



Date: March 6, 2014
Time: 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Location: Town Hall Meeting Room, City Hall
Chair: Kevin McNaney

Northeast False Creek Working Group Meeting Notes

In Attendance:

1. Abigail Bond City of Vancouver, Housing
2. Ann Phelps Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival
3. Annette O'Shea Yaletown BIA
4. Bob Laurie Vancouver Board of Trade
5. Brett Radelet Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival
6. Deanna Geisheimer ArtWorks Gallery
7. Elizabeth Berger Concord Pacific
8. Fern Jeffries False Creek Residents Association
9. Jennifer Ingham Science World
10. Kathy Gibler Dr. Sun Yat Sun Chinese Garden
11. Leslie Adams Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Association
12. Kevin McNaney City of Vancouver, Planning
13. Mark Mazzone Aquilini Development & Construction Inc
14. Matt Meehan Concord Pacific
15. Peter Webb Concord Pacific
16. Patsy McMillan City Gate Intertower Committee
17. Paula Huber City of Vancouver, Planning
18. Riaan DeBeer Aquilini Development & Construction Inc
19. Zane Hill City of Vancouver, Planning

Introductions

5:00 pm

The meeting began with a quick round of introductions.

Agenda Item 1: Developer Updates

5:05 pm

Aquilini

Riaan D. updated the group on the Area 7a (Rogers Arena) development. Work has started on the south tower, the site has been cleared and jet grouting has begun. This process is a specialist form of shoring for the excavation and creates less vibration. This specialist work is being undertaken to keep the nearby viaduct structures safe. Site excavation is anticipated to take approximately 6 months.

Discussion:

In response to an enquiry regarding the commitment of local labour from the DTES being used on the project, Riaan D. responded that the legal agreement with the city is yet to be finalised, however they have been pulling resources from Bladerunners and Embers. Although exact numbers weren't available at the meeting, Aquilini can provide these at a later date.

Canadian Metropolitan Properties (CMP)

No CMP representatives were present at the meeting.

Concord

Peter W. updated the group. Concord is hoping to advance the negotiation around the 5b West site. Once complete, updates can be brought to the group at a later date.

It was noted that Concord supports the FCRA's green light campaign currently underway in the area. Peter Webb noted that delaying the rezoning of 5b West will not help to advance the park timing.

Discussion

The FCRA noted that there bollards between the Science World Parking lot and the seawall have been removed and as a result cars have been seen entering the seawall when heavy event traffic exists in the area (e.g. Heritage Classic, Cirque de Soleil). It was also noted that the section of seawall between Carrall Street and the Plaza of Nations is confusing as to which area is for pedestrians and cyclists.

Further to this, John Murray, FCRA Director, attended an Active Transportation Projects Subcommittee (ATPC) met last night and talked about the seawall conditions and the planned interim improvements.

In response to a question from the FCRA as to how the upgrades would be funded, Kevin responded that there are a number of methods to approach funding for this including CAC's but nothing has been decided.

In response to a question from Fern J. of whether there was a community engagement strategy around the renewal of the presentation centre's permit on Area 9, Kevin M. noted that this is most likely a consideration and decision by the Director of Planning (DoP) as it is simply an extension of an existing permit and is proposing nothing new.

As for the timing around this application, Kevin M. noted that the City has not received an application yet. The current permit expires on May 16th, 2014.

The FCRA noted that they were not happy with previous permit and the lack of public consultation as part of that process regarding the improvements sought by the city.

In closing, Peter W. of Concord explained that it was their ambition to renew the presentation centre, begin advertising for 5b West and get construction underway for that site. He added that the delay of 5B west is only delaying the Creekside park extension further. He also added that the interim markings to the pavement at Carrall Street and Pacific is not successful and is confusing.

PavCo Paragon

No CMP representatives were present at the meeting.

Agenda Item 2:

5:20 pm

DTES Local Area Plan Presentation

Kevin McNaney, Abigail Bond

Discussion:

Kevin M. made a presentation that covered: process and consultation, social impact assessment, public response to emerging directions from spring 2013. He noted that the response to the solutions proposed results in a significant polarity of opinion.

The DTES Plan includes the following general objectives: create housing choice, consider additional height, strengthen Hastings Street, foster economic growth, secure community assets and manage social change.

Chapters of the Plan

1. Improved well being
2. Heritage – quick starts: first nations, Chinatown building grants sustainability
3. Community place making
4. Safe and accessible parks and open space
5. Vibrant inclusive local economy
6. Arts and culture opportunities

7. Improved transportation infrastructure and safety
8. Well managed growth and development

Kevin also provided the group with highlights of distinct areas within the plan:

1. Gastown – reinforced heritage scale and character, public realm improvements, no zoning and policy changes
2. Industrial areas – key to support port, review rail town cluster
3. Hastings East – let get in 1990's, new rezoning to allow for change with social and family housing
4. Kiwassa – another industrial let go area. Rezoning policy to support family housing
5. Strathcona – preserve heritage character, create shopping street, allow for secured market rental on Gore
6. Thornton Park – mixed use pending viaducts decision, honour Hogan's alley
7. Chinatown – implement changes already approved by council
8. Victory square – minor height increases, density changes to incent social and secured market rental
9. DOD – 12 city blocks – maintain as rental housing district, priority area for social housing, anything over 1 FSR has to be 60 % social housing, requires partners to innovate and replace SRO rooms over time

One of the main focusses of the plan is to provide Health Homes for All. Abi Bond from the Housing Centre presented the highlights of the housing strategy.

- 3 areas of concern – affordability, squeeze, maintenance
- Need more diversity of housing for low and moderate incomes.
- Increase in social housing to replace SROs and improved affordability and conditions.
- Create more housing choice through income subsidies and mental health supports.
- Deliver 1400 units of new social housing in the first 10 years of the plan. Expect 450 of those units to be delivered in the first 5 years of the plan.
- Current crisis in housing. Half the City's homeless population lives here.
- Residents paying more than 50% of income on housing.
- 9,400 households with housing need. Can provide 2/3 within the community and 1/3 outside of the DTES.
- Market housing is growing and the number of private SRO units is declining. Anticipate a significant shift in market opportunities for the area. Aim of the plan is the replacement of housing options.
- Need support from other levels of government to implement the plan objectives.

Public Benefits Strategy

- Housing is most important and lion's share of CACs goes to housing

- Community facilities
- Parks and Open space
-

Council meeting is next Wednesday March 12, 2014. JWG were encouraged to attend and share their thoughts on the plan with Council.

Questions and Discussion:

- Q. Rental rate of market housing
- A. Market will set the rent (1 bed \$1100)

- Q. Limit or cap on the 230 sq.ft. units?
- A. Will try to balance the needs and encourage a mix, even within the buildings

- Q.. Does Oppenheimer allow for an increased height to allow for the 60% affordable component
- A. Yes will increase to 120 ft.

- Q. Anticipate push back regarding gentrification and densification. How will this be managed?
- A. City is encouraging a mixed income community and most physical change will come in the east Broadway Corridor.

- Q. Is there research that supports and all rental zone or precedent?
- A. The West End is a precinct wherein the rate of change restriction on rental demolition protect the mix of 80%. Vancouver as a whole has a very high percentage of rental housing and yet is one of the most livable cities in the world. Tenure will not undermine the potential of the area to be successful. The staff response that the West End provides a relevant example of an all rental zone was questioned by some members since the West End does not have the same level of social chaos and people with addictions as the DTES.
- Q. What has been learned from the Woodward's project?
- A. When Woodward's was built the impacts were not clearly understood, has been some impacts. The social impact assessment was done up front as part of this plan to mitigate negative impacts. SIA included learning from Woodward's on the mix.
- Q. Are industrial lands in the DTES protected?
- A. Yes, protected through regional policy and produce good jobs. Art galleries are moving into industrial lands, how does that reconcile? More work to come on this through implementation.

General Commentary:

- Concern around tenure – many of the non-profit societies ~~depending~~ depend on funding from contracts with federal government ~~so new units may house people that are imported into the area rather than existing residents.~~ This is a part of the overall budget plan for the housing development. This means that housing goes to high impact individuals from other parts of the country/province, coming out of federal and provincial institutions, rather than to existing DTES residents.
- Will be difficult to make new non-profit buildings successful and expect a mix of incomes is necessary to match funding available.
- Seems to be a move towards a mix of housing to avoid concentration of housing types in one area. Socially mixing projects appropriately for the context is desirable and helps with fit.
- Redistribution is allowing people to return to their original neighbourhoods from which they originally came.
- JWG acknowledged the huge amount of work that went into the working of the plan and the difficult issues.
- Opportunities such as reduced entry level market housing should be explored as part of the home ownership category.
- Concerns raised with the significant spending on housing and the low spending on parks and open space. New residents need opportunities to be near parks. Limited opportunities to create new park space. Concerns about more people and limited parks, hospitals, schools, etc.
- Need to do more work on local economy with the BIA.
- Acknowledged that the process was difficult and discussions were tough. Some commentary that plan focuses on the poorest areas. Every neighbourhood was involved in consultation.
- JWG would have liked an opportunity to discuss emerging directions.
- How can an implementation process engage the community beyond the low income population?

Next Meetings

April 3rd, May 1st