

AGENDA
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL

To be held virtually via MS Teams
Wednesday, September 18, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

The District of Saanich lies within the territories of the lək'wəŋən peoples represented by the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations and the W SÁNEĆ 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.

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- August 7, 2024
- August 21, 2024

3. 3921, 3925 & 3933 QUADRA STREET

Application by Alan Lowe Architect

To rezone proposed Rezoning From RS-6 (Single Family Dwelling) Zone to Construct a 74 Unit, 6 Storey Residential Apartment Building. Variances Requested.

Legal Description: Lots 1, 2 & 3, Section 32, Victoria District, Plan 3876

Planning File: DPR00903 REZ00704

Planning Staff: Gina Lyons, Senior Planner

***Adjournment ***

Note: Please confirm your attendance to Megan MacDonald at megan.macdonald@saanich.ca

MINUTES
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL
Held electronically via MS Teams
Wednesday August 7, 2024 at 1:01 pm.

Chair: Greg Gillespie

Present: Brad Forth, Matthew Jarvis, Will Kryzmowski, Jacy Lee and Kimberly Simpson

Regrets: Stephen Deglow

Guests: Alan Lowe, and Noor Alshaiikli of Alan Lowe Architect Inc; James Partlow, Lombard North Group

Staff: Gina Lyons, Senior 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 July 17, 2024, be adopted.”

CARRIED

3921, 3925 AND 3933 QUADRA STREET

Application by Alan Lowe Architect

Rezoning and Development Permit application to construct a six-storey residential apartment building. Variances are requested.

Legal Description: Lots 1, 2 and 3, Section 32, Victoria District, Plan 3876

Planning File: DPR00903 REZ00704

Planning Staff: Gina Lyons, Senior Planner

Comments from the Planner:

- This is a Rezoning and Development Permit application to construct a 6 storey residential building with 74 units located at the intersection of Quadra Street and St. Peters Road.
- Vehicle access is proposed off of St. Peters Road with both below grade and surface parking.
- The primary residential entry is proposed to be off St. Peters Road.
- The site is located within the district’s primary growth area and on an identified Primary Corridor.
- The site is within the Quadra Local Area Plan (LAP) and Quadra McKenzie Study area. The Official Community Plan allows for consideration of mid-rise residential, up to 6 storeys.
- Planning is seeking general comments from the panel on the form and character, site planning and landscape design of the proposed development.

Comments from the applicant:

- The six-storey application will feature a four-storey front facing Quadra Street, with two additional two storeys stepped back and less visible from the road.
- The surrounding area includes a medical building, childcare centre, and both single family and multi-family homes.

- The large Garry Oak tree on Quadra Street will be retained.
- There is a driveway to the adjacent lot very close to the property line, with a fence dividing the properties. The fence will be replaced as part of the development.
- A new sidewalk will be installed on one side of the Garry Oak tree, and a bike lane on the other.
- The boulevard between the sidewalk and bike lane will offer ample space for the existing tree, as well as for three new sizable deciduous boulevard trees to be planted.
- St. Peters Road currently lacks sidewalks, so adding a new sidewalk along the property will be a valuable improvement for the neighborhood.
- A sewer Right of Way (RoW) runs across the corner of the lot, from St. Peter Road to the adjacent lot. The RoW, mandatory setbacks from the RoW, the slope of the property and the retention of the Garry Oak tree make building on this lot challenging.
- The site has a pronounced slope from north to south. To better integrate with the neighborhood character on St. Peters Road, the development will use a stepped building design.
- The ground-level townhouse units on St. Peters Road will include a mezzanine within each unit.
- A pad-mounted transformer (PMT) will be set away from the corner to minimize visual impact.
- Entrance to building and parking will be off of St. Peters Road. Colors will break up the massing.
- On the southside, the building recedes, with a greater mass concentrated in the center.
- Surface parking spaces will accommodate deliveries and visitors.
- The fifth floor will be set back from the street frontages, the sixth floor will be set back further.
- Areas finished in white will use composite aluminum, while other colors will be made of hardy board material. The railings will be aluminum with clear glass.
- Ground floor units on Quadra Street and St. Peters Road will feature exterior doors leading to a small patio with a townhouse-style yard, with screening between individual units
- Along the south property line, the parkade is close to the boundary, which restricts the soil area for tree growth. As a result, six smaller trees are proposed for this location.
- A half-meter variance is requested for the front lot line, mainly to accommodate the corner of the building due to the lot's shape. A similar half-meter variance is also requested for the rear lot line for the same reason. Additionally, the exterior lot line on Quadra Street is approximately 1.5 meters more than required.

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

- The main entrance will include a ramp providing access to elevators for units above. The private patios on St. Peters Road will be level. While the Quadra Street frontage will offer some level access, reaching certain units may be challenging due to grade changes.
- Most ground floor units are universally accessible, though some may require additional mechanisms to navigate the stairs in the hallway.
- The rear stairwell will offer access to the lawn at the back corner for all residents. This rear lawn will provide a space for children living in the large corner unit to play outdoors.
- Landscaping will be designed to provide privacy for all ground floor units.
- The BC Building Code allows a room without a window to be classified as a bedroom if it includes a sprinkler system and ventilation. While these rooms have been designated as bedrooms under this code, Saanich's policy and bedroom calculations differ from this.
- The corridor from the mezzanine bedrooms allows for access to the exterior of the building.
- There will be an approximately 3 metre retaining wall between the parkade and the neighbour.
- The pathway around the area above the parkade entrance will be accessible via stairs. Currently, the common outdoor space is not wheelchair accessible. Providing wheelchair access would be complex, requiring either the installation of a lift or a redesign of the area.
- The rain garden is strategically placed to ensure optimal treatment of water runoff.
- Maximizing living areas and usable space on the ground floor presents a challenge for providing bike parking near the entrance. Centralizing the bike parking area may lead to the loss of a unit.
- The lobby is long and narrow. It could be more spacious and functional; however the design focuses on giving as much of the ground floor space to residential units as possible.
- The visitor parking spaces could be made smaller if necessary.
- Reworking the front lobby to include a space for mail boxes may be necessary.

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

- Planning does not consider rooms without windows to be bedrooms. Planning has created their own determination of what the unit mix type is, which differs from that of the applicant.
- This area is part of the Quadra McKenzie Study and is identified as a primary corridor. This designation would allow for higher density on the surrounding lots.

Panel discussion ensued with the following comments:

- The submission of this application to the Advisory Design Panel appears premature. Many elements require further consideration, especially regarding the coordination of the drawings.
- While some aspects of the drawings have been updated in certain areas, others have not been revised accordingly. Ensuring consistency across all drawings is crucial.
- Concerns have been raised regarding the numerous sets of stairs in the ground floor hallway of the building. This design raises significant issues as it impairs universal accessibility.
- The project is generally well-detailed, but further clarification is needed regarding the use of specific areas, such as the space above the parkade entrance. Leaving this area undecided for future residents could result in its full potential being underutilized. A universally accessible outdoor kitchen area or playground would be ideal for this location.
- Providing additional information and details about seating options such as benches should be included. Aspects such as bike racks and trellises would also enhance the outdoor spaces.
- Access to the back lawn area should be available to all residents, but the current plans do not clearly outline how this will be achieved. Plan changes may be needed to enhance this aspect.
- The landscaping on the boulevard is rich, this application will look good from the street.
- The public realm, which is crucial, does not meet expectations in fulfilling its role.
- Transitional spaces are essential for fostering community, and common areas play a central role in this. This application lacks cohesive transitional spaces, which will impede the sense of community. The Saanich Development Permit Area Guidelines should be reviewed.
- Centralizing bike parking and better integrating active transportation facilities for families by including bike parking at-grade would improve overall functionality.
- The outdoor common spaces lack comprehensive planning, particularly in the connection to the building's main circulation areas.
- A few of the ground floor units appear to be excessively large. Using some of this space to improve the lobby would improve the application.
- Well-coordinated and clear site plans are essential. Providing more detailed information on proposed grades and the area above the parkade would be highly beneficial.
- The three-meter-tall parkade wall adjacent to the neighbor poses some concerns. The plans should clearly detail the landscaped areas, elevations, and specifics of the rain garden and its surroundings to help panel members better visualize the proposal.
- Universal accessibility to all common outdoor areas is necessary.
- The proposed location of the accessible stalls is quite far from the elevator, which is not ideal.
- Many units are missing entry closets, which are essential for storage. More storage is needed.
- The ground floor patio and exterior access doors appear to be well thought out.
- The first impression of the building is of life and vibrancy, the banding is nice.
- There is a lack of materiality, using hardy board planks from the ground up is not ideal.
- The sense of entry from St. Peters Road could be improved by using more inviting features.
- The daylight will be limited in unit 13, as it is tucked in a heavily treed corner.
- Setbacks and the small variance request are appropriate for this site.
- Stepping the retaining wall away from the neighboring home would be valuable.
- A dead-end corridor exists with only one exit for the mezzanine level of town house units, this is not in compliance with the *BC Building Code* and poses a risk in the event of an emergency.
- Units are well designed but very compact, with extremely limited storage options.

MOVED by J. Lee and Seconded by W. Krzymowski: “That it be recommended that the design to construct a 74 unit, 6 storey residential apartment building at 3921, 3925 and 3933 Quadra Street, be postponed to a future meeting to allow consideration of :-

- **Universal accessibility and programming of the lobby area and hallways;**
- **Universal accessibility and programming details of the exterior amenity space**
- **Façade design and materiality to address building expression, massing and volume**
- **Softening of the retaining wall interface along the east property line.**

Panel discussion ensued with the following comment:

- Access to the mailboxes and bike storage is crucial.
- The lobby should serve as a transitional space, providing a pause between the exterior of the building and the entry to a unit.
- The massing is well-executed for the lower levels and the variance requests are appropriate.
- The expression of the massing begins to break down toward the top of the building. The architectural volumes could be more clearly articulated by reconsidering the façade design and materiality to redefine the language used to express each feature.
- The language of a building traditionally transitions from a base-middle-top, which fits city context. This proposal loses this understanding as your eyes move around the building. The elevated material causes the massing to break down at the top.
- In board rooms should not be counted as bedrooms, as per Saanich policy.
- Ensuring universal accessibility to all areas of the site is essential.
- More information is needed for the outdoor common space above the parkade. This should include proposed materials, elevations and design plans.
- Smaller car stalls or a terrace to soften the edge for the retaining wall would be favorable.

The Motion was then PUT and CARRIED

On a motion from B. Forth, the meeting adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

CHAIR, Greg Gillespie

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

COMMITTEE SECRETARY

MINUTES
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL
Held electronically via MS Teams
Wednesday August 21, 2024 at 1:02 pm.

Chair: Greg Gillespie

Present: Stephen Deglow and Chris Gower (1:03 p.m.)

Regrets: Brad Forth, Matthew Jarvis, and Will Kryzmowski, Jacy Lee and Kimberly Simpson

Guests: Vincent Rizzo Kayle Rizzo and Louise Peluso of Rizzo Developments; Erica Sangster, Mike Barros and Carole Rossell of DAU Studio

Staff: Amber Walker, Senior Planner and Megan MacDonald, Senior Committee Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

As quorum was not present, the minutes could not be adopted.

3383 Harriet Road and 3442 & 3444 Whittier Avenue

Application by Rizzo Developments Ltd.

To rezone three properties from RS-6 (Single Family) to the RA-11 (Residential Apartment) to construct a 57-unit multi-family rental building with underground parking. Variances are requested.

Legal Description: Lots 1 & 2, Section 7, Victoria District, Plan 13300
Lot 4, Section 7, Victoria District, Plan 4414

Planning File: DPR01063; REZ00762

Planning Staff: Amber Walker, Senior Planner

Comments from the Planner:

- The application is for a five storey rental apartment.
- Vehicles will access the site off of Whittier Avenue.
- A multi-use pathway and corresponding Right of Way (ROW) will be provided as part of this application to connect Harriet Road through to Whittier Avenue.
- Bicycle parking provided exceeds the Zoning Bylaw requirements.
- The project has 9% studio units, 61% one bedroom units, 19% two bedroom units, and 11% three bedroom units.
- The site is within a Primary Growth Area and designated as "Uptown Core." Further guidance on land use, density and building heights is included in the Uptown Douglas Plan (UDP).
- The site is also included in the provincially designated Uptown Transit Oriented Area (TOA).
- TOA designation means the project is eligible for the minimum density requirements and parking relaxations. The TOA supports up to six storeys and an floor space ratio of 2.5.
- There are no residential parking requirements within the TOA.

- This area is designated as Neighbourhood Apartment Residential in the UDP, which envisions 4-5 storeys as the base height with potential for up to 6 storeys.
- The Neighbourhood Apartment Residential designation includes a street wall height of 2-3 storeys with buildings stepping back a minimum of 3 metres at street wall height.
- Whittier Avenue/Culduthel Road fronting the property are identified as a Green Corridor in the UDP. As per UDP policy 4.5.4., considerations for green corridors include:
 - Planting additional trees within the right-of-way;
 - Adding pocket parks with trees and appropriate vegetation;
 - Integrating stormwater management features; and
 - Reducing impervious surfaces within the right-of-way and on adjacent properties
- Further to this, under the UDP, the site is located in the Tolmie Quarter neighborhood sub-area. An important sub-area objective is to support a mix of uses and housing options that enhance the area's vitality.
- Variances are requested for:
 - Front setback for Harriet Road (1.0m)
 - Interior Side Yard Setback on the south side (0.91 m)
- Planning is seeking comments on the site design and building design. Comments on liveability, the relationship to the street and path, the design of the public pathway and landscaping along the Green Corridor (Whittier Avenue frontage) are also requested.

Comments from the applicant:

- The goal is to provide sustainable urban development in the developing area.
- The Tolmie Road intersection is designated as a growth node, providing an opportunity to enhance the streetscape and establish a distinctive neighborhood character.
- This multifamily residential project is strategically designed to mediate between the high-density urban core and the lower-density residential zone of Tillicum Road.
- Harriet Road has been designated as the principal facade and pedestrian access.
- Whittier Road experiences less traffic, making it an optimal choice for vehicular access.
- The North edge will have a walkway path, connecting Harriet Road to Whittier Avenue.
- The five-storey proposal will offer a variety of unit types, from studio to 3 bedroom homes.
- The south-facing landscaped area will enhance the visual appeal of Whittier Avenue.
- The building will feature a terraced design along Harriet Road, creating a gradual transition in scale to the adjacent lower-height residences. The massing strategy will fit the neighbourhood.
- The building's three-story street facade, with the upper two stories set back, will mitigate the visual massing, which will integrate well with the surrounding context in the short and long term.
- The architectural design conveys the building's residential character, enhancing visual interest.
- Tone and texture articulate the building's elements. A neutral base anchors the overall design.
- Flat and custom-profiled angled metal corrugation on the midsection will create dynamic visual interest as it interacts with daylight. The inset, generously proportioned balconies will feature textured surfaces, enhancing their comfort and livability.
- The upper section is characterized by a roof overhang with wooden soffits that align with the underside of the balconies, fostering a cohesive integration with the character of Saanich.
- The building will embody a classic aesthetic while adapting to the evolving neighborhood, reflecting principles of sustainable urban design.
- The site will feature an enhanced pedestrian environment, including a sidewalk, boulevard, and street trees, along with a designated loading bay and on-street parking.
- Patios will offer direct access to the sidewalks, complemented by an accessible pathway.
- The L-shaped frontage along Whittier Avenue will create a dedicated outdoor amenity area.
- The garbage and recycling facilities will be located at the base of the ramp, with three dedicated bike storage rooms that include provisions for accommodating larger bicycles.
- The main floor will feature the lobby and 11 residential units, with a dedicated bike room situated in the northeast corner. Two- and three-bedroom units will be located at the corner positions.
- Elevated landscaping and planters will delineate the patio areas.
- The units are vertically aligned, with daylighting incorporated at the corridor ends of all hallways.

- The building will adhere to Step 3 of the *Building Code*, featuring motion-activated LED lighting in common areas. Zero-carbon performance standards will be adhered to, prioritizing sustainability. The design will integrate seamlessly with the surrounding neighborhood.
- The landscape design is organized in a geometric layout, incorporating three key elements: raised concrete planters, pavers for hard surfaces, and low planting to soften the built form and enhance the natural environment. Raised planters on concrete slabs will be sufficiently elevated to accommodate tree planting.
- Trees will provide shade, enhancing the comfort and usability of the shared space.
- A rain garden will be positioned parallel to the multi-use trail.
- Trees will be strategically placed on either side of the main entrance to frame the entryway.
- Nine bylaw-protected trees will be removed, but mature screening is maintained through retention of offsite trees. The landscape plan will fulfill the requirement for replacement trees.
- The northern edge of the site will feature a rain garden planted with native species, designed for water detention and drainage, with a gradual release into the municipal system.
- To the north of the site, a 3-meter-wide multi-use trail will be situated at ground level, adjacent to patio spaces. Despite the proximity of the patios, raised planters with trees and shrubs will enhance the width of the vegetated buffer, creating a pleasant green walkway.
- The main seating area will be integrated into the soft landscaping and feature multiple bench seats, with two access points. A hedge along the parkade driveway will enclose the space, ensuring safety and separation from the edge. A planted buffer on the side and a neighboring tree will further enhance the area's appeal and usability.
- A smaller seating area is proposed for the northern corner, offering a quieter place to sit.
- In spring, the planting palette will provide nectar and scent, attracting birds and bees, while enhancing the experience for people. The selection of plants will support local wildlife and ensure straightforward landscape maintenance.
- Many of the plants will have low water requirements, reducing overall water usage.

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

- Saanich has indicated that the driveway should be accessed from the lower-volume street.
- A more formal, pedestrian-focused street frontage is recommended along Harriet Road.
- The rain garden will act as a wet fence and trees will provide screening and privacy to units along the pathway. This screening will be visually permeable to give residents oversight.
- Lighting details for the pathway have not yet been confirmed.
- Each unit is equipped with a heat recovery ventilation system to maximize efficiency.
- The design complies with the 2018 Adaptability standards, although the 2024 standards, which will be required by March 2025, would necessitate additional adjustments.
- The design incorporates planter walls and patios, the outermost edge of which is used to calculate setbacks. The building envelope will require less of a setback variance.

Panel discussion ensued with the following comments:

- Providing bike parking at grade is commendable.
- The units are generously sized, offering a pleasant living experience overall.
- The materials will feature warmer tones, complementing the existing neighborhood aesthetic.
- Low maintenance and reduced water requirements for planting are advantageous.
- It is commendable to address this transitional zone as such.
- The applicants have responded effectively; the massing reduces the building's scale, resulting in a relatively subtle yet distinct structure. The variety of finishes will be quite refined.
- For the massing, consider projecting or stepping back the corner unit at the north corner of the building to scale down from the fifth story to the street level. This adjustment could reduce the building's scale. Additionally, a projection could create a canopy over the bike parking area.
- Attention to detail is evident in the careful and subtle finishes.
- The building is attractive, offering both functionality and livability. The functional layout and pleasant outdoor garden space enhance its appeal.

- The emphasis on pedestrian engagement is effective, with a well-considered second outdoor area. The pedestrian flow is functional and enhances the overall appeal.
- At-grade bike parking is crucial, and the ample provision of bike spaces is commendable. The inclusion of cargo bike parking is also a significant advantage.
- The layby option enhances the frontage, and the functional alley is well-conceived.
- The material variation, including the use of corrugated metal panels, adds a great design touch.
- The building form is responsive to the existing neighbors, and opting not to pursue the full six stories demonstrates a strong respect for the surrounding community.
- Bee-friendly plantings are commendable, and these small improvements collectively enhance the project's quality. The provision of at-grade access at both ends of the building is a significant benefit. It's also impressive that the landscape plan addresses all relevant concerns thoroughly.
- The project demonstrates clear management of rain gardens and roof water runoff.
- The design is well attuned to its setting and anticipates how densification in neighborhoods can be architecturally inspiring.
- Evolving to include ample underground parking is a wise decision, providing valuable space and accommodation for residents.

Consensus by present Panel members: “That it be recommended that the design to construct a 57-unit multi-family rental building at 3383 Harriet Road and 3442 & 3444 Whittier Avenue be approved.”

Panel discussion ensued with the following comment:

- The design is subtle, and the landscaping is commendable. A stepped massing could be introduced on the northeast side near the bike storage.
- The applicant could consider various suggestions to step back the massing on the northeast side near the bike storage. Stepping it back may not be the only or best solution.
- Applicant can make changes as they see fit to address this element.

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

CHAIR, Greg Gillespie

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

COMMITTEE SECRETARY