



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Supplemental Report

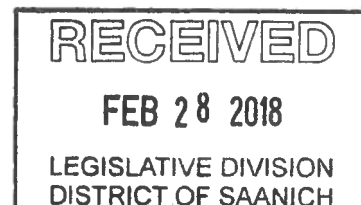
To: Mayor and Council
From: Sharon Hvozdzanski, Director of Planning
Date: February 26, 2018
Subject: Development Permit and Rezoning Application
File: DPR00688; REZ00591 • 1586, 1588, 1592 North Dairy Road and
3200 Wordsworth Street

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Zoning Bylaw, 8200 be amended to include a new RA-10 (Apartment) Zone;
2. That the application to rezone from the RS-6 (Single Family Dwelling) Zone to the RA-10 (Apartment) Zone be approved;
3. That Development Permit DPR00688 be approved;
4. That Final Reading of the Zoning Amendment Bylaw and ratification of the Development Permit be withheld pending registration of a covenant to secure the following:
 - Certification with Built Green Canada as BUILT GREEN® Gold;
 - \$72,941.14 (\$1,176.47 per unit) contribution for sewer capacity improvements to support the proposed density prior to issuance of a building permit; and
 - \$93,000 (\$1,500 per unit) contribution to the Saanich Affordable Housing Fund prior to issuance of a building permit.
5. That Final Reading of the Zoning Amendment Bylaw and ratification of the Development Permit be withheld pending registration of a Housing Agreement to prohibit a Strata Bylaw or Strata Council from restricting rental of a dwelling unit for residential purposes.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek direction from Council on the subject application. The subject application is to rezone from the RS-6 (Single Family Dwelling) Zone to a new RA-10 (Apartment) Zone to construct a four-storey, 62 unit multi-family residential building with underground parking. A new zone is required to support the proposed density. A Development Permit for form and character with variances for setbacks, building width and parking is also requested. The applicant is Abstract Developments.



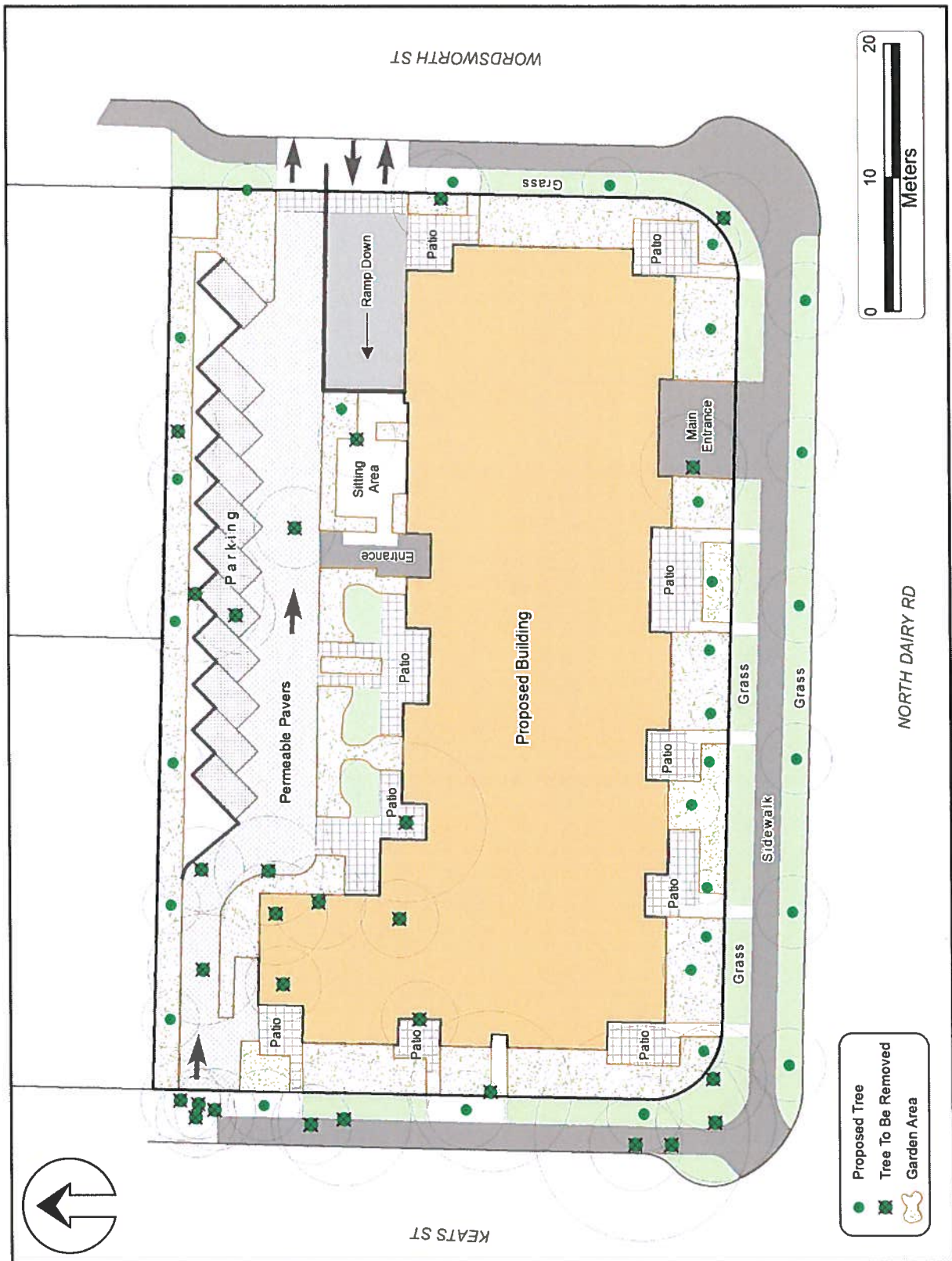


Figure 1: Site Plan

DISCUSSION

Background

At the December 4, 2017 Committee of the Whole meeting, Council considered the report from the Director of Planning respecting the rezoning and development permit applications to rezone from the RS-6 (Single Family Dwelling) Zone to a new RA-10 (Apartment) Zone, and for a “form and character” development permit to construct a four-storey, 56 unit multi-family residential building. Council resolved as follows:

“That it be recommended that the application to rezone the property at 1586, 1588, 1592 North Dairy Road and 3200 Wordsworth Street be postponed to a future date to allow the applicant to address the concerns raised by Council.”

Key concerns related to parking, siting and green/amenity space.

In response to the concerns, the applicant has redesigned the project to include underground parking, added ground level units at the rear of the building, increased the vehicle and bicycle parking ratio, added a bicycle repair and cargo bike room, added scooter/motorcycle parking, increased the rear wing setbacks, adjusted the exterior cladding and planted green space, and added a communal outdoor fire pit and gathering space. The total number of units has increased from 56 to 62 units.

Additional Information

Underground Parkade

The applicant has stated that additional analysis was conducted in collaboration with the project’s geotechnical and structural engineers to better understand the additional costs associated with providing a parkade within the sites challenging soil conditions. After taking into consideration the additional units gained at the ground level it was deemed possible to provide a parkade under today’s current market conditions.

A December 18, 2017, report by Ryzuk Geotechnical states that subsurface soil conditions consist of interbedded loose to compact layers of sand and silt overlying soft silty clay and a thin layer of glacial till. Compression of the clay due to loading from building foundations, surface fill placement, or lowering of the groundwater table was identified as a concern for the proposed development. To mitigate the settlement, the report recommends unloading the site by soil removal and construction of a one-level underground parkade. Maintaining stable excavation base and side slopes is expected to be challenging for construction and will require open cutslopes or a shoring system. The report notes that similar challenges were encountered and overcome when the adjacent Amara apartment development was constructed.

Ground Level Units

By moving to an underground parkade, the rear of the building at ground level is proposed to be converted to ground level units with rear yard space. Additionally, two patio units with front doors facing the street would be added, one facing Keats Street and the other facing Wordsworth Street. These units would help to extend the interactive pedestrian landscape to



South Elevation (North Dairy Road)



East Elevation (Wordsworth Street)



North Elevation



West Elevation (Keats Street)

Figure 2: Elevations (from plans by Low Hammond Rowe Architects)

include both Keats Street and Wordsworth Street. The addition of four units with private yards that would include both planting and grass would be attractive options for future residents with children or small pets. With the addition of these ground level units, the total units proposed would increase from 56 to 62.

Vehicle Parking

The previous application proposed 47 surface parking stalls for 56 units (a ratio of 0.84 stalls per unit). The current proposal combines 56 secure underground parking stalls with 11 secure surface parking stalls for a total of 67 stalls for 62 units (1.08 stalls per unit). Of the 11 surface parking stalls, 6 stalls would be designated for visitor parking. The impact of the surface parking would be minimized by using a narrow one-way vehicle access, angled parking, pavers and river rock. The parking study completed by Watt Consulting Group was updated based on the new unit mix, and found that when deriving parking demand based on comparable unit types in the area, the total residential parking demand was 48 resident vehicle stalls plus 6 visitor stalls for a total of 54 stalls. Parking variances are requested.

Bicycle/Scooter/Motorcycle Parking

Although the vehicle parking provided in the new proposal exceeds the demand calculated by Watt Consulting Group, the updated proposal acknowledges the sites location near numerous bike routes and amenities as well as the improved bicycle facilities that will be developed through the Shelbourne Valley Action Plan. By utilizing a more efficient bicycle parking layout, the new design provides 1.5 times the Saanich bylaw requirement for bicycle parking. The proposal includes 102 secure underground bike parking stalls located immediately adjacent to the parkade ramp for easy access. The underground bike parking room would include five additional stalls for scooters, mopeds or motorcycles. In addition, a bike room with a dedicated bicycle repair station and four spaces for oversized cargo or family bikes would be located at the main floor level with a separate entrance beside the main lobby entrance. Visitor bike parking spaces would be located near the main lobby entrance in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw requirement.

Rear Yard Setback, Massing and Height

To improve the proposed building's transition to the single family/duplex homes to the north, the rear yard setbacks have been increased and additional stepping of the fourth floor has been added. The building wings are setback an additional 1.4 m, increasing their setback from 6.1 m to 7.5 m from the rear lot line. The fourth floor of the building wings has been setback an additional 4.7 m from the third floor below and is now 12.2 m from the northerly property line. The fourth floor of the wings, facing Keats Street and Wordsworth Street has also been setback 1.9 m from the third floor below to minimize the perceived mass of the building extending up Keats Street and Wordsworth Street. The overall building height has been reduced by 0.65 m. As a result of these changes, the project would no longer shadow the rear yards of either of the homes to the north in fall or spring. Variances are requested for maximum building width and for siting.

Exterior Cladding

The previous design of the proposed building utilized more brick in wider sections across the front of the building. The revised design has a narrower brick section. This change further breaks up the façade of the building while providing more of the warmer cedar soffit and cladding.

Greenspace and Outdoor Amenities

The planted greenspace has increased by 27% with the revised design from 430.2 m² to 547.2 m² as a result of reducing the amount of surface parking. To provide an attractive and useable shared private outdoor space at the rear of the building, the area above the parkade ramp would be raised and covered. The space would include a fire bowl surrounded by seating and a wooden trellis for a sense of enclosure. It would be surrounded by planting beds and would be accessible via a ramp for inclusivity.



Figure 3: Corner View at North Dairy Road & Wordsworth Street (from plans by Low Hammond Rowe Architects)

Consultation

The applicant has stated that a re-engagement process was undertaken in response to concerns with the previous proposal brought forward by neighbours and comments from Saanich Council. This process included invitations delivered to 127 neighbours to meet and discuss the project. Individual meetings were held with 27 of the neighbours prior to submission of the revised plans in January 2018. In addition, an open house was held on January 15, 2018, to provide neighbours with the opportunity to view the complete submission package. Planning also sent a re-referral to the Camosun Community Association. No response has been received to date.

Variances

Even though a new zone is proposed there are a number of variiances as part of this application, including: setbacks, building width, and parking.

Setbacks

Variiances are requested to reduce setbacks as follows:

- Front Yard Setback (North Dairy Road): 3.0 m proposed whereas the proposed RA-10 Zone requires a front yard setback of 5.0 m.

- Exterior Side Yard Setback: 3.6 m proposed for both exterior side yards whereas the proposed RA-10 Zone requires an exterior side yard setback of 5.0 m.

Generally variances to front yard and exterior side yard setbacks can be supported when the design would enliven the street with an active frontage and create a human scale streetscape. The ground floor units along each of the street frontages would have patios edged with a low (0.9 m) fence and individual pathways connecting to the sidewalk. Low shrubs and landscaping would be planted between patios and the property line providing a soft transition between the public and private realm. In the public right-of-way a new 2 m wide sidewalk would be buffered with a grass strip and new boulevard trees.

Particularly within “Centres”, well designed developments oriented toward the street can encourage pedestrian activity and help create a sense of neighbourhood. The proposed setbacks, in conjunction with a site design that encourages active use of the street frontages, would contribute to creating a more interesting pedestrian environment within a Major “Centre” and are supportable.

Building Width

The proposed building width is 60.29 m, whereas the proposed RA-10 Zone requires a maximum building width of 55 m. The maximum building width regulation is intended to avoid creating large blank walls and to soften impacts from the building’s mass. Articulations along the building elevation and a mix of exterior materials would soften the building mass. Being sited between roadways would also provide a significant distance between the proposed apartment and adjacent buildings fronting North Dairy Road, further reducing impacts. Given the above the requested variance is supportable.

Parking

The Zoning Bylaw requires a total of 93 parking spaces (1.5 per unit) with 19 (0.3 per unit) designated for visitors, whereas a total of 67 parking spaces (1.08 per unit) with 6 (0.06 per unit) designated for visitors is proposed.

The applicant provided an updated parking study by Watt Consulting Group that compared the parking demand of comparable developments. The report compared vehicle ownership across 12 comparable sites, which resulted in an ownership ratio of 0.93 per unit. The comparison included a range of developments from 15 to 103 units in size and also assessed parking with consideration of the dwelling unit types (bachelor, 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom, etc). The report also notes the average visitor parking demand at the study sites was 0.08 per unit. The visitor parking demand for the proposed development is estimated to be 6 spaces (0.1 spaces per unit) which is consistent with the current proposal. The estimated total parking demand including resident and visitor parking is 54 spaces which is 13 spaces less than proposed.

The parking study also considered the availability of on-street parking in the area. Utilization of on-street parking was less than 50% during all times observed by Watt Consulting. On-street parking is available on Keats Street and Wordsworth Street and the development proposal would formalize six on-street parking spaces (four on Keats Street and two on Wordsworth Street) adjacent to the development site.

The OCP policies support parking variances where any of the following apply:

- Transportation Demand Strategies are implemented;
- A variety of alternative transit options exist;

- There is a minimal reduction in parking;
- The development is within a “Centre”; and
- On-street parking is available.

The proposed parking ratio is similar to other recently approved apartment developments in Major “Centres” in Saanich. Generally, multi-family sites for market housing have provided in the range of 1.2 to 1.6 parking spaces per unit, which would include visitor spaces.

Finding the right balance between parking supply and demand for future residents while avoiding excessive spill-over parking onto neighbouring streets can be challenging. Ensuring adequate visitor parking with accessible pick-up and drop-off locations is beneficial to encourage lower rates of vehicle ownership. The proposal would provide six visitor stalls in a visible location. The project is located in a Major “Centre” and in close proximity to public transit. The proposal also includes a designated bicycle repair station and bicycle/scooter/moped parking in excess of the Zoning Bylaw requirement. For these reasons, the variances can be supported.

Community Contributions

The applicant has provided a letter in accordance with Shelbourne Valley Action Plan policy 5.8.1 which requires a community contribution statement be provided as a component of rezoning applications. As part of their development application the applicant proposes to contribute \$1,500 per unit for a total of \$93,000 to the Saanich Affordable Housing Fund. This commitment would be secured by covenant with payment required prior to issuance of a building permit.

CONCLUSION

The proposed rezoning from single family to a four-storey apartment within the Hillside Major “Centre” is consistent with the Official Community Plan, Shelbourne Local Area Plan, and Shelbourne Valley Action Plan. A higher density RA-10 (Apartment) Zone is proposed for the development. Variances and a Development Permit for form and character are also requested.

The proposed apartment development includes ground-level patios to enliven and engage at street level. The site is bound by roadway on three sides and new separated sidewalks and boulevard trees along all three frontages would contribute to creating a walkable centre.

Adjacent single-family homes to the north, or rear, of the proposed apartment development, would be expected to transition to two to three-storey townhouses in the future as per the Shelbourne Valley Action Plan. The provision of underground parking, increased rear yard setback and further stepping of the building wings on the north side have helped to address the key concerns noted by Council.


Requested variances for setbacks, building width, and parking are consistent with the Major “Centre” location and can be supported.

Prepared by: 
Neil Findlow

Senior Planner

Reviewed by: 
Shari Holmes-Saltzman

Manager of Current Planning

Approved by: 
Sharon Hvozdzanski

Director of Planning


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Attachments

cc: Graham Barbour, Manager of Inspection Services

ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:

I endorse the recommendation from the Director of Planning.


Paul Thorkelsson, Administrator