

## REQUEST FOR DECISION

**TO:** Advisory Planning Commission      **MEETING DATE:** June 3, 2025  
**FROM:** Tyson Baker, Senior Development Planner  
**SUBJECT:** Development Permit for 5788 Cowrie Street  
**FILE NO:** 3060-2025-10

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### RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the Advisory Planning Commission provides comments on the proposed application respecting:
    - The form and character (architectural design and site plan), as well as other applicable features and whether it sufficiently meets specific guidelines in DPA 6.
    - Given the form and context of the development, consider if sufficient guidelines have been adequately addressed for Council to consider approval of the development permit.
    - The architectural design and its interaction with the Cowrie Street & Ocean Avenue.
    - Review of the Landscape Plan.
    - Comments on whether a variance for the roof overhang is supportable.
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### PURPOSE

To request from the Advisory Planning Commission (APC) their feedback regarding the form and character (DPA No. 6 – Downtown Sechelt) for a multi-use commercial development located at 5788 Cowrie Street. Feedback and any recommendations from the APC will be presented to Council.

### DISCUSSION

#### Summary/Background

An application has been received to re-develop the subject property to construct a Tibetan Buddhist Meditation and Cultural Centre with two separate buildings located in the front and rear of the property with a courtyard in between. Building No. 1 is located at the rear of the property abutting Ocean Avenue and Seiner Lane. This structure is one storey in height and will include a lobby and meditation room which will be accessed via two gates, a small one from the rear parking lot and the main gate accessed from Ocean Avenue.

Building No. 2 is located at the front of the property abutting Cowrie Street and Ocean Avenue. This structure is two storeys in height and consists of a small street level shop, a small office space, a caretaker's residence on the first storey.

On the second storey, there is a sauna, a small three-bedroom accommodation akin to a hostel arrangement, having a shared kitchenette, bathroom and lounge area, and with a sundeck overlooking Cowrie Street. Both structures appear to utilize natural materials such as stone, wood, glass and a portion of the roofs would incorporate natural vegetation, commonly known as “green roofs” and skylights.

While the proposed development meets the parking and overall zoning requirements of the C-4 zone, a variance may be required for a portion of the building façade projection for Building No. 2 along Ocean Avenue and for the roof structure. Based on the submitted plans, the roof would protrude 1.5 metres into the exterior side setback where the minimum is 3.0 metres. Therefore, a variance of 1.5 metres may be required. A variance may also be required for the streetscape design along Ocean Avenue which, under Bylaw No. 430, requires a linear sidewalk rather than a meandering sidewalk as proposed in the submission. This proposal will be discussed internally with the Engineering and Operations Division to ensure it is suitable.

### **Legislative Context**

Local governments have the authority to establish objectives for the form and character of commercial development within the Official Community Plan. Guidelines are specified to provide direction for developers to meet the objectives. The relevance of guidelines can vary depending on the context and form of development. Guidelines can also range in importance from required to optional. It is a discretionary decision by Council to determine if sufficient guidelines have been incorporated to meet the objectives of the development permit area.

The review of development permit applications is restricted to consideration of guidelines and objectives in relation to the proposed development. The level of density or use of the land may not be regulated through the development permit process.

The *Local Government Act* limits that development permits may only include requirements respecting the character of the development, including landscaping, siting, form, exterior design and finish of buildings and other structures.

**Table 1 – Application Information**

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|---------------------------|---|
| <b>Applicant</b>          | Urban Arts Architecture Inc.              |
| <b>Owner</b>              | Centre for Tibetan Buddhism and Culture   |
| <b>Civic Address</b>      | 5788 Cowrie Street                        |
| <b>Legal Address</b>      | Lot 26 District Lot 303 Plan VAP7808      |
| <b>PID</b>                | 010-533-354                               |
| <b>Size of Properties</b> | 702.66 m <sup>2</sup>                     |
| <b>OCP Designation</b>    | Downtown Centre                           |
| <b>Zoning Designation</b> | C-4                                       |
| <b>DP Areas</b>           | Development Area No. 6 – Downtown Sechelt |



Staff are currently reviewing the proposed development against the DPA 6 Guidelines. However, based on preliminary reviews conducted so far, overall, the proposed development appears to be meeting the objectives and guidelines.

### **APC CONSIDERATION**

Staff request that the APC consider the following:

- The form and character (architectural design and site plan), as well as other applicable features and whether it sufficiently meets specific guidelines in DPA 6.
- The architectural design and its interaction with the Cowrie Street & Ocean Avenue.
- Given the form and context of the development, consider if sufficient guidelines have been adequately addressed for Council to consider approval of the development permit.
- Review of the Landscape Plan.
- Comments on whether a variance for the roof overhang is supportable.

### **APC RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the APC recommends to Council that the development permit application be approved/denied.

That the APC recommends to Council that the applicant consider the following design issues:

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That the APC recommends to Council that the applicant consider the following changes/additions:

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### **NEXT STEPS**

Comments and recommendations provided by the APC will be brought forth to Council along with a staff report and a draft development permit for consideration. Should Council approve the issuance of the development permit, the applicant will need to adhere to all applicable bylaws, legislation, and apply for a building permit prior to starting construction.

Tyson Baker

Senior Development Planner

Attachments:

1. Applicant Development Permit Report
2. Architectural Design Package
3. Landscape Design Package
4. Tree Inventory Assessment