two wooden arbours will frame key views into the site;
  - Porous paving in drive aisles with stormwater retention on site;
  - Layered landscaping in decorative concrete planters along the street frontage with street trees to shade the new sidewalk and retention of a specimen Garry Oak;
  - New natural state covenant will close the gap and create a contiguous covenant area with the properties to the south and east; and
  - Garry Oak seed mix will be used to restore the meadow.

- Building Design:
  - Six structures comprised of contemporary three storey flat roof buildings with natural looking materials to reflect the context of the site.
  - The exterior will include a shingle style siding, with a semi-translucent finish to give the material a washed out/beachy style finish; complimented by white cementitious lap siding to help distinguish individual homes and break up massing of the homes.
  - Special entry details including roof overhangs and recessed alcoves clad in wood look materials to compliment other material choices.
  - Layered concrete planting beds at entries and individual connections to the sidewalk helps to make each unit feel more like a single-family home.
  - Each unit will have a one or two car garage and three bedrooms on the top floor.

**In response to questions and comments from the Panel, it was noted:**

- The preservation of the onsite Garry Oak trees is commendable, the revision of the layout to preserve more trees following community association consultation is good.
- The setback on the street allows for yard space and a similar setback to the surrounding buildings. The walking loop on the hill and other areas will allow for connection to nature.
- Connection/creation of the pedestrian pathway is appreciated. A gazebo in this area could be perceived as a public space.
- The arbour will frame the mailboxes and close in the site, deter those who want to traverse.
- The location of the electrical room may limit the opportunity for pedestrians to see cars while exiting the property from the laneway. It would be beneficial to relocate this structure.
- The developer has built similar townhome layouts previously. The location of bedrooms has not been an issue acoustically in the similar developments.
- There is an opportunity for additional storage on level 3 in the bulkhead above the washer and dryer; this space should be designed for convenience and storage of items.
- Creation of a new sidewalk in this area is important; there are many pedestrians who currently must walk on the road.
- Landscape plan is attractive; saving the existing Garry Oak trees is appreciated.
- The concrete patio placed between the eaves is great form.
- The covenant protected area bordering the park and the proposed pathway in the northeast is appreciated. This is a great opportunity to extend and enhance the natural area.
- Creating a wider area for cars from the street between the buildings would be ideal.
- Locating the washer and dryer on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor is fantastic; this makes laundry easier.
- The tiered concrete landscape planting beds and gates will provide privacy and separation for each patio. The applicant does not anticipate general public recreation purposes here.
- Building E has an opportunity for a continuous grade between the den/bedroom and the bathroom; this would increase accessibility. The townhouse form is extremely challenging to make accessible as there are stairs. While it would be possible for someone to visit the main floor, townhomes are not subject to Saanich accessibility guidelines.
- Three bedrooms plus den is a fair size; each unit will be approximately 1300-1700 ft<sup>2</sup>.
- Bike parking is in the garage, as well as a proposed visitor bike parking.
- The garage will meet EV bylaw requirement for energized stalls in all homes.
- Garbage collection and compost bins will be stored in each garage. There is sufficient space for the garbage truck to access the driveway for pickup.
- Parks has requested additional details related to retention of the specimen trees. A structural engineer has been engaged to prove that a cantilevered slab can be used to avoid the root protection zones to save trees and prove a viable solution to build foundations.
- This density was thought to be gentle infill which is likely acceptable to neighbours.
- Panel members expressed appreciation for saving the trees and addressing housing issues.

- There is a lack of windows in the den of some end units, this comes down to the grade/slope of the lot and an inability to fit windows in these units.
- There is a great sense of individual entry for buildings A & B.
- Questions were raised around placement of the buildings, much of which came down to tree retention and minimizing setback variance requests.
- Two covenant areas will allow for some natural state while recognizing an amenity for onsite use. Offering the amenity space is appreciated.

**MOVED by J. Lee and Seconded by A. Guiry: “That it be recommended that the application for 4011 Rainbow Street to construct a 6 building, 26-unit townhome project be approved subject to the following consideration:**

**a) provide additional greenery in the internal driveways/corridors.”**

**CARRIED.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:23 p.m.

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**CHAIR, Greg Gillespie**

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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**COMMITTEE SECRETARY**