

DISTRICT OF SAANICH
MINUTES OF THE ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL
Via MS Teams
WEDNESDAY, April 5, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

Acting Chair: Andy Guiry

Members: Brad Forth; Illarion Gallant; Greg Gillespie; Andy Guiry; Will Kryzmowski; Jacy Lee

Regrets:

Staff: Gina Lyons, Planner; Sarah de Mederios, Planner; Eric Joyal, Planner; Kirsten Brazier, Senior Committee Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by B, Forth and Seconded by J. Lee “That the Minutes of the Advisory Design Panel meeting dated March 15, 2023 be adopted.”

CARRIED

801, 811 and 821 McKenzie

Application by Abstract Developments.

This application is to construct a mixed-use building with 104 residential units.

Legal Description: Lot A, Section 49, Victoria District, Plan 10985;
Lot B SECTION 49 VICTORIA DISTRICT PLAN
10985; and Lot 20, Block 3, Section 49, Victoria District,
Plan 1178
Planning File: DPR010941
Planning Staff: Gina Lyons, Planner

Comments from the Planner:

- This is a Rezoning, Development Permit and Official Community Plan (OCP) Amendment application.
- The application includes a ground floor commercial unit and below grade parking.
- The project is located in the Swan Lake development Permit Area; the area is noted in the OCP for up to 4 stories.
- The Interim Height Policy states that Council would consider a variance for up to 6 stories along major corridors.
- The Quadra local Area Plan contains policy to consider infill development where the scale and massing is appropriate and the environmental, social and traffic impacts would be within acceptable neighbourhood limits.
- The Swan Lake Development Permit Area Guidelines state that Major or Significant wooded areas and native vegetation should be retained wherever possible and that as many of the existing trees, as practicable, should be retained as part of the overall landscape design.
- Variances are proposed for lot coverage, setbacks and parking.
- There is a grove of Gary Oaks located at the northwest corner of the subject site, near the intersection of McKenzie Avenue and Rainbow Street. Environmental

Services staff have recommended that this grove of trees be protected through a natural state covenant. The application as proposed removes this grove of trees.

- Planning is seeking comments from the panel on: the proposed development's adherence to the prevailing policies which encourage the retention of Major or Significant wooded areas, the proposed form and massing as perceived from the perspective of the southern neighbors, and all other general form character and site planning comments.

Comments from the applicant:

- The site is on a corridor at McKenzie Avenue and Rainbow Street.
- This is a high-volume corridor and major transit route.
- The site is located in an area where taller buildings may be considered by Council.
- This development would provide diverse range of housing in the 104 units.
- There would be a 3.5m grade change from the street down to the site, with 1.5m wide sidewalk installed.
- The location of Garry Oak trees in the northwest corner interferes with the proposed design.
- The east setback takes into consideration the neighbouring townhouse.
- Commercial space would be located in the northwest corner of the site.
- A wide boulevard has been planned from the building to the street.
- A 2m bike lane would be installed on McKenzie.
- The building entrance is located on McKenzie.
- Multiple access points are planned along Rainbow Street. Vehicle access is also located along this side of the project.
- The northern McKenzie elevation would appear as 5 stories from McKenzie Avenue.
- The site would transition to the townhouse project that was recently approved on the adjacent lot.
- Homes will be built to meet Saanich's adaptability standards.
- Varied floor plans meet the needs of the community.

In response to questions, the applicant stated:

- The variance requested would see the height changed to six stories, taking into consideration the grade change of the site.
- To mitigate the impact on the neighbouring townhomes, the landscape has been terraced using planters. The townhouses step up on the southerly side.
- One commercial parking space and four visitor parking stalls have been allotted. Two parking spaces have been proposed at the street.
- Deliveries would be able to use the on-street parking stall.
- Garbage and recycling pickup will be located in a dedicated room at the top of the parking area. Private pick up would be organized. No bins would be stored on the street.
- The Modo stall is located outside of the residential parking gates.
- An arborist reviewed the Garry Oak trees and ranked them according to health. Some are not healthy. It is not feasible or practical to retain the trees.
- Given the site and location it is anticipated that this café would serve the immediate area with many patrons arriving on foot.
- The hallway will have an above grade exit to the exterior. The frequency of openings on the south residential side is double that of the north side. Lighting design has also been taken into consideration.
- Privacy screens on the ground level patios between the garden units will include wooden divider privacy screens and planters.

- There are two elevator cars to service all units. The long corridors would be taken into consideration as potential residents make their choice of unit.
- The bike lane proposed on McKenzie Avenue would be added as part of the development and would only span along the frontage of the building. In the future, staff would look into carrying on the bike lane as part of the Active Transportation plan.
- An exterior window at the elevator lobby will be included in the design.
- Acoustic performance insulation and drywall will be added to the hallways to cut down on noise.
- Saanich policies for the size of the building are based on use and height.
- 112 indoor bike stalls have been included, with additional bike racks located outside.
- A bike ramp would be built from Rainbow Street to the hallway. A wheel ramp would be installed adjacent to the stairs. There is also elevator access to this level. This floor is level with the commercial space and patio due to the drop in grade.
- Improvements along the sidewalk and a crosswalk to Rainbow Park would be installed.
- If the Arbutus trees were to be saved a significant number of units would be lost.

SUMMARY

Comments from the Panel:

- This project is located in an area with convenient access to transit and in a corridor suitable for additional density.
- The commercial café space is quite small and parking has not been provided for staff. The lack of loading space for the commercial until is a concern.
- A level access to the bike locker area would be best for residents to easily park their bikes and cargo bikes.
- Adding planters along the west frontage would assist with the transition from the building to the street.
- Additional plantings between the project and adjacent townhomes should be considered for additional privacy.
- A design that would make it possible to conserve some of the arbutus trees in the northwest corner should be considered.

MOVED by G. Gillespie and Seconded by I. Gallant “That it be recommended that the application to construct a mixed used building of 104 units on 801, 811 and 821 McKenzie Avenue be approved subject to consideration of improved tree preservation in northwest corner, ensuring level access to bike storage and increased planters on the west frontage, and improved loading and laid by facilities.”

CARRIED

2660 MACDONALD DRIVE

Application by Eric Barker Architect Inc.

This application is to construct a new garden suite on a large lot.

Legal Description: LOT A SECTION 44 VICTORIA DISTRICT PLAN 52449
Planning File: DPR01009
Planning Staff: Sarah de Medeiros, Planner

Comments from the Planner:

- The lot is falls within a garden suite large lot.
- Variance for height of 1.6m is requested (proposed height of 7.10m).
- A second variance for gross floor area of 152.85 sq meters, a variance of 59.8 sq meters is requested
- A third variance is to allow for a Service Level 1 drain for onsite storm water management is requested.
- Planning is requesting comments on scale and massing, and design guidelines for slope and topography.

Comments from the applicant:

- This is a forested site. The neighbouring houses are located at the front of the property.
- The current home is one story with a basement.
- The site plan shows the garden suite at the back of the property. The existing rear garage would be taken down to accommodate the garden suite.
- The garden suite would be 998 sq feet.
- A shed is proposed behind the garage, allowing for storage and additional privacy.
- The garden suite design includes an outdoor deck of 187 sq feet.
- The concept is to have a flat roof element and a sloped roof element to allow visual interest.
- The roof of the building has been elevated to provide an attractive living space inside.
- The variance requested is explained by the drop of the land (approximately 2 meters).
- There is a protected wetland located behind the lot.
- The position of the garden suite had been designed to have minimal impact on the forest.
- Seven trees would be removed. Thirteen replacement trees would be planted.
- A surface storm water rain garden would be installed behind the garden suite on the surface of the forest floor.
- Invasive species have been removed from the site. The proposed suite would be situated on a rocky dry area.
- The suite has been designed to have the least impact on the environment possible.

In response to questions from the Panel, the applicant stated:

- This is being built as a market rental unit with access to bus service. A number of parking spaces are available for tenants and guests.
- The pathway to the garden suite is a gravel path with a concrete apron in front of the unit.
- The preference is to keep the stormwater collection on the land with the addition of a rain garden behind the suite.
- Garbage and recycling will be located beside the proposed shed.
- There is natural delineation on the property between the suite and the shed.

SUMMARY**Comments from the Panel:**

- The addition of plantings would help to better define the space.
- The glazing is a nice connection to the exterior space.
- A hard surface that would allow water to pass through would create greater accessibility to the suite compared to a gravel path is suggested.

- This is a nice project and a good addition to the area.

MOVED by B. Forth and Seconded by G. Gillespie “That it be recommended that the application to construct a new garden suite at 2660 MacDonald Dr. be approved as presented, with the addition of soft landscaping to provide private space for the proposed use, and to consider a permeable hard surface for the pathway.”

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

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CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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COMMITTEE SECRETARY