

MINUTES
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL MEETING
Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers
October 7, 2020, at 3:04 pm

Chair: Keith Davidoff

Present: Jerry Blake, Illarion Gallant, Greg Gillespie, Doran Musgrove, Nicholas Standeven, Megan Walker

Regrets: Greg Gillespie, Erica Sangster

Staff: Gina Lyons, Planner; and Tara Da Silva, Senior Committee Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:03. p.m.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by D. Musgrove and Seconded by N. Standeven: "That the Minutes of the Advisory Design Panel meeting held on August 5, 2020, be adopted."

CARRIED

CASE #2020/12 – 970 & 974 McKenzie Avenue, 4015 & 4017 Saanich Road

Application by Eric Barker Architect Inc. (Eric Barker).Rezoning and development permit application to construct a five-storey, strata residential development, comprised of 37 unit apartments and eight townhouses. There are requested variances for siting, height and parking.

Legal Description:

- Lot A, Section 64, Victoria District, Plan 7253
- Lot 1, Section 64, Victoria District, Plan 19104
- That Part of Lot 5, Section 64, Victoria District, Plan 6916, Lying to the West of a Straight Boundary Joining the Points of Bisection of the Northerly and Southerly Boundaries of Said Lot
- Lot B, Section 64, Victoria District, Plan 7253

Planning File: DPR00732; REZ00620
Planner: Gina Lyons, Planner

Comments from the Planner:

The Planner provided an overview of the proposal as follows:

- This application is for rezoning and a development permit to construct a five-storey, 45 unit apartment building with surface and underbuilding parking.

- The site is in the North Quadra policy area and within a “neighbourhood” as defined in the Official Community Plan (OCP), which contains policy for development up to four storeys in height.
- The Quadra McKenzie Development Permit Area contains policy for high-quality architecture, which should be contemporary and authentic. There is an expectation of the innovative use of durable and high-quality materials.
- There are proposed variances for parking, visitor parking and class 1 bicycle spaces.

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

Eric Barker, Eric Barker Architect; on behalf of Terry Russell, owner; presented to the committee and highlighted:

- The project consists of a five-storey apartment building with integrated two-storey townhouse units accessible from the street level totaling 45 units.
- There are eight townhouses on the ground level, along with parking and the lobby. The remaining units comprise of four bachelor units, 24 one-bedroom units, six two-bedroom units, and three three-bedroom units on the top floor.
- The fifth floor is set back to reduce massing on Saanich road and to create a residential feel. Due to the fifth floor setback, a communal deck is available on the fourth and fifth floors.
- The lobby situates on the corner.
- Various materiality articulates a series of elements to create warmth, interest and excitement. There is brick facing, Hardie panel, high-density fibre cement, composite wood panel and stucco.
- There is a site dedication of 17 feet to widen McKenzie Avenue. The sidewalk will carry on from the apartment building next door (McKenzie Walk) and create an interface.
- From the view of McKenzie Walk, the project transitions from the two-storey townhouses to the five-storey building. The townhouses are accessible off of McKenzie via a path. The rest of the building is behind extensive glazing.
- There are balconies on each of the townhouses. The townhouses range from 1200-1500 square feet and are each three bedrooms.
- From the north view, there is landscaping to screen cars.
- The space between the second floor of the townhouses and the building is a level two communal deck covering parked cars.
- The building's western side on Saanich Road is extended by five feet and contains a brick face. The drive-through is off of Saanich Road as well. There are currently five driveways accessing these properties; once this project is complete, there will be one.
- The proposal calls for 41 parking stalls for 45 units.
- The townhouses will have patios and yards and are accessible from the parking area as well.
- The spacious lobby is on the corner and will contain a large patio. There is a communal barbeque area.
- The bike parking is celebrated with big windows and 49 bike stalls. Each townhouse has a bike stall within the unit.
- There is a communal recreation area on the second level as the client wanted a family-oriented building.
- The third level has a typical corridor, stairwells and elevator. Each unit has a deck.
- The fourth floor is similar to the third level, except there is no corner unit.
- The fifth floor contains large deck areas for the units due to the setback. The elevator opens to the outdoors and accesses the main deck.
- The parking comes in under the building and provides a courtyard; the trees will provide a buffer.

- On the Saanich Road frontage, the townhouses have gardens, fencing, arbours and individual walkways that come out to the street with river rock border to create physical separation.
- Raised planters cordon off the corner plaza with small trees and permanent furniture.
- Saanich was adamant that the corner was not to be paved. The development has proposed these amenities: the coordinated four trees on McKenzie Avenue, grass boulevard, frontage for the bicycle lane, townhouse rain garden along McKenzie Avenue, and functioning stormwater feature similar to the next building for continuity purposes.
- There is sidewalk access to the townhouse units, fencing and screening between the townhouse units that create private entrances and gardens.
- The fifth floor has a divided walkway that separates with freestanding planters. The little planters will be large enough to grow small trees.
- The communal space between the buildings gives front to backlight opportunity. There is a hard surface space area, indoor/outdoor flow connected with a lawn and concrete slab paving. The area ends with a quiet seating spot that has a small water feature.
- There are two trellises for vines to aid in separation.
- Parking is a 0.9 parking ratio. This project plans for a Modo carshare on-site and membership included with each unit to mitigate the parking ratio.

In response to questions, the applicant stated:

- Indoor and outdoor shared amenity space are accessible from the hall.
- There is no frontage dedication on Saanich Road; the curb line is unchanged as the sidewalk meanders around the trees.
- All exterior doors are electric.
- Consideration will be given to revising the visitor and small car parking stalls and perhaps reconfiguring into accessible parking stalls.
- The parking area's height is ten feet; a small recycle/garbage truck will access bins.

Comments from the Panel:

- Successful job interfacing with the public realm, particularly on the Saanich Road frontage and keeping with the neighbourhood character.
- Consideration could be given to having a convenience door for the bike room, or having access to it from the parkade would be best.
- Landscape walls or address monuments on the corner near the main residential lobby would be useful.
- Massing transitions successfully, setbacks are restrained.
- Appreciate the different materials to give character.
- An interesting strategy to the entrances on the fifth floor.
- As it is a strata building, consideration may want to be given to eliminating the water feature.
- The root mass is going to be a challenge with the oak trees on Saanich Road.
- Consideration could be given to making one or more wheelchair accessible units as this site is centrally located.
- Saanich Road street-front looks attractive, McKenzie Avenue feels flat; it needs more activity on that frontage and perhaps an entryway for the townhouse on the corner.
- Consideration should be given to privacy and noise for the residents when creating the courtyard.

MOTION:

MOVED by N. Standeven and Seconded by I. Gallant: “That it be recommended that the design to construct a five-storey, strata residential development, comprised of 37 unit apartments and eight townhouses be approved subject to condition of:

- 1. A more pronounced lobby entrance, perhaps including benches that address the public realm;**
- 2. Extending the private outdoor terrace and townhome entry towards the McKenzie Avenue frontage; and**
- 3. Providing a direct connection between the L2 indoor amenity space and the courtyard.”**

**CARRIED
With K. Davidoff OPPOSED**

M. Walker recuses herself and from the following application as it is within 800 m of a CRD park at 4:10 p.m.

CASE #2020/11 – 4734, 4744, and 4754 Elk Lake Drive

Application by Mike Geric Construction (Greg Gillespie). Rezoning and development permit application to construct a multi-family project of two separate buildings, containing 242 units, built over an underground parkade.

Legal Description:

- Amended Lot 1 (DD 233499I), Section 110, Lake District, Plan 8316
- Amended Lot 2 (DD 2333498I), Section 110, Lake District, Plan 8316
- Parcel “A” (DD S13027) of Lot 1, Section 108, Lake District, Plan 3255

Planning File: DPR00573; REZ00539
Planner: Gina Lyons, Planner

Comments from the Planner:

The Planner provided an overview of the proposal as follows:

- This is a rezoning and development permit application to construct a two-building, 11 storey residential development with 242 units.
- The site is in the Royal Oak policy area and within a “neighbourhood” as defined in the OCP, which contains policy for development up to four storeys in height.
- The subject site is within the Elk Lake Drive Development Permit Area. The designation’s objective is to ensure that developments respect the scenic access policies and principles and that the scale and massing are compatible with adjacent land uses.
- Staff anticipate that variances will be required.

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

Greg Gillespie, Development Manager, Mike Geric Construction Ltd.; Erica Sangster, D'Ambrosio Architecture + Urbanism; Scott Murdoch, Murdoch degree Inc. Landscape Architects; presented to the committee and highlighted:

- This project began in May 2013 with a public Open House and original rezoning application submission in November 2013. In February 2016, the Advisory Design Panel recommended approval of the project to Council. In July 2017, a second Open House occurred. The project consisted of 161 market condos, four buildings ranging from four to six storeys.
- In 2018 the project was redesigned to 152 market condos, four buildings ranging from four to eight storeys and a presentation at the Royal Oak Community Association General Meeting. In November 2018, the Advisory Design Panel recommended approval of the project to Council. In November 2018, a new Council was elected with a new mandate.
- In December 2019, a third Open House was held. The design was strictly market condos, and it did not meet Saanich's needs. Diversity in tenure of housing is needed.
- A new design team was engaged. Starting with market homeownership and introducing affordable components like focusing on affordable homeownership.
- Conversations were started with the Capital Regional District (CRD) as affordable homeownership is the responsibility of all stakeholders.
- The model proposed would see a discount to market condos, proposing 20 of the homes would be part of an affordable homeownership agreement being discounted by 15% in perpetuity. There are various parameters of the agreement that are still being negotiated with the CRD.
- The main goal is to provide much-needed housing while enhancing the location. The neighbouring buildings range from single-family dwellings to townhouses to mid-rise apartment buildings.
- Although the site is close to amenities, the area has a park-like feel that will be continued and enhanced.
- This challenging site is at the edge of the urban containment boundary and is a gateway landmark.
- The development is sculpted to raise the density to the north, reducing the impact on neighbouring homes.
- The general open space allows the landscaping to wrap around the project.
- The project is made up of two buildings. The first building starts at four storeys, the second at five storeys. They both continue up to six, then eight, and ten storeys. The eleventh storey is a bedroom and roof access.
- The resulting building form will feel naturally integrated, provide daylight views, mitigates shadow, as demonstrated in the shadow study submitted.
- The first building is concrete and has 195 units with tiered massing with accessible roof decks, private and shared amenity and outdoor space.
- The second building has 47 units.
- The underground parking will have proper sild around the building to help with the buffering of noise.
- The site has a full storey of grade change, used to provide access to the parkade and the three residential units on the lower level.
- Graduated massing settles the project visually into the setting. The cladding palette is mid-toned with natural colouration.
- The windows are biased towards the main views with more limited glazing on the north-facing walls. The building balances a striking form that has a visual softness that compliments the landscape.

- There are five key elements regarding landscaping on this property: blur park boundaries, integrate with the public realm, enhance site ecology, maintain natural site hydrology, and respect views and privacy.
- The paving in the drive aisles is concrete pavers to make a softer, more plaza-like feel.
- To emphasize the site's connection to the park and make a nice pedestrian access, continuing the sidewalk along to the old fire road would be ideal.
- The cleaned building water is taken from parking areas and directed down to extensive rain gardens at a natural low point. Any access water will flow back out to the storm system of Saanich and feed Normandy Creek.
- Rough but maintained landscaping adds diversity while respecting the edge of Elk and Beaver Lakes. The use of native plant materials, enhanced with rains gardens along the road and developing a berm along the highway and Elk Lake Drive transition from urban to park.
- To enhance Elk Lake Drive, the sidewalk will be offset from the road. Trees, grass, and berm will create a natural experience.
- The transition from this site to the adjacent properties is aided with existing trees to respect the neighbours' views and privacy.
- An existing hedge will be removed but the area will be reinstated with landscaping to create a visual separation.
- Most community amenity contributions (CAC) are proposed to avoid negative impacts on housing supply and affordability. The CACs enhance natural areas through decreased site coverage, the addition of two transit stops new crosswalk on Elk Lake Drive, new landscaped berm, new sidewalk and entrance to Beaver and Elk Lake Park, and affordable homeownership.
- Of the 208 parking spaces, 200 are underground.
- There are ten e-bikes, two e-vehicles and uncoupled parking. Parking spaces will be in addition to the purchase price.
- Total CAC's are approximately \$1.3 million, which equates to about \$5400 per home.

In response to questions, the applicant stated:

- 10% of units in the second building will be accessible units.
- There is chain link fencing along the park that will be buffered with the planting of native plant material, on the covenant edge of the site a split rail to delineate the area and a combination of wood fence and hedging Marsett property line.
- The bike pavilion is enclosed.
- Pedestrian and bicycle access is off of Elk Lake Drive.

Comments from the Panel:

- The forest texture surrounding the building is attractive.
- Responsible use of rainwater, appreciate the rain garden structure. The large rain garden will make for a soft edge to Marsett Place.
- The massing approach is intriguing, with a lot of architecture on-site and a landscape design that comes to the forefront.
- Although there is much urbanism, this project celebrates an outdoor lifestyle.
- The berm will change the experience of walking down the sidewalk on Elk Lake Drive.
- Consideration could be given to creative lighting in the exiting walk tall space in the first building.

G. Gillespie excuses himself from the room for the deliberation and voting process for this application at 4:59 p.m.

MOTION:

MOVED by N. Standeven and Seconded by I. Gallant: “That it be recommended that the design to construct a multi-family project of two separate buildings, containing a total of 242 units, built over an underground parkade be approved as presented.”

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 5:03 pm.

CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

COMMITTEE SECRETARY