

MINUTES
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL MEETING
Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room No. 2
March 16, 2016 at 3:00 pm

Present: Mr. Ron Drane, Chair; Mr. John Gauld, Vice-Chair; Mr. Eric Barker, Mr. Art Beck, Mr. Sorin Birliga, Ms. Pat Danforth

Staff: Mr. Neil Findlow, Senior Planner; and Ms. Penny Masse, Senior Committee Clerk

Regrets: Mr. Cory Lee, Mr. Illarion Gallant

ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

MOVED by A. Beck and seconded by J. Gauld: "That the minutes of the Advisory Design Panel meeting held on February 17, 2016 be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED

CASE #2016/003

Application by Praxis Architects Inc. to rezone from Zone RS-18 (Single Family Dwelling) to a new site-specific zone in order to construct a 4-storey, 25-unit condo project with underground parking at 986 & 990 Doumac Avenue. Variances are requested.

Legal(s): Lot 4 and amended Lot 5, Block 1, Section 31, Lake District, Plan 1444
Planning File(s): DPR00640 / REZ00569
Planner: Mr. Neil Findlow

Mr. Robert Rocheleau, Architect and Ms. Kristin Schulberg, Senior Designer, Praxis Architects Inc.; Mr. Bill Patterson, President and Mr. Mike Dalton, Vice President, Citta Group; Mr. Tom Swift, Tom Swift Construction; and Ms. Carole Rossell, Small & Rossell Landscape Architects Inc. attended to present design plans and answer questions from the Panel.

Mr. Findlow briefly outlined the proposal:

- While the proposal complies with the Official Community Plan (OCP) and the vision for the Cordova Bay Village Centre, height and siting variances are required.
- The proposal would have a Floor Space Ratio (FSR) of 1.7. The Planning Department has determined that it would comply with the density requirements of the RA-8 zone, which permits 1.4 FSR, with density bonus up to 1.7 FSR if at least 80% of the required parking is concealed.
- The Planning Department has assessed the overall design and are in general support of the form and character; however, the proposal may be too dense and there is concern about the trellis which extends off of the front of the building to a zero lot line measurement. It could be pulled back to assist in creating effective facing to the street.
- More information will be required from the applicant identifying how storm water management and garbage and recycling will be addressed.

The applicants highlighted:

- The original plans proposed a 5-storey project; however, it was reduced to four storeys to respond to density and height concerns. The proposed building will consist of four two-storey, ground-orientated townhouses as well as one and two-bedroom units.
- The townhouses will have a Street presence with 3m setbacks and will include private front yards and small patios. Decks are proposed to reduce massing impacts. The third and fourth

floors step further back to ensure there are no visible four-storey walls.

- Shadow studies indicate the existing trees will create more shadow impact than the proposed building.
- Materials include brick, two colours of stucco, black trim and cedar siding on top of panels.
- The natural grade on Doumac Avenue is uneven and results in a differential measurement of 0.6m between the east and west sides of the property. Townhouse entrance stairs accommodate the grade difference and the parkade is at street grade. Due to the grade fluctuation, the height of the proposed building will not overwhelm the single family dwelling located next door.
- The Landscape Plan includes four columnar Red Maple trees to ensure views through the property are maintained. Trees that can be salvaged will be saved.
- A concrete, wave-form sidewalk is proposed at the south-facing frontage and to the garden pathways. Plantings and river rock surfacing is intended to strengthen the wave-form. Plants will encourage a coastal character by incorporating ornamental grasses, herbs and lavender.
- A garden seating space and amenity garden is proposed on the west walkway and would be flanked by stone walls. Remainder of site would be bounded by a 6'.0" solid panel cedar fence.
- Patios will be generous and will be constructed of permeable concrete slabs, patios on the west side would be set into the ground with steps to the pathway.
- Internal landscape spaces would include native and ornamental species and some edible plants, including blueberries and trellis grape vines.
- Due to soil depth challenges Flowering Dogwood, Fine Maple or Serbian Spruce trees can be considered; however, there is a small distance between the edge of the slab and the property line and roots will migrate toward the deeper soil. Full depth soil does exist around the perimeter of the property.
- Phase II is a future possibility for the neighbouring property; however, there are no defined plans or proposals at this point.

Comments from Panel members:

- There are concerns about effective storm water management due to the amount of concrete being utilized and because the proposed building takes up so much of the site.
- Negative impacts to existing neighbouring properties should be avoided and creating a friendly face to the street should be a priority.
- The density and height of this proposal is as intended for this area and it would form part of the future village.
- An accessible parking space should be included in both the designated and visitor parking areas and should be located close to the elevator or access points.
- A door from the south side of the building with direct access to the elevator should be added. Glass walls should be considered for the elevator lobby for Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) considerations.
- Curved pathways result in extra hard surfaces, direct paths may be a better approach.
- The shape of the proposed building and the line of the upper roof are nice; however, the townhouses could be better emphasized and the roof line could be reduced to better shape the building.

MOTION:

MOVED by Mr. Gauld and Seconded by Mr. Barker: "That it be recommended that the 4-storey, 25-unit condo project with underground parking at 986 & 990 Doumac Avenue be approved as presented and that the comments from the Panel be considered".

CARRIED

CASE #2016/004

Application by Mr. Barry Weih, Wensley Architecture Ltd., to rezone from Zone C-3L (Shopping Centre / Major Liquor Retail) to a new site-specific Shopping Centre zone and to amend DPR2006-00012 in order to construct Phase 4 of Uptown Shopping Centre comprising a total of 134 rental apartments and townhouses and 5,110m² of commercial space at 3440 Saanich Road and 3587 Blanshard Street. Variances are requested.

Legal(s): Lot A, Sections 7 & 9, Victoria District, Plan VIP85149, Except Part in Plan VIP85154
Planning File(s): DPR00863 / REZ00568
Planner: Mr. Neil Findlow

Mr. Barry Weih, Architect, Wensley Architecture Inc.; Mr. Geoff Nagle, Morguard Investments Ltd.; Mr. Paul Merrick, Principal, Mr. Shaun McIntyre, Principal and Mr. Darryl Jonas, Managing Associate, Merrick Architecture; and Mr. Peter Kreuk, Durante Kreuk Ltd. attended to present design plans and answer questions from the Panel.

Mr. Findlow briefly outlined the proposal.

- Generally, Planning supports the scale and massing of the residential component of Uptown; however, with white panels and clear glazing the colouring appears to be more monotone than the rest of the development which encompasses a rich variety of colours and finishes. A more successful transition should be explored by extending some of the materials and colours used in the design of the rest of Uptown.
- There is a concern that the glazed balconies may become storage areas due to space constraints in the units and a lack of available storage in the building. Opaque glass balconies could help screen this potential problem.
- There is concern regarding the privacy louvered screens of the external corridors and whether or not they may contribute to a cluttered appearance.
- The corridor lighting on the exposed façade could stand out more than intended as the lighting is bright and could be highly visible at night. There are requirements to ensure there are no impacts to the night sky in Saanich in order to protect the research capabilities of the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory.
- Planning is satisfied with the streetscape treatments and perimeter landscaping.

The applicants highlighted:

- They are pleased to come forward with this final and completing phase of Uptown. The proposed Phase 4 development includes a total of 134 rental apartments and townhouses and 5,452m² of retail commercial in an 11-storey residential tower over a 3-storey podium.
- The south and north wings will be split by the lobby and then joined in the corner to create an internal U-shaped amenity space and courtyard. Terraces will be taller at the northwest corner in order to transfer structural weight to the rear of the CRU spaces; terracing helps to form and step down the remainder of the building to the commercial realm.
- Townhouses will be accessed through a shared, raised walkway and individually through a private patio. The courtyard space, as well as connections to Whole Foods and Uptown, will also be accessible from the shared walkway.
- All apartment units stack vertically with little change to floor plans.
- Anodized aluminum louvered screen panels located on the north side corridors envelope wings and descend the building, which creates a dramatic stepped-down effect when viewed from the courtyard and will create view opportunities when accessing the corridors. The louvered screen would be on the left side of the corridor with cladding on the right side.
- Creative screening exists throughout the development to provide privacy opportunities for

tenants. Frit pattern screening will be installed on the south facing balconies.

- Public and private amenity spaces are provided throughout, included several roof terraces and garden areas.
- Landscaping considerations will maximize the use of all rooftop amenity spaces by creating distinct outdoor areas with different spatial qualities; this will include enhanced paving patterns, raised planters, broom finish and a priority to maintain a view corridor from Uptown Boulevard.
- The Landscape Plan includes consideration of Evergreen, Deciduous and Multi-Stem trees, adaptive vegetation, public ground frontage, a two-way bike lane, a bumble strip and a sidewalk.
- External walkways are to incorporate landscape materials and decorative fencing. A person accessing the commercial components of Uptown will easily ascertain public access points.
- Courtyard units have a private patio; however, the courtyard area reads as one. The primary open lawn space creates courtyard circulation and includes a meandering path that links to outdoor and indoor amenity spaces.
- Elevator, ramps, stairwells and the courtyard lead to, or can access, all levels of the building, including the parkade, bike and scooter common areas.
- The design purposely narrowed the range of materials and palette colours that were chosen for Uptown in order to distinguish itself and create a slightly different mood. Colour and connectivity will be created through building form and animated landscaping.

Comments from Panel Members:

- Improvements to accessibility should be given careful consideration; the existing wheelchair ramps at Uptown are too steep for someone who independently uses a wheelchair and it can be difficult to get from one level to another.
- Truncated, brightly coloured domes should be included in all identified curb cuts.
- There are some concerns about effective weather protection on the external walkway; the louvered screen panels will not provide weather screening.
- Pedestrian circulation outside of the building could be improved; Ravine Way should be considered for pedestrian connection opportunities.
- A food court would be appreciated.
- Through negotiations with BC Hydro the utility pole located at the entrance should be moved if possible.
- The landscape buffer for Whole Foods should be substantial and the continuation should feel as lush as the at-grade landscaped areas.
- This is a sophisticated response to a challenging project.
- A direct, pedestrian access route to Uptown from the residential units should be explored.
- The pedestrian entrance accessed from the sidewalks on Plan A2.02 should be clearly identified.
- The position of the building will be visible from the Pat Bay Highway; it should be front-of-mind that this is a gateway position.
- Additional weather protection should be considered for the passageways on the north side of the building.
- The courtyard formation is a V-shape, not a U-shape; it would be helpful if the north wing could be moved as far north as possible to create more effective separations.
- The development shows a commercial face to the street with the exception of three units on Ravine Way, seeing as Ravine Way is slightly isolated the three units are somewhat awkward.
- The corner adjacent to the residential building could be more effectively connected to the project.
- Appreciate the form, shape, and outdoor spaces of the development; however, it needs to open up to and engage the street more effectively as it is too closed in on itself. Pedestrian circulation opportunities are an excellent way to achieve that, perhaps creating a pedestrian link from the courtyard to the street could be considered.
- There is an opportunity to reinforce the podium and create effective separation from the rest of the building through materials and colour choices.

MOTION:

MOVED by Mr. Gauld and Seconded by Ms. Danforth: “That it be recommended that the application to construct Phase 4 of Uptown Shopping Centre comprising a total of 134 rental apartments and townhouses and 5,110m² of commercial space at 3440 Saanich Road and 3587 Blanshard Street be approved as presented and that the comments from the Panel be considered”.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 5:34 pm.

NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting date is April 6, 2016.

CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary