

AGENDA ITEM NO: 11.4.2

MEETING DATE: November 7, 2023

STAFF REPORT – COVER SHEET

SUBJECT: Elemental Architecture and Interiors Inc. / 45685 Patten Avenue DATE: October 25, 2023

DEPARTMENT: Planning Department DVP01359 & DP001705 PREPARED BY: Stella Xiao / mb

1. SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

The applicant requests to vary the following Zoning Bylaw standards to facilitate alterations to an existing low-rise apartment building within the subject property:


- Reduce the number of off-street parking spaces from 27 (23 resident + 4 visitor spaces) to 18; and,
- Waive the requirement for a private amenity area for two apartment units.

As the property is within Development Permit Area No. 6 (Infill), a concurrent Development Permit for “form and character” of the proposed exterior alterations is required.

2. RECOMMENDATION:


Recommendation that, subject to public representation, Council approve the issuance of Development Variance Permit DVP01359 with respect to property located at 45685 Patten Avenue, subject to the recommendations as stipulated within the draft Development Variance Permit.

Recommendation that Council approve the issuance of Development Permit DP001705 with respect to property located at 45685 Patten Avenue, subject to the recommendations of the Design Review Advisory Committee and the conditions as stipulated within the draft Development Permit.


Gillian Villeneuve
Director of Planning

3. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER’S RECOMMENDATION/COMMENTS:

Supports recommendation.


Chris Crosman
Chief Administrative Officer

**STAFF REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE PERMIT DVP01359 &
DEVELOPMENT PERMIT DP001705**

PREPARED BY: Stella Xiao DATE: October 25, 2023
POSITION: Planner I DEPARTMENT: Planning Department

1. DEFINITION OF ISSUE:

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As the property is within Development Permit Area No. 6 (Infill), a concurrent Development Permit for “form and character” of the proposed exterior alterations is required.

2. PROPOSAL:

In summary, the proposal includes:

- Replacing exterior siding to update the colours and materials to a contemporary scheme;
- Removing balconies for two apartment units;
- Adding a vestibule to the front entrance of the building;
- Planting additional landscaping along the front and rear of the property;
- Upgrading the pedestrian pathways throughout the property;
- Replacing 1 existing exterior parking space with an area for waste collection;
- Converting 1 interior vehicle parking space to meet accessibility standards for disabled persons; and,
- Replacing 5 existing parking spaces within the parkade with 6 mobility scooter parking spaces and 10 bicycle parking spaces as well as a separate waste enclosure room.

A separate Development Variance Permit application (DVP01359) has been submitted to be reviewed concurrently with the subject Development Permit application. A discussion in relation to the proposed variances is provided below.

3. DISCUSSION REGARDING VARIANCES:

Overall, the proposed works will bring high-quality improvements to the existing building, enhancing the visual appeal of the development to the benefit of the residents and neighbours. A discussion in relation to the proposed variances is provided below.

Off-street Parking

The applicant requests to reduce the total number of off-street parking spaces by 9 stalls to facilitate the expansion of the lobby, including the addition of an elevator and to provide space for waste collection and storage, a parking space for disabled people, and an electric scooter and bicycle storage room. Originally, the apartment building was constructed with 24 off-street parking spaces, falling short of the current Zoning Bylaw requirements by 3 spaces (27 spaces are required). As such, while the variance request is for a reduction of 9 spaces, only 6 previously existing parking spaces are proposed to be removed to facilitate the proposed works. Although the submitted site plan indicates an existing parking space (labelled #15), this space does not meet Zoning Bylaw standards for minimum width and as such, is not considered a parking space for the purposes of this proposal.

The existing building currently includes 20 units, with 10 being small unit apartments [having a gross floor area (GFA) under 51m²] with the remaining 10 units having a GFA of approximately 56m². As the site is in close proximity to a transit exchange, those units under 51m² in GFA have a reduced parking rate of 0.75 per unit, rather than 1.5 spaces per unit as required for standard apartments. Although the lesser parking rate of 0.75 spaces per unit does not apply to the 10 units which are 56m², as these units are 1-bedroom apartments and the building is rental housing primarily for seniors, it is unlikely that 1.5 parking spaces per unit will be required to adequately serve the needs of the residents.

As the existing rental apartment building is primarily for seniors, as long-term residents age, the use of private vehicles for transportation has declined, whereas the increased use of electric scooters has posed challenges of secure storage. The removal of 4 previously existing parking stalls to facilitate the addition of a secure bicycle and electrical scooter parking room, an enclosed waste collection room, and an elevator improves the usability of the building for a larger range of ages and mobilities, while providing secure storage spaces. The conversion of 2 vehicle parking spaces to meet the size requirements of an accessible parking space further enhances the accessibility of the parkade. Furthermore, the conversion of an outdoor parking space for waste container placement on collection days facilitates safe maneuvering between the building and the rear lane. As the applicant intends to retain the building for rental tenancy, with a portion of the units dedicated to seniors, the proposed reduction to parking is considered appropriate in this instance. A recommended condition to require a housing agreement to secure the building for rental purposes with 50% of future tenants being 55 years or older has been included within the draft Development Variance Permit to ensure the existing tenancy type is retained in the future.

This variance request is also supported by the City's Transportation Department on the caveat that electrical charging facilities are provided to serve the electric scooters and E-bikes; the applicant is in agreement to provide such facilities and this condition has also been included within the draft Development Variance Permit.

Private Amenity Space

The proposed removal of balconies for two units within the apartment building facilitates the addition of the main entrance vestibule and an elevator within the building, and conversion of the bathroom and bedroom in both units to meet accessibility standards. As the balconies are recessed into the unit, the re-configuration of the units and addition of a new storage space necessitated the removal of the balcony to enable the entire exterior wall to be flush with the remainder of the unit. As the proposed additions and conversions will support residents with reduced or limited mobility, and the apartment is in close proximity to a wide range of amenities such as parks and recreation centres, the requested variance to waive the private amenity space requirement is supportable in this instance.

4. DEVELOPMENT PERMIT CONSIDERATIONS:

As demonstrated by the attached checklist evaluation for DPA 6 (Infill), the proposed development generally complies with the Infill Design Guidelines. A summary of the DPA 6 Design Guidelines can be found below. For information, a copy of the proposed site plan and colour elevations are attached.

Summary and CPTED Review

In support of the application, the applicant has also submitted a CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) report prepared by *Elemental Architecture and Interiors Inc.* A summary of the CPTED assessment is shown in the table below:

CPTED Elements	Recommendations	
	✓ included in the design	* not included in the design
Natural Access Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Add a new door to the parking garage to enable locking access between the front lobby and parkade. * Equip the parkade with a separate locked storage area for bikes and scooters, relocating the front bike rack to the rear, to discourage theft.*** ✓ Replace entrance phone buzzer system. ✓ Relocate the building manager’s office to have clear sight lines to the building entrance and elevator lobby. 	
Natural Surveillance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide lighting over balconies, under stairs at front and rear entryway, parkade, and rear unenclosed parking area.* ✓ Add security lighting at main entrance and overhead garage door on timer of photocell.* ✓ Provide bollard lighting along new sidewalks.* ✓ Increase glazing at the stairwell and front lobby. ✓ Paint interior of parking garage to a light colour to further enhance visibility. 	
Territoriality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Replacing the pedestrian pathway pavement material connecting to 	

	<p>Patten Avenue and the rear lane with concrete pavers will create a territorial boundary between the public and private realm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Add curbs, bollard lighting and low shrubs bordering the entrance walkways to further define the private space. ✓ Add new security cameras throughout the building to reinforce security measures.
<p>Maintenance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Select plants and shrubs (boxwood shrubs) for their size at maturity to avoid blocking of sight lines to the street.** ✓ Include seating and a meeting space within the design of the larger lobby space to help develop a sense of community within the building. ✓ New cladding design and exterior finishes reinforces sense of pride and are durable and low maintenance. ✓ Upgraded PVC windows and sliding doors with modern locks will reduce the number of break-ins. ✓ New cooling systems and mechanical ventilation will allow residents to keep windows and doors shut and locked during summer months. ✓ New pavers will be bordered by concrete curbs and filled with polymeric sand to prevent the growth of weeds.
<p>* Included within the draft Development Permit. ** All landscaping and building maintenance will be at the discretion of the building manager. *** Applicant will retain bike racks at the front of the property for short-term parking as the vestibule addition provides increased natural surveillance. Long-term parking is provided within a new secure room inside the parkade.</p>	

5. DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DRAC):

The Design Review Advisory Committee (DRAC) reviewed the subject Development Permit application and associated variances on October 17, 2023, and made the following recommendations:

That the Design Review Advisory Committee supports DP001705 and recommend Council approve the application subject to the following conditions:

1. *That a detailed lighting plan be submitted, prior to the issuance of a Building Permit, to ensure adequate lighting is provided for all walkways, parking areas, and exterior doors of the building;*
2. *That all new utility equipment be screened from public view through installation of landscaping fencing, or vinyl wrapping;*
3. *That an irrigation system be included into the landscaped areas within the site;*
4. *That non-combustible cladding and soffits be provided within the balconies; and,*
5. *That additional colour accents be included on the Patten Avenue facade to provide greater visual interest.*

The applicant was present and agreed to all conditions of the Development Permit (DP001705) as recommended by DRAC. In response to Condition #5, revised elevations were submitted to provide additional blue accents on the Patten Avenue façade to increase visual interest of the main entrance, as shown below. The blue accents were also incorporated on all other building façades. As such, this condition has been removed from the draft Development Permit.

Original



Revised



The remaining Conditions (#1-4) have been included within the draft Development Permit to be completed at time of Building Permit application.

6. FACTORS:

6.1 2040 Official Community Plan (OCP) / Land Use / Community Engagement

Official Community Plan: “Residential 3a (Density Bonus)” as designated in the Downtown Land Use and Development Plan within the 2040 Official Community Plan.

Land Use: There is currently a 20-unit apartment building within the subject property.

Community Engagement: The applicant has advised that on October 24, 2023, brochures were mailed out to residents within 30m of the subject property detailing the application and requesting input. At time of report, no responses have been received. A copy of the applicant's public engagement summary has been included within the public record.

6.2 Neighbourhood Character

The subject property is located in a transitioning area of Chilliwack Proper which has been experiencing significant redevelopment and densification recently. The property is surrounded by the following land uses:

North: A vacant lot currently undergoing development for an apartment building within the R6 (Mid Rise Apartment) Zone.

South, East, and West: Apartment buildings within the R6 Zone.

6.3 Technical Issues:

Floodplain: The property is located within the protected area of the floodplain, and as such, is subject to the Floodplain Regulation Bylaw.

Watercourses: There are no known watercourses within, or in the immediate vicinity of, the subject property.

Geotechnical Issues: The property is not subject to any known geotechnical hazards or earthquake related risks.

6.4 Conditions of Issuance:

Staff support the requested variances as proposed by the applicant and recommend approval of the draft DVP and DP, subject to the recommendations of the Design Review Advisory Committee and the conditions as stipulated within the draft Development Variance Permit and Development Permit.

7. RECOMMENDATION & SUBSTANTIATION:

Recommendation:

Recommendation that, subject to public representation, Council approve the issuance of Development Variance Permit DVP01359 with respect to property located at 45685 Patten Avenue, subject to the recommendations as stipulated within the draft Development Variance Permit.

Recommendation that Council approve the issuance of Development Permit DP001705 with respect to property located at 45685 Patten Avenue, subject to the recommendations of the Design Review Advisory Committee and the conditions as stipulated within the draft Development Permit.

Substantiation:

The proposed variance for reduced parking is not expected to impact the neighbouring properties due to the provision of storage facilities for alternative modes of transportation, proximity of the property to a transit exchange, and anticipated impact due to the small size and tenancy of the apartments, to be secured via a housing agreement with the City. Similarly, the proposed variance for private amenity spaces is considered minor in nature with little impact to the surrounding area; the benefits of improved accessibility within the building in conjunction with the abundance of public amenity spaces in the vicinity supersedes the loss of two private balconies.

The development is also consistent with the Design Guidelines for Development Permit Area 6 (Infill) by creating a visually appealing frontage through the use of varied building materials and a complementary colour scheme. Via the proposed works, the impact of the apartment building on Patten Avenue is anticipated to be significantly enhanced.

8. DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA 6 DESIGN GUIDELINE CHECKLIST:

Design Guidelines	Yes/No	Comments
1.1 Landscaping & building materials		
Preserve existing trees where possible	N/A	There are no existing trees within the subject property.
Utilize tree species & vegetation common to area	Yes	New boxwood hedge landscaping is proposed at the front and rear of the apartment building
Use varied building materials (i.e. combinations of wood, brick, rock, etc.)	Yes	The proposed exterior finishes include vinyl siding, corrugated metal siding, brick cladding, and painted concrete
2.1 Building shape & form		
Provide visual variety in building form, shape & character	N/A	No changes to the building form, shape, or character are proposed
Avoid large expanses of blank façade	Partial	The design mostly avoids large expanses of blank façade by using a variety of materials, colours and building articulation; however, two sets of windows on the 2 nd and 3 rd storeys and balconies are proposed to be removed and replaced with a wall flush with the neighbouring walls to facilitate the elevator addition and accessible unit conversion, creating a blank façade over a portion of the vestibule area.
Use a variety of complementary colors	Yes	The proposed exterior finishes include a variety of colours that complement each other. In response to Condition 5 made by DRAC, the applicant has revised the design to include blue accents to complement the red accent at the main entrance. A copy of the material legend is attached within the elevations.

	Physically integrate development with adjacent development		
3.1	Shared access, consolidate open space, etc	N/A	No changes to the site layout are proposed.
3.2	Scale, mass & form is sensitive to adjacent properties		
	Height not to exceed more than 8m above adjacent historically significant home	N/A	There are no significant historical buildings adjacent to the site.
	Use articulation, vary materials and colors to provide visual relief	Yes	A complementary colour scheme with diverse building materials and horizontal building articulation serves to create a visual relief. The applicant provided additional blue accents to provide further visual relief in response to recommendations by DRAC.
	Series of modules fit together	Yes	Varying architectural treatments create a design where the buildings appear as a series of individual units that fit together
	Differentiate between pedestrian-level commercial and upper level residential development	N/A	No commercial development is proposed
	Complement existing size, mass, and scale of surrounding development	N/A	No changes to the building size, mass or scale are proposed
	Consideration of views from adjacent developments	N/A	As above.
4.1	Maximize a positive impact on the street		
	Preserve & integrate existing natural features where possible	N/A	No existing natural features to preserve or integrate
	Orient development towards street	Yes	The expanded main entrance and new pedestrian pathway connection reiterates the street orientation of the existing building.
	Locate development close to & parallel to street	N/A	No changes are proposed to the siting of the existing apartment building.
	Consider impact of sun, wind & shadows on site	N/A	As above.
4.2	Locate mechanical equipment and service areas out of public view		
	Locate or screen mechanical and operational equipment from the view of tenants and from the street	Yes	New utility equipment will be screened from public view through a combination of landscaping and fencing, while mailboxes are located within the apartment lobby. A condition has been included in the draft Development Permit for screening of all new exterior utility and mechanical equipment
5.1	Entrances into the development must be highly visible, easy to find and logical in location.		
	Emphasize vehicle entrance through additional landscaping, tree planting, appropriate signage & lighting	Yes	The vehicle entrance is clearly defined through landscaping and different colour door at the rear of the property. The pedestrian entrance at the front of the building is clearly marked with address signage at the front door. New lighting is also proposed at the rear garage entrance
	Define pedestrian & vehicle corridors	N/A	No changes are proposed to the location of pedestrian & vehicle corridors

5.2	Parking areas must be adequate in size, efficient in layout and safe in location and design		
	Parking areas are visually secured all day	N/A	No changes are proposed to the size or location of the ground-level parkade. All proposed parking layout changes are internal only, apart from the removal of one outdoor parking space.
	Provide parking areas that are easily accessible but do not dominate the user's first impression of the site	N/A	As above.
	Avoid the provision of parking in the front yard	N/A	As above.
	Adequate conceal underground parking	N/A	As above
	Avoid large expanses of contiguous parking	N/A	As above.
	Use landscaping to soften the impact of parking area	N/A	As above.
6.1	Building entrances must be highly visible, attractive and inviting to the pedestrian		
	Clearly identify and orient the primary pedestrian entrance to the street	Yes	The primary pedestrian entrance is oriented towards Patten Avenue and reiterated through the use of larger windows and addition of a vestibule
	Provide curbed sidewalk with minimum 1.5m width connecting public road or sidewalk to each dwelling unit or building		Concrete paver sidewalks with a minimum width of 1.8m are provided, connecting Patten Avenue and the rear lane to entrances at the front and rear of the building, respectively. The sidewalk at the rear of the building is separated from the adjacent driveway by a curb.
	Provide separate ground-level entrances for commercial and residential developments	N/A	No commercial development is proposed.
	Provide a suitable transition from public (street) to semi-private to private (entrance) through scale, detail, and sense of enclosure	Yes	The proposed landscaping and vestibule addition improve the existing transition between public, semi-private and private space.
6.2	Enhance the pedestrian experience by providing interest at the street level		
	Set back building facades to create amenity areas that interact with the street	N/A	No changes to building setbacks are proposed.
	Use various materials and design techniques to create through-visibility or transparency, (e.g. windows, see-through landscaping and fencing, etc.) at ground level	Yes	Retention of the parkade concrete blocks and addition of new larger windows at the entrance enhances the through-visibility at ground level.
	Have a pedestrian oriented building base of 1 to 3 storeys that is distinct from upper storey developments	N/A	The apartment building is 3 storeys tall.
	Provide architectural detail to capture pedestrian attention	Yes	The building articulation, newly enlarged ground-level entrance, large windows, variety of building materials/colours, and the incorporation of landscaping all serve to intrigue pedestrians. The applicant has addressed the condition requested by DRAC for additional colour by introducing blue accents throughout the building exterior to further capture pedestrian attention.

6.3	Design outdoor spaces to provide a sanctuary for its occupants		
	Create useable, accessible and highly visible onsite people places and amenity areas (e.g paths, courtyards, upper level decks, playground areas, etc)	Partial	While the existing building does not have a common amenity area, retained private amenity areas are accessible and highly visible from the street. The replacement of the old balconies also improves usability of private amenity spaces. While the balconies of two units are proposed to be removed, the proximity of the building to parks and other amenity spaces provides adequate recreational opportunities.
	Accommodate the year-round use of outdoor spaces by considering environmental conditions (e.g sun angles and prevailing winds)	N/A	No change to the location of retained amenity spaces is proposed.

9. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

- Development Permit Application (DP001705) – April 28, 2023
- Development Variance Permit Application (DVP01359) – April 28, 2023
- Development Application Review Team (DART) Minutes – June 8, 2023
- CPTED Report, prepared by *Elemental Architecture and Interiors Inc.* – February 9, 2023

Location Map



Ortho Photo

