



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

Minutes - Draft

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

APC Design Review Committee

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

2:30 PM

Esquimalt Council Chambers

Present: 6 - Chair Tara Todesco
Vice Chair Shaun Smakal
Member Avishai Gilad
Member Eric Tran
Member Kody Thomson
Member Doran Musgrove

Regrets: 1 - Member Chris Windjack

Staff: Bill Brown, Director of Development Services
Alex Tang, Planner
Jakub Lisowski, Planner
Victoria McKean, Committee Coordinator/Recording
Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Todesco called the meeting to order at 2:31 PM and acknowledged with respect the Songhees and Xwsepsem Nations on whose traditional territories we live, we learn, and we do our work.

2. LATE ITEMS

There were no late items.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by Member Smakal, seconded by Member Thomson: That the agenda be approved as circulated. Carried Unanimously.

4. MINUTES

1) [25-320](#) Minutes of the Design Review Committee meeting held on July 9, 2025

Moved by Member Smakal, seconded by Member Tran: That the Minutes of the Design Review Committee meeting held on July 9, 2025 be adopted as circulated. Carried Unanimously.

5. STAFF REPORTS

- 1) [25-308](#) Rezoning Application - 1048 Craigflower Road, Staff Report No. DRC-25-013

Alex Tang, Planner, introduced the item and the applicant. Staff and the applicant responded to questions from the Committee.

Committee comments included the following:

- The use of native plants and inclusion of features that support biodiversity was encouraged;
- A revised shadow study and an updated site survey was requested;
- It was expressed that the street-facing view of the proposal lacks character and design interest;
- It was noted that insufficient information was provided to assess how the project relates to the neighbourhood; grading and shadow studies were unclear, and the north orientation was missing;
- It was suggested that Building 2 could be integrated into the hillside to reduce grading and preserve trees;
- Concern was expressed about the lack of relationship between the buildings and the street, as well as potential impacts from grading, retaining walls, and driveway shading;
- It was expressed that the proposal appeared incomplete; setbacks were unclear, neighbourhood context was missing, and no cross-section showing slopes or site conditions was provided;
- A full site section to show both north-south and east-west slopes was requested;
- It was stated that while they are not opposed to six units, there is not enough detail to assess setbacks, neighbourhood fit, or landscaping;
- Adding more diversity to the proposed plant list and including more layers in the landscape plan was suggested;
- It was observed that the proposed density is consistent with the broader neighbourhood context;
- A street elevation drawing to better understand the proposal was requested.

Moved by Member Smakal, seconded by Member Gilad: That this application be postponed to a future Design Review Committee meeting as more information from the applicant is required to provide a recommendation. Carried Unanimously.

2) [25-296](#) Official Community Plan (OCP) Recalibration 2025 – Review of draft Development Permit Area (DPA) Guidelines

Jakub Lisowski, Planner, presented a PowerPoint and responded to questions from the Committee.

Committee comments included:

- Applicability of bird-friendly guidelines to residential homes was emphasized;
- Concern was expressed that *Green Shores* guidelines are losing strength;
- Songbirds depend on native insects and landscaping and the weaker language around native plant use and the removal of landscape design elements that support birds is of concern;
- Many exemptions apply to most of Esquimalt's land base; without parameters, checklists, or incentives, there's risk of losing tree canopy and native plants;
- Biodiversity and bird habitat content has been reduced and watered down, it was suggested to include a cultural component on biodiversity;
- Language such as "limit" or "avoid" with respect to outdoor lighting is vague, clearer, operational parameters, ideally informed by studies, was emphasized;
- The need to streamline the document was recognized but it was stated that it should not come at the cost of losing valuable information;
- In Section 20.5.3 (1), a preference for allowing both complementary and contrasting design and including either integration with existing structures or deliberate contrasting designs for additions was suggested;
- With respect to Section 20.5.4, it was recommended to include windows in all bedrooms;
- Regarding accessibility, it was suggested that a dedicated section on accessibility which includes a long-term vision be included, that "universally accessible" be used rather than "accessible", and that it be made clear that the Building Code is a minimum and that exceeding it should be encouraged, with Rick Hansen Guidelines as the goal;
- Clear glazing and avoiding blocking windows with displays or decals should be encouraged;
- Lot scale, character, and diversity of facades should be preserved to encourage human-scale street frontages, clear sightlines, and transparency between indoor and outdoor activity;

- Galley style developments can work if they are well designed and more clarity would be beneficial;
- It was suggested to include an explicit mention of green roofs;
- Support was expressed for sustainable design guidelines, such as north-facing windows to reduce solar heat gain, and groundwater protection measures.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Member Tran, seconded by Member Smakal: That the meeting be adjourned at 5:12 PM. Carried Unanimously.

TARA TODESCO, CHAIR
APC DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
THIS 10TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2025

VICTORIA MCKEAN
COMMITTEE COORDINATOR
CERTIFIED CORRECT