



**CHINATOWN HISTORIC AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 10, 2020**

Minutes of the meeting of the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee (CHAPC) held on Thursday, December 10, 2020, via videoconference.

- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Andrew Larigakis, Architectural Institute of BC, Chair  
Sarah Ling, Member-at-Large, Vice Chair  
Albert Lam, Heritage Vancouver (arrived at 5:41 p.m.;  
departed at 7:01 p.m.)  
Edmund Ma, Chinatown Property Owner  
Inge Roecker, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden Society  
Eric Siu, Chinatown Property Owner  
Grace Wong, Chinatown Merchants Association  
Michael Yu, Chinatown Merchants Association (arrived at  
5:41 p.m.)
- MEMBERS ABSENT:** Fang Liu, Architectural Institute of BC  
Leslie Shieh, Planning Institute of British Columbia
- LIAISONS PRESENT:** Trustee Allan Wong, Vancouver School Board
- GUESTS:** Bonnie Ma, Planner, Downtown Eastside Planning Team  
(Item 2)
- STAFF:** Amber Knowles, Staff Liaison
- RECORDING SECRETARY:** Debbie Reimer, Mosaic Writing Group

**Call to Order**

Andrew Larigakis, Chair, acknowledged the unceded ancestral territories of the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations and thanked them for having cared for this land.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. and conducted a roll call.

**1. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes**

MOVED by Inge Roecker  
SECONDED by Edmund Ma

THAT the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee adopts the agendas for the November 12 and December 10, 2020 meeting, with the addition of Item 3 – Retention of H-Frame Electrical Power Poles to the agenda of the December 10, 2020 meeting.

CARRIED

## Members Arrived

Albert Lam and Michael Yu joined the meeting at 5:41 p.m.

MOVED by Sarah Ling  
SECONDED by Inge Roecker

THAT the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee adopts the minutes of the October 18, 2020 and November 12, 2020 meetings, as presented.

CARRIED

The CHAPC considered the adoption of the motion developed during the November 12, 2020 meeting regarding the Chinatown Transformation Team: Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan (CHAMP).

MOVED by Inge Roecker  
SECONDED by Eric Siu

THAT the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee is highly supportive of the presented draft framework of the Cultural Heritage Assets Management Plan. COVID-19 has created increased stress on the non-tangible assets, such as businesses and cultural assets. We wish to see a focus on short term supports for these assets. We also wish to get a better understanding about how we can build resiliency in the community in the face of future stresses.

CARRIED

## 2. Downtown Eastside (DTES) Plan and Vision Update

Bonnie Ma, Planner, Downtown Eastside Planning Team, joined the meeting.

Ms. Ma led the review of a presentation titled “DTES Plan Three-year Progress Report (2017–2019)” and highlighted:

- Geographic area covered by the DTES Plan (Plan)
- Plan vision
- Social impact assessment (SIA) objectives
- Plan objectives:
  - Create housing choice while protecting heritage character and scale
  - Consider additional height in specific locations to support public benefit to help improve well-being
  - Strengthen Hastings Streets as a mixed-use corridor and local serving retail street
  - Foster local economic development and social innovation
  - Secure community assets and manage the social impacts of change and development
- Community context
- SIA trends:
  - Health inequities:
    - ☞ Decreasing life expectancy exacerbated by the opioid overdose crises
    - ☞ Increasing early Childhood vulnerabilities

- Gaps in basic needs:
  - ☞ Increasing homelessness
  - ☞ Persistently high rate of income poverty
- Risk of displacement:
  - ☞ Decreasing rates of people accessing social assistance
  - ☞ Increasing rate of individuals with incomes over \$50,000
- Evolving community challenges:
  - Health emergencies
  - Increasing street homelessness and housing needs
  - Access to places and spaces for low-income residents
  - Retail commercial space affordability
- Major infrastructure changes
  - St. Paul's hospital & health campus
  - Prior Street downgrading & new underpass
  - Centerm expansion
  - Increase in Burrard Inlet line capacity
- Public consultation on the implementation of the Plan every three years
  - DTES Plan Fair co-created with the local community, including information displays, community exhibition space, and discussion forum
  - Over 700 participants at in-person meetings and questionnaire responses
- DTES community perspective that there have been positive steps yet systemic inequities remain:
  - Appreciation for the Plan grant program and temporary modular housing
  - Concerns about the effects of colonization, mental health, trauma, displacement and gentrification
  - The need for more safe spaces, healing spaces, appropriate healthcare services and amenities
  - Non-profits and small business are concerned about the affordability crisis
  - The informal economy is still stigmatized
  - More shelter rate housing is needed
- Implementation highlights:
  - Building social capital through partnerships
  - Collective response to the overdose crisis
  - New social housing and secured rental units, including temporary modular housing (TMH)
  - Replacement of single room occupancy (SROs) is challenging without senior government investment
  - Growth in employment and economic well-being
  - Increased access to affordable spaces through partnerships
  - \$7 million in Plan grants and \$4.6 million in cultural grants
- Progress on housing, economic and well-being targets
- Strategic analysis:
  - Neighbourhood implementation to harness social capital
  - Policies to support cultural redress
  - Decolonization and intersectional initiatives
  - Housing initiatives
  - Local economy initiatives

- Emerging three-year priorities (2020–2022) in the following Plan objective categories:
  - Cultural redress
  - Housing and homelessness
  - Local economy
  - Transportation
  - Public realm
  - Parks
  - Arts and culture
- Public benefits achieved since 2014 and anticipated by 2044
- Plan grant achievements and grant distribution in eligible streams:
  - Community asset management
  - Community economic development
  - Neighbourhood improvement
  - Strategic projects
- Plan funding priorities:
  - Urban environment and public realm enhancement
  - Affordable spaces
  - Community stewardship.

Discussion ensued on:

- The indicators provide an assessment of the impact of the Plan on peoples' lives
- The cultural redress with Chinese-Canadian community will be undertaken through the work of the Chinatown Transformation Team, and a number of City-wide initiatives through the Social Policy group
- The Plan and targets will be monitored and evaluated with progress reported every three years until 2044
- Concern regarding the lack of childcare spaces in the DTES:
  - No new schools have been built in the DTES, which exacerbates the lack of childcare spaces as all new schools include dedicated childcare space
- The Housing Vancouver Team has developed City-wide targets and implementation, including a moderate increase in density to facilitate social housing
- Whether the Plan targets are sufficiently ambitious to make a difference
- Question about the plan for the reopening of Oppenheimer Park
- Early childhood vulnerabilities are correlated to poverty and substance abuse and are being addressed by providing support to the family
- Grants are provided to community agencies that provide childcare
- Community Centres in the DTES have programs to provide meals to students, e.g. Strathcona Community Centre
- Whether there is an explanation for the cause of the increase in the early childhood vulnerabilities from 2014–2016 to 2017–2020.

MOVED by Inge Roecker

SECONDED by Michael Yu

THAT the Chinatown Heritage Area Planning Committee generally supports the work on the Downtown Eastside (DTES) Plan and wants to register its support for updating the targets to reflect changes that are happening in the community in the short and mid-term. Also, we noted the high level of childhood vulnerabilities and lack of

childcare in the area and note that this is a significant issue that sometimes gets overlooked with all the different challenges in the DTES.

CARRIED

Ms. Ma departed the meeting.

**3. Retention of H-Frame Electrical Power Poles**

Inge Roecker advised that electrical cables are being buried in Chinatown and questioned if CHAPC would be willing to support the retention of the H-frame electrical power poles due to the potential usage in art installations to activate laneways.

**Member Departed**

Albert Lam departed the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

Discussion ensued on:

- The electrical power poles have historical significance and are part of Chinatown's character
- Safety risks to be considered if the electrical power poles are retained
- The film industry has requested that the electrical power poles be retained in at least one lane
- The City would be required to assume responsibility for the future maintenance of the electrical power poles
- BC Hydro plans to remove the power poles in the next few months unless there is a request that they be retained
- The need for more discussions to determine the specific areas in which the retention of power poles would be most beneficial.

MOVED by Inge Roecker

SECONDED by Eric Siu

THAT the Chinatown Heritage Area Planning Committee sees historical significance for the retention of the H-frame electrical power poles in Chinatown's lanes. We consider there may be future alternate uses for them and that further consideration should be done as to which areas they would be retained.

CARRIED

**4. Other Business**

Amber Knowles, Staff Liaison, reviewed the 2021 CHAPC meeting schedule and reminded the members to inform the City Clerk if they do not wish to have their term extended to spring 2021.

Ms. Knowles advised that CHAPC members will be notified when a new Staff Liaison is identified.

**5. Adjournment**

The Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee meeting held December 10, 2020 adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

**Next Meeting:**

Date: January 14, 2021

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Place: Videoconference (WebEx Events)

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Certified correct:

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Andrew Larigakis, Chair

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Date Approved

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