

AGENDA
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL
To be held virtually via MS Teams
Wednesday December 04, 2024 at 1:00 PM

The District of Saanich lies within the territories of the ləkʷəŋən peoples represented by the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations and the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples represented by the Tsartlip, Pauquachin, Tsawout, Tseycum and Malahat Nations.

We are committed to celebrating the rich diversity of people in our community. We are guided by the principle that embracing diversity enriches the lives of all people. We all share the responsibility for creating an equitable and inclusive community and for addressing discrimination in all forms.

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. November 6, 2024

B. COMMITTEE BUSINESS ITEMS

1. **4512 WEST SAANICH ROAD**

Applicant: Dean Strongitharm, Strongitharm Consulting Ltd.

Project Description: 12 storey mixed use development with 80 residential units.

Planning File: DPR00971 and REZ00717

Planner: Gina Lyons

C. ADJOURNMENT

Next Meeting: December 18, 2024 at 1:00 PM

In order to ensure a quorum, please contact Megan MacDonald at 250-475-5494 ext. 3430 or
megan.macdonald@saanich.ca if you are unable to attend.

MINUTES
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL
Held electronically via MS Teams
Wednesday November 6, 2024 at 1:00 pm.

Chair: Greg Gillespie

Present: Stephen Deglow, Brad Forth, Matthew Jarvis, Will Kryzmowski and Jacy Lee

Regrets: Kimberly Simpson

Guests: Mike Jones and Jamie Gill, Seba Construction; and Tim Rodier, Outline Design

Staff: Christine Rickards, Planner and Megan MacDonald, Senior Committee Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED by J. Lee and Seconded by W. Kryzmowski: “That the Minutes of the Advisory Design Panel meeting held on October 2, 2024, be adopted as circulated.”

CARRIED

1899 COCHRANE STREET

To rezone from the RS-6 (Single Family Dwelling Zone) to RT-8 (Attached Housing Zone) (a new attached housing zone) to construct an 8-unit townhouse project.

Applicant: Seba Construction
Planning File: DPR01069 and REZ00770
Planning Staff: Christine Rickards, Planner

Planning provided an overview of the proposal, followed by a presentation from the applicants (PowerPoint on file).

The applicant noted the following in response to questions from the Panel:

- The current plans indicate the removal of the large boulevard tree at the corner; however, Saanich Parks has recently indicated Staff will work to see if it can be retained. Adjustments to the building design and proposed sidewalk to protect the tree may be required.
- While material changes to the plans may occur following this meeting, the feedback from the Panel remains valuable, as it will inform and guide the redesign process.
- The flex space on the lower level of certain units is not intended to function as a rental suite.
- Converting the flex space into a separate suite would obstruct access to the outdoor patio. Instead, the space is designed to serve as an independent ground-level living area for adult children or elderly family members who may require some assistance while still benefiting from a degree of autonomy in their own space.
- As the flex space is not designated as a formal suite, no dedicated parking has been allocated.

- An arborist has confirmed that the boulevard tree is in good health. To ensure its preservation, the root zone must be avoided, and appropriate protective measures will be implemented.
- Unit 1 features a well-screened and landscaped front entrance facing Cochrane Street, with mailboxes integrated into the design. Other units will have access through the drive aisle. A similar frontage for Unit 5 was considered but is not feasible due to its proximity to the corner.
- The installation of a pad-mounted transformer (PMT) would interfere with the design and reduce available ground-level common amenity space. A PMT is likely not necessary.
- Preserving trees may necessitate the removal of a unit or a reconfiguration of the layout.
- Landscape maintenance access will be provided via the drive aisle and pedestrian pathways.

The following was noted during Panel discussion:

- The Dean Avenue streetscape is well-executed, with the design of Unit 1 along Cochrane Street demonstrating greater success in its integration compared to Unit 5.
- The residents have expressed their preference that the mature corner boulevard tree be preserved. This tree, along with others situated along Dean Avenue, plays a crucial role in sustaining the urban canopy and enhancing the area's green infrastructure.
- The corner design should be reevaluated to ensure the protection of the tree and address any spatial gaps. Considering incorporating a layby or a shared outdoor space near there could enhance the functionality of the area without detracting from the overall aesthetic appeal.
- The overall design and architectural character are visually appealing, with a well-chosen color palette that complements the surrounding environment. However, the development lacks sufficient common amenities, especially considering the proposed density of the project.
- Including flexible space is a clever design choice; however, incorporating additional storage, increased glazing, more outdoor areas or dedicated bike parking could further improve the functionality and appeal of the project.
- The flexible space could potentially be converted into a suite, which would have ripple effects on both the functionality and livability of the development. It's important to consider how this space might be utilized to ensure it doesn't negatively affect the quality of life for neighbours.
- The development is a well-considered infill project, particularly in comparison to alternative small-scale housing options. Walkability and proximity to local amenities make it a positive addition and enhance the overall experience of the area.
- The Dean Avenue streetscape is visually appealing, variances proposed should not negatively impact the livability of the residents or the neighboring properties.
- The approach to outdoor living is well executed, with the patio and green space effectively integrated into the public realm. This provides a welcoming and functional outdoor area that complements the overall design.
- Placing the washer and dryer on the second level, while the bedrooms are located on the third, may not be the most practical layout. This configuration could create inefficiencies in terms of convenience and accessibility, particularly when it comes to laundry tasks.
- The innovative use of space for the rain garden and stormwater management is commendable.
- The plantings at the corridor entrance are successful, the boulevard treatment is well-executed.
- The definition of the flex space versus suite is a concern. A larger outdoor patio and a greater dedication of outdoor space would be ideal to enhance functionality and livability.
- Regardless of the intended use of the lower-level flex space; as shown it could be used as a separate unit and should be treated as such. This includes parking spaces considerations.
- Providing an outdoor common area would be a valuable amenity.
- A set of bike racks would be a welcome addition for visitor bike parking.
- The glass guards on the Dean Avenue side do not align with the architectural style. Picket railings may be a more appropriate choice to maintain stylistic consistency.
- Increasing fenestration, adding sidelights, and elevating or animating the frontage would be beneficial in enhancing the overall aesthetic and street presence.
- A path along the southern edge of the development would be a valuable addition, as dead-end routes are undesirable. Additionally, establishing a pedestrian connection from the dead end of the drive aisle to Dean Avenue would enhance accessibility and circulation.

- It would be premature to approve this application based on the current design and plans.

MOVED by B. Forth and Seconded by J. Lee: “That it be recommended that the design to construct an 8-unit townhouse project at 1899 Cochrane be postponed to a future meeting to allow for consideration of:

- **Resolution of tree retention and potential impacts on design;**
- **Further clarification on the total unit makeup;**
- **Clarification of hydro requirements;**
- **Inclusion of ground level common amenity space;**
- **Improved circulation to include a walkway at the south; and**
- **Improved ground floor expression along Dean Avenue.”**

The following was noted during Panel discussion:

- The design regarding the tree and its impact on the overall site plan need to be reconsidered.
- As shown, the flex space could be used as a lock out unit, the plans should be clarified to accurately reflect the number of units or remove the potential there could be lock out units.
- The existing trees are a crucial element of the site and must be protected. It is essential to emphasize to the applicant that the preservation of this tree is a priority, and every effort should be made to ensure it remains intact throughout the development process.
- Improving circulation by incorporating a walkway along the southern edge of the site is crucial for enhancing pedestrian flow and accessibility. This pathway would provide a direct and safe route for residents and visitors, improving connectivity to key areas and promoting walkability.
- A pathway would also help to create a more integrated and cohesive site, ensuring easy access to outdoor spaces, amenities, and the surrounding neighborhood.
- Clarification of the requirements for BC Hydro is needed, as the installation of a PMT may be necessary to meet the project's power demands.
- The inclusion of ground-level common amenity space is essential, and it should be designed to be accessible for all residents. Ensuring that the space is fully accessible promotes inclusivity and enhances the overall functionality of the development, allowing everyone, regardless of mobility, to benefit from this shared area.

The Motion was then Put and CARRIED

1853 AND 1855 FAIRBURN DRIVE

Application by JRTW Planning Services

To rezone from the RS-6 (Single Family) Zone to the RT-8 (Attached Housing) Zone (a new attached housing zone) to construct a 12-unit townhouse project. ADP member W. Krysmowski recused himself from the panel as he is a part of the applicant team.

Planning File: DPR00965 and REZ00714

Planning Staff: Christine Rickards, Planner

Planning provided an overview of the proposal, followed by a presentation from the applicants (PowerPoint on file).

In response to questions and comments from the Panel, the applicant noted:

- Currently, there is no designated accessible path to the amenity space, but there is space to access the amenity space between the vehicles in the visitor parking area.
- There will be one accessible visitor parking stall, and its dimensions comply with the bylaw requirements, with no specific aisle space mandated. However, there is some flexibility in the layout. It may be possible to remove one parking stall to create an aisle, which could improve access and circulation within the parking area and to the common amenity area.

- The grade of the amenity space has not yet been determined, but it is possible to design it to be fully accessible. This will ensure the space can be made accessible to all users, compliance with accessibility standards and provide an inclusive environment for all residents.
- The approach to managing the grade change, whether through a retaining wall, raising the buildings, or adding a berm, requires careful consideration. It is essential to investigate the impact on the existing trees, particularly the off-site trees, to ensure their health is maintained throughout the construction process. Any grading or changes to the site will be designed to minimize disruption and preserve the long-term viability of the surrounding vegetation.
- The layout of blocks three and four place the living room spaces facing the drive aisle, positioning them toward the neighboring properties may raise concerns about privacy.
- A cargo bicycle parking space will be located in the garage of each unit.
- The stormwater management areas are located at the ends of Blocks 1 and 2. Between Blocks 3 and 4, there is a small area that could potentially be developed into a compact play area.
- The Zoning Bylaw does not apply the visitor bike parking requirements to townhouses. Bike parking stalls have been included in the garage instead.

The following was noted during Panel discussion:

- This project is supportable, particularly in how it effectively utilizes the site to maximize the number of units while preserving ample greenspace. The design strikes a good balance between private amenity spaces for residents and the creation of shared outdoor areas.
- The design will foster a sense of community for the residents.
- There is an opportunity to reallocate one of the visitor parking stalls adjacent to the amenity area. By giving up this stall, the space could be better utilized by creating an accessible pathway to the amenity area, enhancing the functionality of the common area and allowing for more efficient use of the site. This would also create additional opportunities for landscaping.
- Flipping the layout of Blocks 3 and 4 to orient the living rooms away from the drive aisle would be more ideal. This change would enhance the residents' living experience by maximizing natural light and improving sightlines. Additionally, it would elevate the overall aesthetic and appeal of the units, creating a more desirable living environment.
- The design and material choices are well-executed, with the massing and height of the development being appropriate and respectful of the neighboring properties. The units have been thoughtfully planned, and the landscaping is a standout feature, enhancing the overall aesthetic. The infill development is a fitting addition to the area, seamlessly integrating with the surrounding environment while meeting both functional and aesthetic goals.
- The allocation of space for garbage and recycling is commendable; this thoughtful design will help maintain the site's cleanliness and organization.
- The inclusion of bike parking within the garage is appreciated, as it provides a secure and convenient solution for residents. This thoughtful design promotes sustainable transportation options and encourages cycling as an alternative to car use, while also helping to reduce clutter in communal areas.
- The homes are overall spacious and functional. For Units A-F, the tech space is a practical addition, serving well as an office or craft room. The upper-floor bedrooms are generously sized, providing ample living space. For Units G-L, all three bedrooms are well-designed and functional, offering flexibility and comfort for residents.
- A compact child play area between Blocks 3 and 4 would provide additional recreational space for residents, particularly for families with children, while maintaining the site's overall functionality and stormwater management requirements.
- The materiality of the design is commendable, with thoughtful selections that enhance both the aesthetic quality and durability of the project. The choice of materials contributes to the overall visual appeal and aligns well with the surrounding context. Architecturally, the design is quite appealing, with elements that are particularly well-executed and visually striking.

- Some of the side elevations feel somewhat stark and could benefit from additional features to create more visual interest. Enhancing these areas with more texture, variation, or detailing would help achieve a more cohesive and dynamic appearance.
- Orienting the living spaces away from the drive isle, would provide more privacy for the residents, creating a more sheltered and cohesive environment for the development.
- The courtyard benefits from material and color changes, which define and enhance the space.
- The treatment of the termini using a trellis and climbing vines effectively softens the space, preventing it from feeling like just a large, hardscaped drive aisle.
- It is important to ensure that the amenity area is accessible at grade, providing easy and direct access for all residents. Designing the space at grade level will eliminate barriers and enhance its functionality as a shared community space, making it inclusive for everyone.

MOVED by J. Lee and Seconded by S. Deglow: “That it be recommended that the design to construct a 12-unit townhouse project at 1853 and 1855 Fairburn Drive be approved subject to consideration of removing one visitor stall to allow for an accessible path to amenity area.”

The following was noted during Panel discussion:

- Accessibility to the amenity area is an important consideration which should be refined.

The Motion was then PUT and CARRIED

On a motion from M. Jarvis, the meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

CHAIR, Greg Gillespie

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

COMMITTEE SECRETARY