



**GASTOWN HISTORIC AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
DECEMBER 16, 2020**

Minutes of the meeting of the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee (GHAPC) held on Wednesday, December 16, 2020, via videoconference.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Brady Dunlop, Community Architect, Chair  
Peter Meiszner, Community Resident Owner, Vice-Chair  
Mahbod Biazi, Community Property Owner  
Sarah Chesterman, Community Resident Tenant  
Jurian ter Horst, Community Heritage Representative

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Clarence Lowe, Community Business Representative  
Natalie Telewiak, Local Property Owner

**LIAISONS PRESENT:** Councillor Colleen Hardwick

**GUESTS:** Bonnie Ma, Planner, Downtown Eastside Planning Team

**STAFF:** Hugh McLean, Heritage Planner

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Carol Lee, Mosaic Writing Group

**Call to Order**

Hugh McLean, Heritage Planner, called the meeting to order at 4:16 p.m.

**1. Introductions and Welcome**

Mr. McLean acknowledged the unceded ancestral territories of the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tseil-Waututh First Nations and thanked them for having care for this land.

Mr. McLean conducted the roll call.

Mr. McLean advised that the development permit application for 555 West Cordova Street, which had previously been scheduled to be presented today, will be deferred to a future meeting.

**2. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes**

MOVED by Peter Meiszner  
SECONDED by Mahbod Biazi

THAT the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee adopts the agenda for the December 16, 2020 meeting, as presented.

CARRIED

MOVED by Peter Meiszner  
SECONDED by Mahbod Biazi

THAT the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee adopts the minutes of the September 16, 2020 meeting, as presented.

CARRIED

### 3. **Downtown Eastside Plan and Vision Update**

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 Street 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 and health campus
  - Prior Street downgrading and 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.

Staff responded to questions from the GHAPC members on:

- The housing targets were developed collaboratively with the Housing Vancouver Team and the DTES community

- Consultation will be undertaken in 2021 regarding the proposed uses for the additional heights and densities
- Request for specific information on the housing projects that have been completed
- Engineering Services and the Vancouver Park Board are developing a strategy to address the lack of access to public washroom facilities in the DTES
- Concern regarding the reluctance for developers to provide market housing in the DTES:
  - The limited land base and the heritage requirements in Gastown may be contributing factors
  - Suggestion to provide incentives to developers to undertake projects and heritage rehabilitation in Gastown
- Request for an update on the reopening of Oppenheimer Park
- Suggestion to re-evaluate the targets given that significant progress has already been made after three years and the DTES Plan has a life of 30 years.

#### 4. **Gastown Places and Spaces**

Hugh McLean, Heritage Planner, led the review of a presentation titled “Gastown Places and Spaces” and highlighted:

- Development of a transportation plan for Gastown that will include the streets and public spaces
- Initial Initiatives:
  - Determine the process and cost to rehabilitate brick street pavers in 13 areas in Gastown
  - Extend and improve the temporary plaza on Carrall Street
  - Consultation with First Nations regarding the Gassy Jack statue status
- The transportation plan will address traffic on Water Street.

Staff responded to questions from the GHAPC members on

- Request for information with respect to discussions regarding Indigenous place naming and reconstruction of creeks and pathways in Gastown
- Consultation is underway with the Musqueam Indian Band regarding the Gassy Jack statue
- Whether the streetscape will be renewed to reflect the 1920/1930 period or continue with the 1970s urban renewal
- Concern regarding that delay in the schedule for the Gastown Places and Spaces plan:
  - Request that Engineering staff provide an update when more information on the Gastown Places and Spaces plan is available
- The restoration of Blood Alley Square will proceed independently of the Gastown Places and Spaces plan:
  - Concern regarding the removal of two heritage buildings in Blood Alley that have not been replaced
- The need to expedite the rehabilitation of the brick street pavers:
  - Suggestion to learn from cities with climate similar to Vancouver regarding the causes for the failure of bricks
- Whether there is a potential for traffic to be calmed or removed from Water Street
- Suggestion to include the improvement of Cordova Street in the Gastown Places and Spaces plan to make it more pedestrian and cyclist friendly.

**5. Other Business**

Mr. McLean advised that he will be leaving the City of Vancouver at the end of 2020 and this will be his last meeting with GHAPC. Mr. McLean's replacement has not yet been named.

**6. Adjournment**

MOVED by Jurian ter Horst  
SECONDED by Mahbod Biazzi

THAT the meeting of the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee meeting held December 16, 2020 be adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

CARRIED

**Next Meeting:**

Date: January 20, 2021  
Time: 4:00 p.m.  
Place: Videoconference (WebEx Events)

Certified correct:

---

Brady Dunlop, Chair

Date Approved