

MINUTES
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL MEETING
Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room No. 2
December 4, 2019 at 3:00 pm

Chair: Keith Davidoff

Present: Jerry Blake, Nicholas Standeven, Robert McLeod, Doran Musgrove

Staff: Neil Findlow, Planner; Cameron Scott, Manager of Community Planning; Megan Squires, Planner; Tania Douglas, Senior Committee Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair to the Advisory Design Panel called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Moved by D. Musgrove and Seconded by N. Standeven, “That the minutes of the September 11, 2019 Advisory Design Panel meeting be adopted as circulated.”

CARRIED

CASE #2019/10

Application by Broadmead Care Society (Laurie Macdonald) to amend the Nigel Valley Master Development Permit DPR00665 in order to construct a 6-storey residential building comprising of a total of 88 units including 41 licensed care units, 37 assisted living units and 10 affordable housing apartments under the current CD-6NV (Comprehensive Nigel Valley) Zone. Variances are requested for siting and driveway location.

Legal Description: Proposed Lot 2 of the following lands as shown on the tentative plan of subdivision prepared by Polaris Land Surveying Inc.: Lot A, Sections 9 and 33, Victoria District, Plan 24291; Lot 1, Sections 9 and 33, Victoria District, Plan 25469; and part of Nigel Avenue, Sections 9 and 33, Victoria District, being part of road dedicated on Plan 1375.

Planning File: DPA00939 (880 Vernon Avenue)

Planner: Neil Findlow, Senior Planner

Comments from the Planner:

The Planner provided an overview of the process to date as follows:

- Zoning Amendment Bylaw to rezone Nigel Valley to a new Comprehensive Development Nigel Valley Zone occurred in November 2019.
- The process to subdivide Nigel Valley to create nine individual development sites is underway and will be phased over a number of years.

- Two Development Permit Amendment applications for development of individual sites within Nigel Valley are in the final stages of review. The one before the Panel today is an application by Broadmead Care Society to construct an 88 unit residential development at 880 Vernon Avenue.
- The proposal is for a six-storey, 88 unit building that will include licensed care units, assisted living units and affordable housing apartments. Variances are requested for siting for an entrance canopy and for the driveway location for the underground parking relative to the Nigel Avenue/Vernon Avenue intersection.
- The proposal is consistent with the Official Community Plan which focuses on future growth of centres and villages, and supports walkable neighbourhoods.
- The proposal would provide a range of housing that can accommodate people of differing ages, income and physical and social needs. People with special needs would be able to become or remain a part of the community.
- The proposal is also consistent with the draft Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan which designates the site for mixed residential development up to six storeys and contributes to a vibrant, inclusive neighbourhood and healthy community.

Comments from applicant / owner / applicant representative(s):

Erica Sangster, Architect introduced the team working on the project. Ms. Sangster and Laurie Macdonald, Broadmead Care Society presented to the committee and highlighted:

- The Broadmead Care Society is a not for profit agency; this project is for people that are difficult to house. There is opportunity for a campus of care which fulfils Broadmead Care's purpose.
- This project was planned in parallel with the Nigel Valley Master Planning Process.
- Nigel House will move to a new block on Vernon Avenue. There is no back yard, and a large front yard.
- The buildings are hybrid in nature: there will be assisted and affordable living in one, and residential in the other. Services will be shared as it functionally makes sense to do so.
- There will be additional boulevard frontage because of the upcoming closure of one lane on Vernon Avenue; this means lots of buffering with landscape separation.
- There will be some underground parking for staff and visitors.
- They conform in height and area but do require three variances for the entrance canopy, the driveway location and driveway space for the handi-dart and Nigel bus (or other vehicle) pickup/dropoff. The entrance canopy houses a covered bike area.
- Inside on level one there are larger public amenities such as a reception area, fireplace room and multi-purpose/family room space. The main dining area will have access to a sunny patio.
- There will be a variety of assisted living units, residential care units, affordable housing units; some will be built to accessible standards. By offsetting the structure, they gain access to daylight.
- A description of the façade and materials was given; they have chosen warm-toned neutral palate of warm greys and rich browns with a solid robust ground floor and lighter upper floors. They have patterned the facades to look less institutional and more like a residence.

Scott Murdoch from Murdoch de Greeff Landscape Architects presented information about the proposed landscaping:

- Private outdoor spaces are planned with lots of plant life. There will be spaces for mobility scooters and wheelchairs to join seated areas, and the space will be comfortable.

- Onsite storm water management was discussed; rain gardens have been designed and roof rain will be directed to the lower part of the site.
- Patio space is designed on the second and fifth floors. Pavers and planters on the patios will decrease the wind and there will be cover so people can still go outside when it is raining.
- The site is complicated due to the level of the water table; they have planned a hierarchy of trees having a larger canopy of trees along Vernon Avenue and smaller trees on site.
- Pollinator plants, both native and non-native are planned.

In response to Panel questions, the applicant stated:

- The traffic study indicates that closing the Vernon Avenue lane will not have much impact.
- The project is sited lower than Vernon Avenue due to the natural slope.
- The stairs and windows on the west and east ends of the building were designed to code.
- Security will be in place as this is a mix of residential, affordable and assisted living.
- Units are accessible and adaptable.
- They will see how loud road noise is before determining final screening.
- There are four disabled parking spots. Most parking stalls will be for staff.
- The screening of the rooftop mechanical equipment is not yet determined.

Comments from the Panel:

- The project materials are done well.
- Accessibility to affordable housing is good.
- It would be good to leave as much space as possible around the disabled parking spots.
- Suggestion made to install a door directly to the washroom from the small outside deck so people could have immediate washroom access from the outside.

MOTION:

MOVED by D. Musgrove and Seconded by J. Blake: “That it be recommended that the design to construct a 6-storey residential building comprising of a total of 88 units including 41 licensed care units, 37 assisted living units and 10 affordable housing apartments under the current CD-6NV (Comprehensive Nigel Valley) Zone be approved with the following requests:

1. **The applicant consider creating access from the outside patio to the washroom and;**
2. **The applicant should ensure there is adequate space around the disabled parking spots.”**

CARRIED

GARDEN SUITES

M. Squires and C. Scott circulated handouts and noted that they are here to discuss garden suites and the recent Council decision to include the Advisory Design Panel in the review process for garden suite applications. The noted the following:

Background

- Saanich staff recently completed a comprehensive study to explore the possibility of allowing garden suites on residential properties. The process resulted in a garden suite regulatory framework being endorsed by Council on October 21, 2019. Bylaw amendments are being prepared to enact regulatory changes and formally permit garden suites.

- As part of the regulatory framework, Council supported an approval process that would include a Delegated Development Permit approved by staff and a design review by the Advisory Design Panel (ADP).

Role of the ADP

- The approval process that Council supported would include a technical and design review by staff, as well as design review carried out by the ADP. The ADP would provide comments to staff to inform their decision on development permit applications for garden suites.
- The ADP is uniquely suited to providing qualified input on garden suite applications. As an existing committee of Council with a mandate to provide advice on the design merits of development plans, the ADP is well positioned to offer timely and meaningful feedback on building and site design.
- The collective expertise of the members in architecture, landscape architecture, building, and accessibility for people with disabilities ensures that the panel can provide strong technical advice to staff that will aid with decision-making.

How the process would work

- The review process for garden suites would be similar to the current DP process and that the role of the ADP will be similar as well. The steps in the process will likely include:
 - Staff undertaking a technical and design review based on zoning regulations and the design guidelines. A summary of this review would be presented to the ADP.
 - The ADP completing a design review based on the Design Guidelines for Garden Suites. Their motions/comments would be captured in the minutes and provided to the Planner and the Manager of Community Planning.
 - The ADP could request to revisit an application once changes have been made.
 - Informed by the input received from the ADP, Planning staff would then make a decision about an application.
- Based on Victoria's numbers, we may receive approximately 25-30 applications per year, which would work out to approximately one to two applications per ADP meeting. As with other types of applications, some garden suite applications will be straightforward and other applications will be more complex and may take more time to review.

Next steps to formalize the regulations for garden suites

- Preparing the formal bylaw amendments, scheduling a public hearing in spring 2020 and preparing necessary application documents. Once the bylaw changes are formally adopted, Saanich can start accepting applications for garden suites.
- Included in their endorsement of the regulatory framework, Council has directed staff to undertake a review of the Garden Suite program one and two years after it is formally adopted. A key objective of the review will be to evaluate the approval process to determine how it is working and if there are any changes that can be made to improve efficiency. Included in this review would be an assessment of the ADP's role in the review process.

Panel Comments and responses to panel questions:

- Staff would do the front end work with applications and send to ADP for review when ready.
- Regarding a comment about neighbours disputing garden suites: Council has said this is a

permitted use and neighbours can comment only on the form and character of the development.

- As long as it is within the guideline, the ADP can recommend a change in materials.
- Any variances would be requested with the application.
- Panel members felt that it would be less bureaucratic and of better value to have panel members approve the design guidelines, rather than delay the process by reviewing applications. Suggestion made that a six month trial occur for the ADP to review applications.
- Staff noted that the highest consideration will be to have a quick process, and that a Panel review would run concurrently with reviews by other departments. It should not be an overly burdensome process.
- It is not known whether staff or the applicant would be presenting the application.
- Engineering will address sewer and stormwater requirements. Site inspections will be done by building inspectors and parks staff (for tree impacts). Bylaws may have to be tweaked.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 pm.

CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

COMMITTEE SECRETARY