

Transcripts from the First M27 Workshop

January 25, 2009



The following document is a collection of transcripts of comments made by community participants at a Main 2nd to 7th Light Industrial Area (M27) workshop held on January 25, 2009. The workshop forms part of the Mount Pleasant Community Planning Program (www.vancouver.ca/mountpleasant). This workshop will be followed by a second workshop where options and directions suggested by participants at the first workshop will be assessed and refined.

How the Transcripts were recorded

The workshop was attended by approximately 80 people. Participants divided themselves into four groups. Following guided site visits to the M27 study area, ‘creative sessions’ were held, facilitated by urban designers, to find out key concerns and aspirations held by workshop participants. Posters with potential options/directions and maps were used to encourage discussion and record people’s ideas.

Understanding the Transcripts

The possible Directions that appear in normal type came out of previous Community Plans for Mount Pleasant and from related Community Plans for other parts of the City. Those in *italic type* are other possible directions suggested by Mount Pleasant Plan Fair participants, or on “feedback forms” distributed to local community groups, and at previous Mount Pleasant Community Workshops and on the Mount Pleasant web site.

“Discussion” points **in bold** (right hand column) are transcribed directly from notes made by workshop participants and urban designers/facilitators on posters or on maps at the workshops. “Discussion” points shown in *italics* are based on comments made by workshop participants during site visits in the initial part of the workshop. Accompanying each transcript is a photograph of the map(s), with comments, that were produced at the workshop.

Possible Options/Directions	Key Questions
<p>PROVISION OF SHOPS & SERVICES</p> <p>1. Additional commercial density should be located along Broadway, especially near the ‘hub’ where Broadway intersects with Main, to expand the provision of shops and services, to encourage job growth, and to respond to improvements in public transportation (e.g., UBC Millennium Line extension, street-car extension from False Creek).</p>	<p>Should the ‘hub’ include the Main 2nd to 7th area? If so, where, what changes should occur, and why?</p>
<p>2. There should be a wide range of local-serving shops and services located in the Main 2nd to 7th area (<i>Plan Fair participants suggested encouraging Uptown-like variety of businesses; building mixed use development with residential above shops; putting in awnings, outdoor patios, restaurants; and promoting evening activities. Some participants suggested retaining industrial development and mixing it with commercial development, while others recommended removing or relocating the industrial businesses from the area. Auto-oriented services should be discouraged</i>).</p>	<p>What types of stores/services are missing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Library - Piazzas
<p>3. Supermarkets are more important “anchors” for neighbourhood shopping areas. (<i>Plan Fair participants suggested either a smaller, neighbourhood grocer or a larger grocery store is needed in the area</i>).</p>	<p>Where?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SW Main and 2nd (Old Scotia Bank). Link to south. - Narrow rest/lounge – can’t see entry
<p>4. Encourage retail to wrap onto more side streets and lanes.</p>	<p>Where?</p>

Possible Options/Directions	Key Questions
<p>SHOPPING MALLS & BIG BOX</p> <p>5. Additional major shopping malls, and ‘big box’ stores which sell groceries, clothing, and other daily needs, should not be permitted to locate where they will harm the economic health of the local shopping areas in Mount Pleasant (<i>Plan Fair participants favoured local, small businesses with interactive storefronts rather than big-box or chain stores in the area</i>).</p>	<p>Do you agree? Why?</p>
<p>6. Some specialty outlets (e.g. electronics, toys, pets stores) might act as positive anchors or attractions if they are located in the Main 2nd to 7th area. They should be considered if they are designed to fit properly. [Note: the City’s recent study of the West Broadway/Arbutus local shopping area recommends a maximum store size of 40,000 sq. ft.]</p>	

Possible Options/Directions	Key Questions
<p>TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES AND NETWORKS</p> <p>7. Develop a Kingsway – Quebec Connector to relieve the Kingsway/Main/ 7th intersection and reduce congestion on Main Street north of Kingsway.</p>	<p>Do you agree? Why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - City owned site should include a park, which could be used for a farmers’ or artists’ market; could develop part of site with buildings
<p>8. Provide good connections, address impacts, improve building design, and enhance public realm associated with <i>Southeast False Creek, Granville Island, Great Northern Way Campus, Downtown, and future transit projects (e.g. the extension of the Millennium Line along Broadway out to UBC, and the proposed rapid transit stations at Great Northern Way Campus and at Broadway and Main).</i></p>	<p>Are there other important connections to this area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Millennium Skytrain Extension - Need to know alignment and technology (e.g. tunnel under Scotia St.)
<p>9. Provide good connections with, address impacts of, and improve building design and public realm associated with the extension of the Street Car Line from Gastown to Broadway and Main.</p>	<p>How?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Streetcar extension - Clogs up Main St. more - Different transit modes may not be practical - Not a popular idea
<p><i>10. Provide efficient transit service on Main St. by providing better connections to downtown, more frequent service, and signal priority measures.</i></p>	<p>How?</p>

Possible Options/Directions	Key Questions
<p>TRAFFIC SAFETY AND PARKING</p> <p>11. Along Main, shops and services should be continuous along the ground floor of buildings. Ground floor frontage should not be interrupted by driveways, drive-throughs, parking lots, or building fronts that are not ‘pedestrian friendly’</p>	
<p>12. Sidewalks and street crossings should be made safer for pedestrians (<i>Plan Fair participants suggested installing more east/west crosswalks with activated lights across Main St., widening sidewalks, installing traffic islands and centre medians, planting street trees, and addressing pedestrian and car safety concerns at 2nd and Main St</i>)</p>	<p>What and where?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alley between 6th and 7th east of Main has lots of potholes - More crosswalks (2nd and Brunswick) - Angles of streets in area lots of traffic coming from different directions; people walk on lanes as it is quieter - 4th and Scotia – knit streets and alleys together to be safer (and ‘sensible’ for cars) - Put in light at 2nd and Scotia - Put in traffic circle at 4th and Scotia - Main and Kingsway need “no right turn” sign north bound, Main to Kingsway - Longer pedestrian crossing times
<p>13. Convenient short-term parking, including curbside parking, should be available for customers to help keep the retail viable and reduce impacts on neighbours</p>	<p>Where?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SE corner Main and 2nd could be used more intensively for parking - Create limited parking for visitors in IC-3 - U/G parking is not well used - Need to review this
<p>14. <i>Help retain small businesses by having parking exemptions for small sites or along transit routes.</i></p>	<p>Where and how would this help?</p>
<p>15. <i>Support businesses and local services that encourage pedestrian activity</i></p>	<p>How can shops support pedestrian activity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farmers/artists markets - Nice design (e.g. at 7th and Main) small changes make it more attractive for residents
<p>16. <i>Make intersections safer for bicyclists (e.g. 5th and Main and future connection to #1 Kingsway), and provide more bike racks near stores, apartments buildings, and parks.</i></p>	<p>Where?</p>

Possible Options/Directions	Key Questions
<p>HERITAGE, CHARACTER, AND CULTURE</p> <p>17. Reinforce Uptown as an historic area: its buildings, 'flavour', 'feel'.</p>	<p>How might this affect planning for the Main 2nd to 7th area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Find a way and link heritage and industrial aesthetics
<p>18. Add to the Heritage Register of building, streetscapes, and places, identifying buildings of architectural, cultural, and historic value; develop heritage retention guidelines and incentives. (Plan Fair participants suggested day-lighting Brewery Creek)</p>	
<p>19. Identify and retain neighbourhood character landmarks, or use them to inspire new urban design.</p>	<p>Which ones? How?</p>
<p>20. Incorporate urban design considerations in determining Main 2nd to 7th policy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topography, views, and natural features • Open spaces and mini-parks • Bikeways and Greenways <p>Existing urban fabric (including building types, thoroughfares, pathways, frontages, and streetscapes)</p>	<p>How?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider context, height appropriately - Small, inter-connected spaces - Views north are important
<p>21. Provide facilities, spaces, and places for the creation, production, exhibition, experience and enjoyment of artistic expression in all its forms.</p>	<p>Where?</p>
<p>22. Create design guidelines for new developments to ensure they fit into the area's character. (Plan Fair participants suggested igniting this discussion with lively debates and design competitions).</p>	<p>What features should new buildings have/not have?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New buildings must consider existing buildings i.e. light and views and shadowing (e.g. 6th & Main/Scotia and Main & 3rd area) - 10 storey buildings too high all over Main St. maybe every 2 blocks. - Consider using design features of the Brix courtyard downtown (texture, nooks and crannies in Mt. Pleasant) - Heritage: comparison to SEFC "Yaletown Look"; what should this area be like? - Need more foot traffic on GNWC and Brunswick; more street furniture
<p>23. The City should encourage new developments (plus renovations and additions) to adopt green building design guidelines. (Plan Fair participants recommended green roofs, energy efficient systems, recycle/green materials, and sustainable landscaping).</p>	<p>Where and how could this happen?</p>

Possible Options/Directions	Key Questions
<p>SERVICES AND SAFETY</p> <p><i>24. Increase police presence and make area safer from criminal activity (e.g. prostitution, drug, and graffiti).</i></p>	<p>How can we reduce crime?</p>
<p><i>25. Provide more services in the area: community drop-in centre; medical centre; day care and youth centre; community and recreation centre with library and pool). (Plan Fair participants recommended building a rehab centre and social services for drug users, sick, and disable, while others suggested moving social services for the homeless to other areas)</i></p>	<p>What services are missing?</p>

Possible Options/Directions	Key Questions
<p>PUBLIC REALM: AMENITIES & COMFORT</p> <p>26. The appearance of the Main 2nd to 7th area should be improved through efforts of private businesses and the City (e.g., create outdoor patios with benches, more landscaping, corner bulges; banners, hanging baskets, and awnings; special lighting, bike racks; public notice boards/directory; public plaza; public art, murals, special paving, drinking fountains)</p>	<p>Does Main 2nd to 7th have a “special character” that should be maintained and strengthened, or should that character be changed? What are the key factors which contribute to the making of a “special character”, and need to be emphasized in the Community Plan?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New benches - 2nd & Brunswick - Quebec & 2nd - mid-block, E/S Main between 4th and 5th (rest stop on hill; integrate with coffee shop) - New lighting - ‘pocket park at 5th & Brunswick
<p>27. Sidewalks, gutters, lanes, parking lots, storefronts, garbage areas, and loading bays should be kept cleaner and maintained better by both private businesses and the City</p>	<p>Everywhere, or particularly in certain locations?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lanes should be more beautiful; some private owners keep them nice - Better upkeep / maintenance at 5th & Brunswick pocket park, GNWC & Brunswick; north/south, Autobody – keep doors closed and ventilated; Garbage on streets (organize city crews) - Red house on Scotia needs upkeep; enforce this.
<p>28. Business Associations and BIAs should be encouraged and strengthened, with organizational assistance from the City. They should be involved, together with residents, in promoting shopping in their areas and organizing services and activities to attract shoppers</p>	<p>What kinds of promotions, services and activities?</p>
<p>29. <i>Provide more parks, open space, and opportunities for creating community gardens. (Plan Fair participants said the area needs more benches with views, a soccer field, baseball diamond, dog area, outdoor stage, skate park, and converting the parking lot at 7th and Main into a park).</i></p>	<p>Where?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, area is already park deficient. Space must be well-managed over time but this hasn’t happened - Too small amenity spaces, poor security, and not well maintained (5th & Brunswick and others) - City-owned lots on 7th & main should be a park; buildings on portion of site; artists or farmers market on park site
<p>30. Street trees contribute to the pleasant character of the street, as well as bringing visual consistency. Existing trees should be kept and maintained. Their impact should be enhanced by adding trees where they are missing as well as on new corner bulges and on side streets.</p>	<p>Where?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At 350 E. 2nd Ave., trees should be mirrored as on North side to give unity to street and make more appealing

Possible Options/Directions	Key Questions
<p>A NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE WITH HOUSING</p> <p>31. Main 2nd to 7th should become more of a neighbourhood centre with the provision of additional housing. Additional housing is important to support shops and services, it could range from additional apartments above stores on major streets to more ground-oriented housing within walking distance of these streets. Any new housing should be in keeping with the character and scale of the neighbourhood.</p>	<p>Should additional housing be built in the Main 2nd to 7th area? If so, what type of housing (e.g., mixed-use, rowhousing, low-rise to high-rise, or ?), for whom (e.g., market, non-market, supportive?), and where should the housing be located?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - City-owned site (7th & Main) mixed use - Park fronting Main - <i>Housing height on Main St. – 60 feet is appropriate like in IC-3; maybe some 10 storey (interspersed)</i> - <i>Housing height on Main – 40 ft is appropriate like in IC-2; with no 10 story buildings</i>
<p>32. <i>Higher density housing should be considered, provided that it is accompanied by high quality green space, pocket parks, community facilities, and other services for the additional population.</i></p>	<p>Do you agree? Why?</p>
<p>33. <i>Encourage the development of affordable artist live/work studios. (Plan Fair participants suggested converting industrial buildings into loft style apartments, while another observed that there are already too many condos and that we should keep a mix of commercial and industrial uses so people can work and live in the same neighbourhood)</i></p>	<p>Do you agree? Why?</p>

Comments from Map

- **Connect lanes together and design them for pedestrian use**
- **Plazas as gathering places for community**
- **View cone at 6th – shouldn't change 40 ft. height**
- **Heights of new developments should not mimic the 10 story new community centre**
- **Green roofs and roof lines are important and should be interesting**
- **No streetcar up Main**