

MINUTES
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL
Held virtually via MS Teams
November 19, 2025 at 1:00 PM

ROLL CALL

In Attendance: Chris Gower (Chair), Brian Fraser, Matthew Jarvis, Jacy Lee, Sean Partlow, Kimberly Simpson, Xeniya Vins
John Bourcet, Woodsmere Holding Corp.; Alan Lowe, Alan Lowe Architect Inc.;

Guests: Alvin Villars, AV Architecture Ltd.; Brad Forth, Forsite Landscape Architecture; 'Noor Alshaikhli, Alan Lowe Architect Inc.; James Partlow, Landscape Architecture

Regrets: Greg Gillespie

Staff: Chuck Bell, Planner, Current Planning; Christine Rickards, Planner, Current Planning; Preet Chaggar, Senior Committee Clerk

COMMITTEE BUSINESS ITEMS

3271, 3275, 3279, 3283, 3287 & 3293 ALDER STREET AND 901, 907 & 911 CLOVERDALE AVENUE

Applicant: Woodsmere Holdings Corp. (John Bourcet)

Project Description: To rezone from the RD-1 (two-family dwelling) zone & RS-6 (single family dwelling) zone to a site-specific zone to construct a 249 unit mixed-use (commercial & multi-family) rental apartment development in two buildings. variances are requested.

Planning File: DPR00923; REZ00688

Planning Staff: Chuck Bell

Planning provided an overview of the proposal, followed by a presentation from the applicants.

The applicant noted the following in response to questions from the Panel:

- Building A's primary access is off Cloverdale Avenue. Building B's primary access is off Alder Street.
- The daycare center's main entrance is off Cloverdale Avenue, with a dedicated lobby and seating area. A secondary exit through Building A is provided to meet code requirements.
- A concrete pathway at the rear of the site provides access for both buildings to Rutledge Park.
- Building B's courtyard includes seating areas and a covered pergola to support community gatherings and events.
- Outdoor furniture is kept minimal (tables, benches, counters) and can be bolted down to prevent theft.
- Due to the building's diagonal orientation and a large culvert at the rear, a setback is created. This area supports preservation of significant trees, and additional landscaping will be added to enhance greenery.
- The daycare includes a fenced outdoor play area with required structures. Final layout will be determined by the provider.
- Outdoor space requirements for the daycare were estimated based on square footage and policy guidelines, considering proximity to Rutledge Park.
- The daycare layout concept is flexible, allowing the provider to determine program type (preschool, after-school care) and required facilities such as bathrooms, kitchens, and storage.
- A lay-by on Cloverdale Avenue, designed with traffic consultant Bunt, will accommodate cars, small buses, and delivery trucks for drop-offs, pickups, and deliveries, keeping vehicles off the main roadway.

- Visitor and on-street parking along Alder Street can be used as temporary daycare drop-off spaces.
- The woonerf provides pedestrian access from Alder Street through to Rutledge Park via an SRW (Statutory Right-of-Way) under the District of Saanich.
- The woonerf acts as the primary connection between the two buildings, the courtyard, and the park, supporting pedestrian movement throughout the site.
- Central woonerf trees are limited due to soil-volume constraints; landscaping will rely on planters, ground-level plantings, and flowering accent trees.
- The east-side setback functions as green space and a stormwater rain garden; the courtyard width exceeds typical combined side-yard setbacks.
- The courtyard between the buildings is private, Building A residents can access Building B's courtyard using a gate key to visit friends, but the general public is not permitted to enter this space.
- Boulevard trees will be planted in natural ground, while frontage trees will be placed in raised planters approximately 5 ft deep and 4 ft above grade.
- Landscape section drawings are pending and will be completed at the Building Permit stage.
- Site setbacks are constrained by a large culvert and associated SRW, limiting opportunities to expand the site or enlarge the courtyard.
- Building facades will use Hardie-type panels in a mix of colours and textures, incorporating earth tones to complement the adjacent park and darker tones to visually anchor the buildings.
- Lighter cladding is proposed in courtyard-facing areas to improve daylight access.
- Black or charcoal aluminum mullions and guardrails are proposed; asphalt shingle roofs will likely be gray.
- Ground-floor patios for 2–3 bedroom units are kept to standard sizes to preserve landscape space and maintain privacy.
- Units include ample in-suite storage, full laundry rooms with stacking washer/dryer units, and additional closet space.
- A total of 351 bicycle parking stalls is provided, limiting the ability to include separate storage rooms or cages.
- Commercial spaces will be fitted out based on tenant requirements, with uses guided by agreements with prospective occupants.
- The leasing office will be located in Building A's lobby and integrated with amenity or commercial space.
- Unit counts in each building fall below Canada Post's threshold for a dedicated mail room; therefore, mailboxes will be located in the main lobby of each building.
- The majority of road-fronting units are designed to provide direct access to the street, in line with design guidelines. Each unit that faces the street has a direct connection to it.

Planning staff noted the following:

- Rezoning and the development permit are being processed simultaneously so Council is able to see the complete development proposal.

The following was noted during Panel discussion:

- Opportunity to relocate elevators in Building B from the entrance to the south side to enhance courtyard views.
- Shifting elevators slightly south could better align with windows and doors, improving natural light and visual connectivity.
- Additional indoor and outdoor amenity areas are recommended, clearly assigned to building occupants.
- Upper-level amenity spaces (third floor and above) could be expanded for more usable resident areas.

- Circulation, activation, and access in amenity areas need improvement to maximize social and functional use.
- Ground-floor units lack direct landscape access, limiting outdoor activation.
- Light access and privacy concerns in the central courtyard due to facing units and constrained planter sizes.
- Pedestrian connections, including the route to the adjacent park, appear as service areas; redesign with paving, aligned walkways, and landscape features are needed.
- Daycare requires a dedicated, fenced exterior play area; residual spaces near the building may not suffice.
- Project's architectural expression and massing appear fragmented; elevations and materials should be refined for cohesion, distinguishing the two buildings where possible.
- Parking, loading, and service areas compromise pedestrian connections and park access. Improvements include relocating intrusive elements, enhancing paving, and adding planters, seating, or trellises.
- On-site property management office recommended for direct resident access; existing amenity space should not be repurposed.
- Integration of landscape, circulation, and building design is essential for a cohesive and inviting environment.
- Revised layout and landscape design should prioritize pedestrian experience, unit access to patios, and clearly illustrate scale, planters, seating, and material strategy.
- Demonstrate minimized service intrusion along primary pedestrian routes and mitigation where relocation isn't feasible.
- Panel acknowledged project complexity; unit layout, parking, and building function are generally well addressed.
- Encouraged additional architectural refinement, landscape integration, and enhanced amenity programming for a more inspiring and functional outcome.
- Small improvements to landscaping, lighting, entrances, and circulation can significantly enhance livability without a full redesign.

MOVED by M. Jarvis and Seconded by X. Vins: That it be recommended that the design to construct a 249 unit mixed-use (commercial & multi-family) rental apartment development in two buildings at 3271, 3275, 3279, 3283, 3287 & 3293 Alder Street and 901, 907 & 911 Cloverdale Avenue be postponed to allow for consideration of:

- **Increase indoor and outdoor amenity space and connectivity of amenity spaces;**
- **Revised massing of buildings to promote connectivity and maximize suite livability;**
- **Enhancement of through block public park access;**
- **Further resolution of exterior expression;**
- **Increase planter sizes and expand ground floor patios on Alder Street;**
- **Provide further detail to the landscaping plans."**

RESULT: Carried 7 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Fraser, Gower, Jarvis, Partlow, Lee, Simpson, Vins

OPPOSED: None

*** S. Partlow declared a conflict of interest and did not participate as a Panel member for this application. ***

4104 SHELBOURNE STREET

Applicant: Alan Lowe Architect Inc. (Alan Lowe)

Project Description: To rezone from the RS-6 (single family dwelling) zone to the RT-3 (attached housing) zone and a development permit to construct a total of 8 attached dwelling units.

Variances are requested.

Planning File: DPR00713; REZ00608

Planning Staff: Christine Rickards, planner

Planning provided an overview of the proposal, followed by a presentation from the applicants.

The applicant noted the following in response to questions from the Panel:

- The building facade is designed with a consistent appearance, incorporating selective cedar accents to provide visual warmth.
- Additional windows were not considered for the end-unit walls.
- The amenity building is sited with setback variances due to the tight site conditions.
- The garbage enclosure is located beside the amenity building to allow truck access without routing vehicles through sensitive areas or in front of buildings.
- Access to rear yards will generally be through the individual units, as the yards are private spaces; end units may have limited side access.
- Most units have grade-level access without the need for significant steps.
- Unnecessary patio walls will be removed, and landscaping in front of patios will be revised.
- Existing perimeter trees, including some uncommon species, were retained to maintain design consistency with the site's architecture.
- The landscape design reflects a balance between arborist recommendations, environmental guidelines, and functional landscape needs.

The following was noted during Panel discussion:

- The retention of views, existing trees, and generous green space was identified as a positive aspect of the proposal.
- The placement of trees and overall landscape design were noted to effectively frame and complement the buildings.
- The smaller building at the site entrance was considered visually solid and could benefit from additional facade articulation, such as material variation or added windows.
- While understanding the desire for uniformity in layouts, it was suggested that the sidewall presents an opportunity for enhancement.
- Adding windows to the side elevation could provide pleasant views and improve the experience for those approaching the building.
- Articulation or other design considerations on the side facades, particularly along the main approach, could further enhance the project.
- The site is approached from an uphill direction, and adding windows on that elevation could provide desirable side views and enhance the visual experience when entering the site.
- The project would benefit from a communal outdoor amenity space.
- Relocating the PMT, garbage enclosure, and bike storage area could create space for a shared amenity, such as a small play area, to support residents, particularly families with children.

MOVED by K. Simpson and Seconded by M. Jarvis: "That it be recommended that the design to construct 8 attached dwelling units at 4104 Shelbourne Street be approved as presented."

RESULT: Carried 6 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Fraser, Gower, Jarvis, Lee, Simpson, Vins

OPPOSED: None

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

SENIOR COMMITTEE CLERK

DRAFT