

**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, Attendee; Daniel Lake, Attendee

**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 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

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CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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COMMITTEE CLERK