



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

To: Mayor and Council
From: Advisory Design Panel
Date: October 28, 2022
Subject: May 4, 2022 Advisory Design Panel Meeting – Consideration of the Development Permit Application for 4079 Quadra Street

BACKGROUND

This application by R.W. Wall Ltd. is for a development permit to rezone from C-9 (Local Service Station Zone) to C-4 (Office and Apartment Zone) to permit a mixed use 3 storey building with dental/medical offices on the 2nd floor and 4 residential units on the 3rd floor, parking at grade.

Legal Description: Lot 1, Section 64, Victoria District, Plan 22060 (4079 Quadra Street)
Planning File: DPR00878; REZ00699
Planner: Christine Rickards

DISCUSSION

Comments from the Planner:

- The site in question is approximately 550 m north of McKenzie Avenue, and will be 1369 m² after road frontage dedications are deleted from the site.
- This site, with an irregularly shaped lot, was a former gas station and is now vacant.
- The uses across the street, to the East, and North East are all residential, zoned as RS-6. There is a small one storey commercial building to the north of the site, zoned as C1-NC.
- The proposed structure will be 12.1 m in height.
- Parking is to be located on both the exterior/surface parking and on the ground floor.
- The 3rd floor proposes four apartment units each with private outdoor space.
- The floor space ratio is 0.75, total gross floor area is 983 m², total open space is 518 m, and the impervious surface area total is 851 m².
- The site requires parking and setback variances.
- The proposed Community Amenity Contributions meet the District's policy requirements and include 10 year rental of units then revert to ownership, and a per door fee of \$2500 to the Affordable Housing Fund.
- The site is within the North Quadra neighborhood designation which supports mixed use developments up to 4 storeys.
- As a former gas station, this site had contamination issues and has since been remediated.
- Excavation is not permitted for below grade site uses.
- Interdepartmental feedback has been received by Parks and Engineering.

Comments from applicant:

The applicant team presented to the Panel and noted the following:

- The applicants have worked closely with the District to come up with a formative plan for this awkwardly shaped site.
- Secure under building parking is provided as underground parking is not an available option.
- Electric car charging stations are provided as well as secure bike storage.
- An outdoor sheltered amenity area is proposed for the broader public.
- The decks in residences face towards Quadra Street to avoid overlooking into neighbours' properties on Tuxedo Way. All units have access to a private outdoor space.
- The applicant team consulted with immediate neighbours to provide information about the project. Information was also sent out to the broader neighbourhood.
- The applicant engaged directly with the community association and met in person to provide information and address questions. Feedback from the community association was positive.
- The site slopes from the North West down to the South East.
- The selected materials are simple and sympathetic to neighbouring residences.
- The applicants had to give up 14-15 feet along the Quadra Street frontage for road widening.
- The medical practices do not operate on weekends.
- Proposed plantings include: Garry Oaks; native plants and plants sympathetic with native plants with same growing conditions; and a hedge on the east side to offer screening between properties where the grade slopes.
- The road dedication allows for future widening: 2 m for sidewalk; 2.5 m for boulevard, bike lane and hardscape buffer.
- A landscaped rain garden is proposed along the frontage that will store and treat storm water from the roof. The proposal also incorporates an underground tank for the parking lot portion.

In response to questions from the Panel, it was noted:

- Street trees along Quadra Street include a mixture of trees including Garry Oaks and Maples.
- The use of rain gardens in the boulevard was not included as part of the proposal.
- The intent was to leave the amenity space open (without gates) for the community to enjoy the space.
- The outside parking lot is intended to be asphalt. The under building parking area will be concrete.
- The Southeast corner of the building houses a stairwell and bike storage area. The applicants contemplated glazing the stairwell, or may use different materials to make it look more dynamic.
- The third floor (residences) is secured by requiring a key fob to enter the residential area. Only residents of the building will have a key to access the third floor. Patients of the medical and dental offices will not have access to walk up the stairwell and must use the elevator to get to the medical floor. People can exit the stairwell without requiring a key.
- Sizes of the apartments range from 615 – 655 ft². It is proposed that the smallest unit will be accessible.
- To widen the drive aisle would take away from the size of the building. The under building parking is allocated for the owner and residents of the building (maximum of six cars).
- The applicant has now hired electrical, mechanical, structural, building envelope, and environmental consultants and are working towards refining details pertaining to parking, bike parking and electrical room spaces.
- Staff would consider reduced parking in order to provide for other benefits such as larger bike parking spaces and increased lobby area.

SUMMARY

Comments from the Panel:

- The proposed project is commendable given the awkward shape of the site.
- Concerns were expressed about the use of Garry Oaks as boulevard trees. It was proposed that Garry Oaks be used elsewhere on the site and a different type of oak tree be selected for the boulevard.
- The Southeast corner of the proposed building is predominant and seems to be the least featured portion of the building.
- Concerns were expressed about the amenity space not having secure gates for after hours as it may attract campers to the site.
- The bike parking seems tight and its location is not ideal.

MOVED by B. Forth and Seconded by J. Lee: “That it be recommended that the application to rezone from C-9 to C-4 to permit a mixed use 3 storey building with dental/medical offices on the 2nd floor and 4 residential units on the 3rd floor, with parking at grade, be approved subject to the consideration of:

- a) Working with Planning staff to reduce the ground floor parking area in order to improve lobby, bike storage and pedestrian experience.
- b) Implementing a decorative fence and gateway for the outdoor amenity area to improve Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design requirements.
- c) Reconsideration of use of Garry Oak trees as street trees (panel members encourage the use of Garry Oak trees on site but not as street tree; a different larger scale boulevard tree is recommended).
- d) Revision of the south end of the corner point building to improve architectural prominence by adding glazing or using a different material.”

The Motion was then Put and CARRIED



Megan MacDonald
Senior Committee Clerk

cc: *Director of Planning*
Manager of Inspection Services