MINUTES
ADVISORY DESIGN PANEL
Held virtually via MS Teams
December 17, 2025 at 1:00 PM

ROLL CALL

In Attendance:	Greg Gillespie (Chair), Brian Fraser, Chris Gower, Matthew Jarvis, Sean Partlow, Jacy Lee James Gardiner, Owner; Pradip Misra, Misra Architect Ltd.; Chris Windjack, LADR Landscape Architect Inc.; Bryn Walmsley, Abstract Developments; Adam Cooper, Abstract Developments; Christopher Rowe, Low Hammond Rowe Architects; Bianca Bodley, Biophilia Design Collective
Regrets:	Kimberly Simpson, Xeniya Vins
Staff:	Fiona Titley, Planner; Daniel Lake, Planning Analyst

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

November 5, 2025

MOVED by C. Gower and Seconded by B. Fraser: "That the Minutes of the Advisory Design Panel meeting held on November 5, 2025, be adopted as circulated."

RESULT: Carried 6 TO 0
IN FAVOUR: Gillespie, Fraser, Gower, Jarvis, Lee, Partlow
OPPOSED: None

November 19, 2025

MOVED by B. Fraser and Seconded by M. Jarvis: "That the Minutes of the Advisory Design Panel meeting held on November 19, 2025, be adopted as circulated."

RESULT: Carried 6 TO 0
IN FAVOUR: Gillespie, Fraser, Gower, Jarvis, Lee, Partlow
OPPOSED: None

December 3, 2025

MOVED by C. Gower and Seconded by J. Lee: "That the Minutes of the Advisory Design Panel meeting held on December 3, 2025, be adopted as circulated."

RESULT: Carried 6 TO 0
IN FAVOUR: Gillespie, Fraser, Gower, Jarvis, Lee, Partlow
OPPOSED: None

COMMITTEE BUSINESS ITEMS

3960 ASHFORD ROAD

Applicant: James Gardiner (Owner/Agent), P. Misra (Architect)
Project Description: To rezone from RS-10 to a new RM-7 Zone to construct eight townhouse units, two of which include secondary suites. Variances are requested
Planning File: DPR01083; REZ00785
Planning Staff: Fiona Titley, Planner

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

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

- Four secondary suites are proposed as lock-off units intended to be rented by townhouse owners.
- Dedicated bicycle parking is not provided for secondary suites; bicycle storage is proposed under upper decks within fenced rear yards, with bikes secured to the building in low-traffic private areas.
- Alternative bicycle storage options were discussed, including integrated exterior lockers and potential consolidation with garbage storage.
- Garbage collection is proposed through District of Saanich services, with a private collection option available if required.
- A central bicycle parking area near the accessible parking stall is intended to serve visitor bicycle parking.
- Roofing includes an A2-ply system on the primary buildings and a corrugated metal roof on the bicycle shelter.
- Three visitor parking spaces are provided, including one accessible stall between the two building blocks and two stalls at the northwest corner of the site.
- The space between the two buildings functions primarily as circulation, is split across two levels, and includes gated access to Units 4 and 5.
- The development is proposed as strata ownership.
- Fenced rear yards are designated as Limited Common Property and provide private outdoor space; all other landscaped and common areas would be maintained by the strata corporation.
- Enclosed private yards were noted as contributing positively to resident ownership and livability.
- No landscaping is proposed along the northern property line due to drive aisle and parking constraints, and a six-foot fence is proposed in this location.
- Concern was expressed regarding the limited landscaping along the northern property line, which is highly visible to adjacent properties and exposed to the drive aisle and building massing.
- It was noted that approximately 16 inches of planting width appears available, while a minimum width of approximately 24 inches would be required to provide meaningful screening.
- A Canada Post pedestal mailbox is located adjacent to the fence with adequate clearance from the drive aisle, with parcels delivered directly to unit doors.
- Backyard areas are primarily intended for the principal dwelling units, with stairs providing direct access from main living levels; ground-floor suites include separate covered patios beneath upper decks.
- Street tree locations and species were requested by Saanich Parks, with greater consistency in species and arrangement encouraged to improve neighbourhood screening.
- Additional on-site street tree planting outside of the boulevard was encouraged to infill gaps and improve frontage continuity.
- It was noted that proposed species canopy size, utilities, and rain garden infrastructure may constrain planting opportunities; however, further exploration of feasible options was supported.
- Proposed Pacific Sunset and Garry Oak species were noted as expected to develop significant canopy spread, further limiting opportunities for additional planting.

Planning staff noted the following:

- The parking area calculation includes interior garages, surface parking stalls, the drive aisle, and parking spaces at the end of the drive aisle.
- For developments with three to twelve units, the interim parking bylaw requires a minimum of one parking stall per unit and no maximum; maximum limits apply only to developments over twelve units, and the proposed parking complies with bylaw requirements.
- Additional stalls were provided to accommodate secondary suites, with the layout balancing visitor and suite parking while minimizing paved area and preserving open space.

The Panel noted the following during discussion:

- The project was supported and described as a well-considered proposal that responds to site constraints and contributes positively to the surrounding neighbourhood.
- The development was viewed as an appropriate fit for a tight site, achieving a high unit count through efficient design without appearing overly dense, and was noted as a positive townhouse infill model supporting housing diversity, including secondary suites.
- The building form and material treatment were viewed as well resolved, with height variation helping to reduce perceived massing.
- The north side of the drive aisle and northern property line were identified as visually exposed areas, and opportunities to strengthen landscape screening were encouraged.
- Minor dimensional adjustments were encouraged to increase planting strip width, including review of parking stall sizes, accessible stall placement, and drive aisle widths in low-traffic areas, without altering the building footprint.
- Additional landscape measures, such as vertical planting, trellis elements, and layered planting, were encouraged to enhance screening and visual interest without significantly reducing site area.
- Review of select parking stalls for small-car dimensions was suggested where permitted, while noting the need to accommodate larger vehicles within townhouse developments.
- Narrowing portions of the drive aisle in low-traffic areas was identified as a potential means of achieving additional landscape space, subject to staff review.
- The importance of providing secure and convenient bicycle storage for secondary suites was emphasized, particularly given proximity to cycling routes.
- While under-deck bicycle storage was acknowledged, more integrated and secure built-in options were encouraged, potentially near suite entrances or along blank building walls.
- Subtle variation in colour, detailing, lighting, and landscape elements was encouraged in future projects to avoid monotony and reinforce neighbourhood character.

MOVED by B. Fraser and Seconded by S. Partlow: "That it be recommended that the design to construct eight townhouse units, four of which include secondary suites at 3960 Ashford Road be approved subject to considerations of:

- **Provision of bicycle lockers for all suites;**
- **Provision of a landscape strip along the northern property line;**
- **Re-look of the proposed street tree species along Ashford Road."**

RESULT: Carried 6 TO 0
IN FAVOUR: Gillespie, Fraser, Gower, Jarvis, Lee, Partlow
OPPOSED: None

3561, 3679 & 3589 QUADRA STREET
Applicant: Abstract Developments (Bryn Walmsley)
Project Description: To rezone from the RS-6 to C-15 to construct a six-storey mixed-use building with 88 residential units and one commercial retail unit. Variances are requested.
Planning File: DPR01060
Planning Staff: Daniel Lake, Planning Analyst

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:

- Significant site constraints, including sloping topography and Quadra Street frontage conditions, were identified as key drivers shaping the ground plane, access, and overall site organization.
- Tattersall Street is identified as the primary address, informing the location of the main entrance and café space.

- Grading constraints were noted as a major design consideration, as further lowering the building to respond to Quadra Street grades would increase excavation, retaining walls, and the depth of outdoor amenity spaces
- The design was developed through close collaboration with the client, with a façade strategy incorporating layered articulation to break down building mass.
- Access from Tattersall Street was explored but determined to be impractical due to grade constraints.
- Primary parkade access is located at the lowest point on Quadra Street and designed as right-in, right-out only, supported by the project's traffic engineer and Engineering.
- Secondary surface parking access is provided from Tattersall Street at near-grade.
- Rear surface parking accommodates car-share, commercial visitor, and residential visitor parking.
- A flexible parking strategy allows surface stalls to serve commercial uses during business hours and residential visitor parking after hours.
- Temporary loading and move-in activities are anticipated to occur within the rear surface parking area, managed by a strata manager as required.
- Standard moving vehicles are expected to access the parkade, with some maneuvering typical of similar developments.
- No direct access is provided from the parkade to the commercial unit.
- The parkade is configured as a split-level, with the elevator stopping approximately half a storey above the lower parking level, requiring stair access between levels.
- Two accessible parking stalls share a widened circulation route to the parkade vestibule, with no Building Code prohibitions identified.
- Door swing orientation was discussed and may be refined through further design development.
- A secondary access to the vestibule is provided via an alternate stair core.
- The Quadra Street frontage incorporates tiered landscaping and tree planting to define a generous boulevard condition and reduce perceived building scale.
- A meandering pedestrian pathway connects rear parking to residential units, organized through tree alleys and planting pockets to provide continuous canopy coverage and buffering to adjacent properties.
- The pathway leads to a communal dog play area, with planting used to buffer nearby ground-level patios.
- The landscape plan includes all required replacement trees plus additional plantings, for a total of 22 trees, with coordinated species selection.
- A drought-tolerant planting palette is proposed, incorporating grasses, perennials, and evergreen species.
- Terraced stairs, integrated planters, and seating are proposed at the corner to manage grade change and enhance streetscape activation.
- The rooftop amenity includes seating, pocket gardens, and views, with expansion anticipated in a future design iteration.
- The dog play area is currently stair-only; and is not accessible a ramped, accessible route along the rear property line was identified as feasible.
- The commercial unit is intended for small-scale retail or café use, with no direct access from the parkade and limited loading and servicing needs.
- A full-size loading stall was described as impractical due to grade constraints and design objectives.
- Alternative servicing strategies were identified, including temporary use of the parkade entry or rear surface parking during off-peak hours.
- A variance to the loading stall requirement will be requested, and the approach was described as workable for the intended use.
- Some ground-floor studio and one-bedroom-plus-den units include interior bedrooms without direct natural light due to unit configuration and servicing constraints.

- This was described as a trade-off to provide separation between living and sleeping areas within compact units.
- The unit type was noted to have been successful in previous projects and supports affordability.
- Opportunities for borrowed light, such as transom glazing or increased ceiling heights, were noted as subject to detailed design.
- Generous patio depths along the north property line were discussed, noting they had already been reduced from earlier iterations to accommodate trees and pathways.
- Each unit includes a dedicated storage locker in the parkade in addition to in-unit storage.
- The accessible route to the lobby and commercial unit was noted as reading secondary to the grand stair.
- Consideration was encouraged to strengthen the visibility and expression of the accessible entry, particularly at the corner condition.
- Opportunities to incorporate interpretive elements referencing the site's history were identified, with the corner plaza noted as a high-visibility location.
- Salvaging materials from the existing early-1900s wood-frame home was described as challenging due to performance requirements.
- Opportunities for deconstruction and material donation will be explored.

The Panel noted the following during discussion:

- Strong overall support was expressed for the proposal, which was described as setting a high-quality precedent for multifamily development within village and corridor contexts.
- Adjustments to building grades along Quadra Street were viewed positively for reducing retaining walls and improving streetscape integration.
- Shadow impacts were reviewed and considered limited and short-lived, with no significant concerns identified.
- The architectural expression was described as vibrant and dynamic, with effective use of materials, colour variation, framing, and articulation, though some areas were noted as visually busy.
- The corner area and public–private interface were highlighted as successful, with integrated seating, planters, tiered landscaping, and patio-level homes contributing to an activated streetscape.
- Refinement of the building entry and corner condition was encouraged to strengthen project identity, with consideration given to signage, lighting, public art, or heritage references.
- The landscape design was strongly supported, with particular recognition of the meandering pathway, layered planting, generous patios, and outdoor amenity spaces.
- While indoor amenity space was identified as desirable, the combination of rooftop and ground-level outdoor amenities was supported given economic constraints and plans to expand the rooftop.
- Improved accessibility to the rear amenity areas, including the meandering pathway and dog play space, was identified as an opportunity for further refinement.
- The unit mix was noted as responding to market conditions, with a focus on smaller units and appreciation expressed for the provision of dedicated storage lockers.
- Interior bedroom configurations in compact units were acknowledged as a trade-off, with opportunities identified to enhance livability through borrowed light, transom glazing, or glazed doors where feasible.
- Additional heritage gestures were encouraged, with emphasis placed on interpretive elements that communicate the site's history rather than replication of the existing structure.

MOVED by B. Fraser and Seconded by C. Gower: "That it be recommended that the design to construct a six-storey mixed-use building with 88 residential units and one commercial retail unit at 3561, 3579 & 3589 Quadra Street be approved subject to considerations of:

- **Improving accessibility to the rear amenity area;**

- **Inclusion of an indoor amenity space and/or increasing the size of the rooftop amenity space;**
- **Improving the heritage gesture."**

RESULT: Carried 6 TO 0
IN FAVOUR: Gillespie, Fraser, Gower, Jarvis, Lee, Partlow
OPPOSED: None

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by B. Fraser and Seconded by J. Lee: "That the meeting be adjourned at 4:23 p.m."

RESULT: Carried 6 TO 0
IN FAVOUR: Gillespie, Fraser, Gower, Jarvis, Lee, Partlow
OPPOSED: None

CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

COMMITTEE CLERK