



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

Minutes - Final

Municipal Hall
1229 Esquimalt Road
Esquimalt, B.C. V9A 3P1

APC Design Review Committee

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

2:30 PM

Esquimalt Council Chambers

Present: 5 - Chair Tara Todesco
Vice Chair Shaun Smakal
Member Avishai Gilad
Member Eric Tran
Member Chris Windjack

Regrets: 2 - Member Alexander Robinson
Member Simon Williams

Council Liaison: Councillor Ken Armour

Staff: Bill Brown, Director of Development Services
James Davison, Manager of Development Services
Alex Tang, Planner
Victoria McKean, Committee Coordinator/Recording Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

Victoria McKean, Committee Coordinator, called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM and acknowledged with respect the Songhees and Kosapsum Nations on whose traditional territory the township stands, and that their historic connections with these lands and waters continue to this day.

2. LATE ITEMS

- 1) [25-085](#) Revised Landscape Plan - Item 6.5: OCP Amendment and Rezoning Application - 1005 Tillicum Road - Staff Report No. DRC-25-005.

Staff introduced the late item.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by Member Smakal, seconded by Member Todesco: That the agenda be approved with the inclusion of the late item. Carried Unanimously.

4. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The Committee Coordinator called for nominations for the Chair of the Committee. Member Todesco was nominated and elected Chair for 2025.

Chair Todesco called for nominations for the Vice Chair of the Committee. Member Smakal was nominated and elected Vice Chair for 2025 and assumed presiding responsibilities for the meeting.

5. MINUTES

- 1) [25-079](#) Minutes of the APC Design Review Committee meeting held on November 13, 2024

Moved by Member Windjack, seconded by Member Smakal: That the minutes of the APC Design Review Committee meeting held on November 13, 2024 be adopted as circulated. Carried Unanimously.

6. STAFF REPORTS

- 1) [25-080](#) Informational Documents for Commission Members

Victoria McKean, Committee Coordinator introduced the item, which was received for information.

- 2) [25-027](#) Rezoning Application - 621 Constance Avenue, Staff Report No. DRC-25-001

Alex Tang, Planner, introduced the staff report and Graeme Verhulst, Waymark Architecture, introduced the application and responded to questions from the Committee.

Committee comments included the following:

- The approach to the scale and intensification of this challenging site is appreciated as it brings more housing to the neighbourhood;
- The proposal is suitable for the site, especially in this neighbourhood since more density is being added;
- Massing and architecture is nice and it fits in with existing buildings. The proposed building being smaller than other neighbouring buildings helps it fit in;
- Would like to see the parking slab used as part of stormwater mitigation;
- The vehicular access proposed minimizes excavation;
- The site is tight but the landscape treatment is good;
- If anything, the proposed building may be too small. There is no issue with the form and character;
- Stormwater management may be a concern;
- Would like to see another approach to the amenity space, including its relocation to the roof;
- This is a good approach with respect to form and character, suitable to its site and overall a supportable proposal as it seems appropriate to this area of Esquimalt with respect to density and height.

Moved by Chair Todesco, seconded by Member Tran: That the

Esquimalt Design Review Committee recommends to Council that the rezoning application to regulate the proposed development of a 6-storey residential building consistent with the architectural plans provided by Waymark Architecture and the landscape plan provided by Small and Rossell Landscape Architects, Inc., to be located at 621 Constance Avenue be approved for the following reasons:

- the application adds appropriate density and new housing;
- the housing is suitable to the site and adjacent buildings;
- the Committee recommends that the impacts of winds be considered when designing amenity and outdoor space. Carried Unanimously.

3) [25-074](#) Development Permit Application – 602, 608, 612 & 618 Nelson Street and 1319, 1331 & 1347 Sussex Street, Staff Report No. DRC-25-004

Alex Tang, Planner, introduced the staff report and the applicant. The applicant introduced the application and responded to questions from the Committee.

Committee comments included the following:

- Concerned with the proposed design of Junior 2-bedroom units as many of them are long and narrow, resulting in very little light in the interior of the unit;
- The Committee recognized that while a room does not need a window to be considered a bedroom from a code perspective, bedrooms without windows are very undesirable and suggested that the proposal be reconfigured or the units be designated differently;
- Not very desirable for a livability perspective; may be a result of trying to fit as many units as possible into the building;
- Livability should not be sacrificed whether or not it is a rental; all spaces should be created equal;
- Concerned about the types of trees selected and their placement on the site;
- Design drawings and a landscape plan for the rooftop amenity were not provided to the Committee for consideration: a rooftop amenity that constitutes a significant aspect needs to have design drawings as part of the presentation;
- The landscaping plan plant list is very limited within the context of this region, plant life will be hard to maintain, it is a very industrial style of planting, the proposed plant life will shade the balconies. This project deserves more layering, more species selection, and more diversity, more emphasis on a planting design that will provide more habitat and support for pollinators and birds, and no information was provided on soil depth;
- It would be nice to see considerations made on the street frontages for more articulation in the wall;

- The grade along the street is significant and may be an accessibility concern;
- The proposal seems massive and with very little happening in terms of pedestrian experience;
- Scale is appropriate, massing is imposing; what's missing from the presentation is civic address - you might miss it if you're walking by. More design consideration for the main entrance and corner of Nelson and Esquimalt is needed;
- In terms of form, character, not enough attention was given to the exterior treatment of the building, it is large and occupies the whole block and the design lacks articulation at the facade level and it doesn't promote a healthy street-level experience;
- Challenged to support this proposal with the information presented;
- Not supportive of this submission at this time; guidelines are not sufficiently met when it comes to the exterior of the building;
- Quality of proposed materials is not sufficient.

Moved by Chair Todesco, seconded by Member Windjack: That the Esquimalt Design Review Committee recommends to Council that the application for a development permit authorizing the form and character of the proposed multi-family residential development consistent with the architectural plans provided by Formed Alliance Architecture Studio and landscape plan provided by Scatcliff Miller Murray, to be located at 602, 608, 612 & 618 Nelson Street and 1319, 1331 & 1347 Sussex Street be denied for the following reasons:

- There is insufficient landscape design information provided, especially for the rooftop garden and soil depth for trees, that the diversity of plant selection is not varied or appropriate for a residential area and lacks habitat for native insects and birds;
- The massing feels imposing and would benefit from changes to the entryway design and materials to break up the uniformity of the exterior of the building as per the multifamily residential guidelines. Carried Unanimously.

Moved by Member Gilad, seconded by Member Tran: That the Chair, with the support of staff, draft a memo to Council outlining their concerns regarding unit designs that contain bedrooms without windows or access to direct natural light. Carried Unanimously.

- 4) [25-075](#) Development Permit Application – 861 & 863 Esquimalt Road, Staff Report No. DRC-25-005

Member Windjack recused themselves at 4:20 PM due to a conflict of interest, as they are employed by dHK Architects.

Alex Tang, Planner, introduced the staff report. dHK Architects, introduced the application and responded to questions from the Committee.

Committee comments included the following:

- It's a very comprehensive presentation, commend the design team; along main streets of our city we need things to celebrate.
- The proposal is appreciated and supportable, with lots of playful texture;
- This proposal sets a new precedent for Esquimalt, and will improve our community;
- The unit layouts are excellent, there are plenty of windows and opportunity for natural daylight;
- The pocket parks are supportable but ensuring that there is enough separation between public and private spaces is important;
- Would like to have seen some sections and elevation for landscape items, in particular the entranceway, and more detail of where the building sits in relation to the fence line;
- The design of the entranceway is appreciated;
- The rooftop amenity might benefit from some more shade;
- The proposal and materials selected is supportable, especially for its site, the ability to grow food on the rooftop is very appreciated.

Moved by Member Tran, seconded by Member Gilad: That the Esquimalt Design Review Committee recommends to Council that the application for a development permit authorizing the form and character of the proposed 59-unit residential development, consistent with the architectural plans provided by dHK Architects and landscape plan provided by LADR Landscape Architects, to be located at 861 & 863 Esquimalt Road be approved for the following reasons:

- the building is appropriately designed in terms of form and character along the main street of Esquimalt Road;
- the proposal creates more unique architecture along our main streets and sets a new precedent;
- there is appropriate attention to the design and application of biodiversity, amenity spaces, plant palette, and public interface. Carried Unanimously.

Member Windjack returned to the meeting at 4:44 PM.

Chair Todesco called a 5 minute recess at 4:45 PM.

Chair Todesco reconvened the meeting at 4:50 PM.

- 5) [25-073](#) OCP Amendment and Rezoning Application - 1005 Tillicum Rd - File No. DRC-25-003

James Davison, Manager of Development Services, introduced the staff report. Xenia Vins, XV Architecture, provided a presentation and responded to questions from the Committee.

Committee comments included the following:

- Utilising the lot in this way is convincing;
- Changes to the location of the bike room were recommended;
- A pocket park utilising the green space at the back of the property would be a good use of space.

Moved by Chair Todesco, seconded by Member Windjack: That the meeting be extended until 6:15 PM. Carried Unanimously.

Committee comments, continued:

- Overall, it is an appropriate proposition for this site and area;
- There are no problems with the building typology;
- What makes this site unique is the transfer trail/pedestrian connector, this proposal allows the connector to be highlighted and be brought to the fore and to become more frequented;
- In support overall of the application, the form, character and scale is nice;
- The Tillicum-facing frontage isn't as interesting as the south-facing frontage.

Moved by Chair Todesco, seconded by Member Windjack: That the Esquimalt Design Review Committee recommends to Council that the Official Community Plan amendment and rezoning application to authorize the proposed development of a four-storey mixed-use development, with 32 residential and one commercial unit, consistent with the architectural plans provided by XV Architecture and the landscape plan provided by 4SITE Landscape Architecture and Site Planning, to be located at 1005 Tillicum Rd be approved for the following reasons:

- it is an appropriate animation of this space with additional density;
- it offers revitalization of a transfer trail;
- it is a compelling addition of green space at the rear of the property;
- the addition of commercial space is a positive and sets a good precedence for future developments in this corridor. Carried Unanimously.

6) [25-028](#) Rezoning Application - 1007 Arcadia Street, Staff Report No. DRC-25-002

Alex Tang, Planner, introduced the staff report. Rachel Sansom, Grayland Consulting Ltd, and Raj Kaylon, provided a presentation and responded to questions from the Committee.

Committee comments included the following:

- This application is supportable, townhouses are an appropriate use of this site;
- It was suggested that the location of the garbage be shifted to the rear, provided that this does not make collection inconvenient;
- Would like to see more separation between the two buildings to improve simultaneous access to visitor and bike parking;
- No objections to the proposal, this is suitable for the area and the OCP;
- More information on tree placement would have been a benefit;
- Would like to see increased planting, patios or other outdoor element or private outdoor space for units;
- Suggested design changes to the frontage on Arcadia to increase visual interest.

Moved by Chair Todesco, seconded by Member Smakal: That the Esquimalt Design Review Committee recommends to Council that the rezoning application to authorize the proposed development of a 6-unit residential development, consistent with the architectural plan and landscape plan provided by Adapt Design, to be located at 1007 Arcadia Street be approved as town homes are an appropriate use of this property and location. Carried Unanimously.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Chair Todesco, seconded by Member Smakal: That the meeting be adjourned at 6:11 PM. Carried Unanimously.

TARA TODESCO, CHAIR
APC DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
THIS 9TH DAY OF JULY, 2025

VICTORIA MCKEAN
COMMITTEE COORDINATOR
CERTIFIED CORRECT