

**MINUTES OF THE  
GASTOWN HISTORIC AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**NOVEMBER 19, 2014**

A Regular Meeting of the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee (GHAPAC) was held on Wednesday, November 19, 2014 at 4:00 p.m., at the City of Vancouver, Broadway Room, 515 West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver, BC.

- PRESENT:** Carol Sill, Community Resident Owner, Chair  
Glenda Bartosh, Local Property Owner  
Shelley Bruce, Community Heritage Representative  
Alan Davies, Community Architect  
Mila Kostic, Community Business Representative  
Ashley Pope, Community Architect  
Glade Schoenfeld, Community Engineer (arrived 4:16 pm)
- ABSENT:** Chris Fair, Community Business Representative, Vice-Chair  
Jon Stovell, Community Property Owner
- ALSO PRESENT:** Matthew Cavanaugh, Cadillac Fairview (Item 3)  
Paul Cheng, Development Planner  
Marie Fares, B+H Architecture (Item 3)  
Brian Jackson, General Manager, Planning and  
Development Services, City of Vancouver (Item 4)  
Zlatan Jankovic, Heritage Planner  
Laura Jimenez, Adrian Smith Gordon Hill Architecture (Item 3)  
Jimmy Sun, Cadillac Fairview (Item 3)  
James Vasto, B+H Architecture (Item 3)
- RECORDING SECRETARY:** Linda Tylla, Raincoast Ventures Ltd.

With a quorum being present, Chair Sill called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

**1) Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda was approved as circulated.

**2) Adoption of Minutes**

**MOVED** by Mila Kostic  
**SECONDED** by Glenda Bartosh

THAT the minutes of the October 15, 2014 meeting of the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee be adopted.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

3) **Waterfront Tower - 601 West Cordova Street - DE418532**

Chair Sill welcomed the proponents and advised them of the GHAPC Meeting Procedures.

Zlatan Jankovic, Heritage Planner introduced the item, advising that the development permit application for a mixed-use office tower on a site immediately east of the CPR Station building has been received. The proposal was initially presented to GHAPC on December 18, 2013, at the pre-application stage. At that time GHAPC generally supported the proposal, recommended some changes and requested that the final proposal be brought back to the Committee for review at the development application permit stage. It was noted that the applicant had addressed some of GHAPC's previous comments given at the December 18 meeting.

Although the site is not located within Gastown Historic Area boundaries, this proposal was presented to GHAPC because of its proximity to Gastown and its potential impact on the heritage character of the area.

Paul Cheng, Development Planner noted that it had been discovered on November 18, 2014 that, due to a miscommunication earlier in the process, the height of the building exceeded the Council-imposed view cone by 13 metres, and that the design of the building would need to be revisited. It was further noted that due to the view cone restriction, the applicant would not be able to take advantage of the possibility of building a taller, thinner tower to reduce the impediment on the adjacent heritage building as suggested by Committee resolution on December 18, 2013.

Laura Jimenez, Adrian Smith + Gordon Hill Architecture, introduced herself and the project team in attendance. Ms. Jimenez provided an overview of the project, including site context and design details.

Glade Schoenfeld arrived at this time (4:16 pm) and recused himself from the discussion on this item, as his engineering firm is part of the project team for the development.

The project team and staff received comments and responded to various questions related to the application and project proposal.

**MOVED by Ashley Pope**  
**SECONDED by Glenda Bartosh**

That the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee expresses gratitude for the opportunity to review and comment on the development permit application for the Waterfront Tower at 601 West Cordova Street, and due to the current issue with the height of the proposed tower, will defer providing a motion of support or non-support until the tower reaches its final design stage;

However the Committee does recommend that as the design process continues, further consideration be given to the following:

- The project's impact on the cultural landscape of a the area, particularly in the pedestrian realm;
- A greater setback from the CPR Heritage Class A building; and
- Given the requirements for the lower tower height, a review of the overall massing of the building; and

That the Committee looks forward to seeing the project again if significant changes are made to the built form of the tower.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### 4) **Gastown - Current DE Permit Applications and Related Issues**

On October 15, 2014 the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee requested to meet with the Director of Planning, City of Vancouver, to discuss current issues affecting Gastown, which have emerged as a result of recent development permit applications/enquiries presented to GHAPC - in particular the demolition of designated buildings, the height of rooftop additions, form of development and massing on consolidated sites, potential loss of historic character of the area, cumulative effects of new developments in the area, and application/interpretation of the HA-2 District Schedule and Design Guidelines.

Brian Jackson, General Manager, Planning and Development Services, City of Vancouver, appeared before the Committee to address their related concerns.

Chair Sill raised a question on behalf of the Committee in regard to the City's long term vision for the district given that in the past year, GHAPC has reviewed several large scale development applications proposed in Gastown that exceed the height limitations specified in the HA-2 Bylaw.

In, response, Mr. Jackson advised that the long-term vision for Gastown is as a nationally designated historic neighbourhood, and that planning is always done in the context of a national designated historic district and Vancouver's top tourism district. The City recognizes that there are some buildings that are unusable in their current state, and that consideration must be given to the utility of the building to balance heritage consideration with economic demands, particularly for office developments. He noted that the three applications on Water Street were more than have been seen in a long time, and that staff want to avoid a block that is built to the absolute maximum. He further noted that the newly adopted Downtown East Side Plan did not make changes to the built form provisions for Gastown, adding that there is flexibility to enhance the heritage character of the neighbourhood and balance economic demands. He also confirmed that the sawtooth profile provision for new buildings built beside existing heritage buildings was still in place.

On behalf of the Committee, Chair Sill raised a question regarding how the Gastown HA-2 Design Guidelines should be used in conjunction with the HA-2 Bylaws and questioned how strongly the Committee should seek enforcement on the Design

Guidelines as some recent proposals. She also asked for clarification on how the City determines the acceptability of a project before it is sent to GHAPC for review.

In response, Mr. Jackson noted that in many cases he relies on his staff to advise on the appropriateness and alignment and that they would not challenge the Committee with something completely outside of realm of possibilities.

Mr. Cheng noted that if a proposed addition is for a historical building, it typically is supposed to be only one or two storeys, and that staff are striving to balance the strong need for office space in the area with a one or two storey addition, and that the façade should always retain the original profile with additional storeys well set back.

Concerns were raised in relation to the creation of monolithic consolidated blocks in Gastown, that encumbered sites are not dealt with separately, and that policy is silent on the addition on heritage buildings. The Committee asked if the bylaws and guidelines were of equal weight in terms of height restrictions.

Mr. Jackson advised that the City takes the best advice from both the advisory group and professional group, and that Planning takes into account zoning regulations, recommendations from committees and staff, and makes decisions considering all input.

Mr. Jackson further advised that there is discretion to be exercised, and that the preference would be to see the envelope pushed on office rather than residential space as there is more opportunity for residential development in other east side areas. He also noted that as they move forward on a proposal, they will continue to work together to shape the applications, and that if the Committee is concerned that staff are not being rigorous enough on an application, the Committee can provide more feedback. Some proponents come to the City for a review in the pre-application stage and staff identify issues to be considered and the Committee has the opportunity to express concern to those considerations.

Discussion ensued relative to the challenges associated with large consolidated sites such as the Enriques site.

Mr. Jackson noted that staff look to the Committee for dialogue on finding compatible uses as part of a standard. He also noted that there are limited tools, grants and tax structures in Canada to promote total preservation, but they would like to protect the resources before the fall down, enliven the area and keep the buildings alive.

Discussion ensued on the quality of the design solutions being presented, preserving the granularity of each building when there are larger consolidated projects behind the façade, and the importance of the water-side landscape in terms of heritage value.

Mr. Jankovic advised that staff have been monitoring the possible accumulative effect of infill on Gastown as proposals are evaluated which take into consideration views to the North Shore, saw-tooth profile, the streetscape character as

information comes forward, but the final results are not know as many projects are still in the pre-application stage. The Committee requested that staff provide more preamble on the context of the project as they are presented in order to assist members to assess the proposal.

Discussion ensued on the Heritage Bank. Mr. Jackson advised that the City will be seeking advice from Heritage consultants and staff on the best possible tools to motivate heritage preservation in the city.

Discussion ensued on the use of Commemorative Integrity Evaluations by Parks Canada and how they might be used to determine the accumulative effect of development on Gastown.

Mr. Jackson advised that staff will continue to investigate how to mitigate concerns, manage change, and meet community interests like economic demand, affordable housing and heritage preservation.

The Committee thanked Mr. Jackson and staff for their comments, and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to have their concerns addressed.

5) **NEXT MEETING:**

DATE: December 17, 2014  
TIME: 4.00 p.m.  
PLACE: Hastings Mill Room (4A), Woodward's

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

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Chair

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Date Approved