

**Chinatown Development Policies Information Sessions – Questions
Recorded**

**May 29, 2018, Chinese Cultural Centre Multipurpose Hall
3pm to 4:30pm (58 people attended)
5:30pm to 7pm (26 people attended)**

Questions related to Development Policies and Zoning

- Why is the 6 storeys higher? Floor to ceiling higher/frontage wider
*difference b/w heritage (HA-1A)?
- What is the purpose behind residential density maximum amounts?
- What happens to existing lots that are over 50 or under 25 feet?
- What kinds of protections are in place for large lot assemblies?
(especially commercial enterprises? Informal).
- Chinatown – S Zoning: Are the first 2 Flrs commercial and/or cultural?
- How was 1.5 FSR (non-residential) determined? Why not 1.0?
- What is the relaxation for social housing?
- Should there be a maximum of units in a family unit?
- Development widths 50' for HA-1 and 75' for HA-1A Why? How does it align with heritage? Shouldn't it be smaller (25')?
- What are the parking /loading exemptions /relaxation?
- FSR vs Storey - What does this mean?
- Outright density for (HA1/HA1-A)?
- Why outright & conditional? Why isn't there an outright FSR if everything is conditional anyway?
- What is the incentive for mezzanine floor and laneway retail (how to be culturally appropriate towards revitalization)?
- What do the conditional sections mean? What are the conditions?
- What are the parking/loading requirements?
- HA-1 What is the faster process for 5storey?
- What will happen to the property adjacent to the Chinatown gate?

Response

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- The proposed development policies include reasonable measures to encourage development that fits with Chinatown’s scale and character. The proposed policies are explained in the policy report at this [link](#). Specifically, the proposed zoning for Chinatown is in Appendix A of the report.

Questions related to Economic Studies

- If you rescind/ revoke rezoning policy for Chinatown South (HA-1A) then the goal to “Achieve public benefits through CACs” is no longer achievable. How will benefits (e.g. 22 units of seniors housing @ 188 Keefer) be achieved?
- If heights are reduced and max. residential FSR is put into place (even with relaxation for social housing) where is incentive for developers to do anything but 100% market housing?
- If plan to keep FSR, less people less \$. Where are the incentive and bonus density charges to give to e.g. Benevolent Society to plan?
- Has there been an economic study on housing (affordability, reduced supply) or retail regarding the proposed changes?
- Was an economic impact study completed (post 2011)?
- Has staff looked at Gastown as a case study to look at what happened after zoning was constrained?
- Will a change in zoning affect property values and the types of businesses in Chinatown?
- Was a survey conducted for businesses who left, who stayed, their market and why? Was there any independent data collected? What types of businesses are moving in? Was data collected?

Response

- The 2011 Rezoning Policy for Chinatown South (HA-1A) aimed to leverage public benefits from new developments. From public consultation, staff heard that many people felt that the amount of public benefits achieved did not meet need or expectation, and that trading character for public benefits is not worth it.

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- A summary of economic studies conducted is included in this memorandum dated June 22, 2018 that was submitted to Council. The document link can be found [here](#).

Questions related to Consultation, Notification and Process

- Why only negative comments presented about the changes. Were there any positive comments. Were only selected people surveyed?
- What has the City heard re: increased density from different audiences? Who values it? What do long-term residents think?
- What happens on June 5 in terms of process? If not referred
- What was the public engagement for this process?
- How will comments make their way to council?
- Can speakers talk on June 5?
- How does the City plan on expanding their community engagement process for Chinatown? How would it differ from other communities?
- Why policy & rezoning @ the same time?
- What mechanisms will be put in place to monitor the effect of zoning changes?
- How can all stakeholders land owners be included in future consultation?
- How does the Planning Dept work with commercial/economic agencies when zoning changes are proposed?
- How can developers work with community members and regenerate Chinatown (without affecting height)?
- What's the typical process for a development policy/guide lines?
- Why is the report being submitted before public consultation process with community?
- What consideration for land owners that the goal posts won't shift in middle of process?
- What is the community response to the 2nd floor office idea?
- Clarification in the presentation *report* i.e. regarding business leaving.
- Who has been involved in Chinatown voices?
- What was density viewed positive or negative as revitalization.
- What steps are the City doing to maintain the same full 'rezoning' process?

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- What would happen to this plan after the election if there is a significant change in Council?
- Does the business association truly represent all businesses in Chinatown? What is their make-up?
- Who endorsed the 2011-12 plan? Who is supporting this plan?
- What info prompted the changes from the 2011 plan? And what is the plan expecting to produce?

Response

- Staff endeavour to consult the public and work with community partners in developing these proposed policies. A summary of public engagement is included as Appendix F in the policy report [here](#).
- A background of conditions in Chinatown leading up to the 2011 Rezoning Policy for Chinatown South is included in this memorandum dated June 22, 2018 that was submitted to Council. The document link can be found [here](#).

Questions related to Housing

- What affordable housing targets are we achieving in this plan?*
- What does Social housing mean? For whom? Welfare rate?
- What affordable housing options will be lost in downgrading the conditions*
- Can there be an incentive for seniors housing?
- What does “social housing” mean? Is this welfare rate?

Response

- The city-wide social housing definition applies to Chinatown (HA-1 and HA-1A). The definition can be found [here](#).
- The proposed development policies include some flexibility for buildings with social housing. The second floor non-residential use requirement can be waived if the building contains social housing.

Questions related to Cultural and Intangible Heritage

- What kind of stewardship is considered? (eg. UNESCO bid)

- Will the proposal enhance the expression of Chinese Culture in Chinatown
- How does City plan to find the intangible now? (heritage, culture)?
- Why call it Chinatown if there are no Chinese businesses or less & less Chinese people coming here?
- Why do we want to be UNESCO Heritage site when the area is not thriving? There are other sites that we could consider.
- How do the revisions/policy changes fit into the UNESCO application? If UNESCO is approved, how does this impact the plan?

Response

- In 2017, City Council directed staff to undertake cultural and economic development, as a preparation step towards applying for UNESCO World Heritage Site designation.
- More work will be done with the community to look at how to enhance and grow Chinatown's living culture and intangible heritage.

Questions related to Data/ Research

- Are there any data on new supply of housing, price of new housing, target market, medium income, change in demographics,
- Was a study done to determine the ratio b/w residential & commercial? What is the optimal ratio?
- What types of dwelling has been developed since 2011 (market/social/SROS)? How does that compare to local incomes in Chinatown & at large?
- What is the square footage cost & how has that changed?
- What is this plan expecting to produce? higher rents?
- Have there been any traffic studies along the commercial corridors? Including laneways.

Response

- Some of the data requested is included in in this memorandum dated June 22, 2018 that was submitted to Council. The document link can be found [here](#).

Questions related to Design Guidelines

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- “C” Revised design guidelines – What does that look like? Modern? Historical Design?
- What does “Character” mean?
- How many people are aware that neighbouring community will ‘look down’ if Chinatown being built up (building heights lower)?

Response

- Chinatown’s character is often described as fine-grained and pedestrian scale. Further, it was observed by many in the community that its’ character also includes the intangible (non-building related) aspects, such as sights, smells, people and businesses.
- A description of Chinatown’s character can be found in this this memorandum dated June 22, 2018 that was submitted to Council. The document link can be found [here](#).

Questions related to General Chinatown Planning

- How is Planning working with senior levels of gov’t, other depts., and community service providers to create the multi-faceted well-being? As described in the presentation?
- How will the plan (City) revitalize Chinatown? (What is the vision?) Why lower heights?
- What is the policy to bring vibrancy? What is the intention of Rezoning policy help vibrancy?
- How is this plan capturing “place making”(The entrance to Chinatown)?
- Who is the team of 7 people: languages spoken, understanding of local/cultural context, priorities?
- What type of business is dislikeable?
- How can you get more people in Chinatown? (We need Chinese people)
- Who will benefit from the development in the community?
- How was the boundary of (HA-1/HA1-A) defined?
- Why is creating density & bringing more people to Chinatown not listed as a policy?

Response

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- The Chinatown Vision adopted by Council in 2001 identifies three key directions: a vibrant culture, a prosperous economy and a strong and engaged community. The Vision continues to serve as the blueprint for Chinatown’s revitalization today.
- The proposed development policies will encourage quality development that fits Chinatown’s character to continue to bring new energy into the neighbourhood.
- Development policies are only part of the larger plan for Chinatown. The Chinatown Neighbourhood Plan also includes strategies to attract and promote businesses, to retain existing businesses, tourism development and youth development.

Questions related to Surrounding areas, Northeast False Creek and Viaducts

- How do the viaducts impact Chinatown? Prior to Union won’t fit with new development.
- Why the money (CAC 15 million for revitalization of Hogan Alley) but nothing to do with Chinatown?
- If Georgia Viaduct being taking down. How could the City revitalize Chinatown?
- Is the release of the new False Creek North Plan to build 1,000,000 square feet on two blocks of viaduct land with towers of 12, 14, and 22 storeys not significant enough to warrant keeping Chinatown South at higher buildings than the historic district?

Response

- The Northeast False Creek Plan adopted by Council in 2018 specifies that buildings on the two Main Street blocks will respect Chinatown’s character. The majority of buildings on these blocks will have a maximum height of 90’, with the exception of taller buildings on the western portion of the west block.
- Future development in the NEFC Plan area is expected to increase demands for commercial and residential spaces in Chinatown.

Comments

- Page 16 of the Rezoning Proposal – “The public comments form the basis of staff recommendations for revised zoning for Chinatown described in

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section 4.” But Planning Staff has not engaged the property owners or the merchants. Owners were first notified in late April after the report was prepared.

- Interest in intangible heritage and cultural importance – and have new development reflect this thoughtfully.

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Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability
website: vancouver.ca and vancouver.ca/chinatown