

MINUTES OF THE 

CHINATOWN HISTORIC AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

March 13, 2012

A meeting of the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee was held on Tuesday, March 13, 2012 at 5:43 p.m. in the Boardroom of the Chinese Cultural Centre, 50 East Pender Street, Vancouver, BC.

PRESENT: Henry Tom, Chair
Alan James, Vice Chair
Shirley Chan
George Chow
Chris Kearn
William Ma
James Tan

ABSENT: Carla Graebner
Oliver Lang
Mike Newall
Grace Wong

ALSO PRESENT: Zlatan Jankovic, Heritage Planner
Allison Dunnet, Planner, DTES Neighbourhood Group
Foad Rafii, Rafii Architects Inc.
Craig Marcynuik, Solterra Development Corp.
Garry Papers, Development Planner

RECORDING SECRETARY: Rae Ratslef, Raincoast Ventures Ltd.

Agenda Varied

The order of the Agenda was varied to allow for a round of self-introductions, and to conduct the election of the Chair and Vice Chair, prior to consideration of the Minutes of the February 14, 2012 meeting.

1) New Membership and the Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2012

On February 29, 2012 City Council approved re-appointments and new appointments to CHAPC adopting the motion:

“THAT the following individuals, as members of the organizations and categories indicated, be appointed to the Chinatown Historic Area Committee, terms to commence immediately and end December 2, 2012:

- Shirley Chan, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden Society
- Alan James, Architectural Institute of British Columbia
- Chris Kearn, SUCCESS
- Mike Newall, Planning Institute of British Columbia
- James Tan, Member-at-Large;

FURTHER THAT the following individuals, as members of the organizations and categories indicated, be appointed to the Chinatown Historic Area Committee, terms to commence immediately and end December 1, 2013:

- George Chow, Chinese Cultural Centre
- Carla Graebner, Heritage Vancouver
- Oliver Lang, Architectural Institute of British Columbia
- William Ma, Chinatown Property Owners
- Henry Tom, Chinatown Merchants' Association
- Grace Wong, Chinatown Merchants' Association."

MOVED by Shirley Chan
SECONDED by George Chow

THAT Henry Tom be nominated for the position of Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee Chair for a one-year term, until the end of 2012.

CARRIED UNANIMIOUSLY

Henry Tom consented to the nomination. There being no other further nominations for the position, Henry Tom was acclaimed Chair.

MOVED by Shirley Chan
SECONDED by William Ma

THAT Alan James be nominated for the position of Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee Vice Chair for a one-year term, until the end of 2012.

CARRIED UNANIMIOUSLY

Alan James consented to the nomination. There being no further nominations for the position, Alan James was acclaimed Vice Chair.

Adoption of Minutes

MOVED by Shirley Chan
SECONDED by Alan James

THAT the minutes of the February 14, 2012 meeting be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED UNANIMIOUSLY

Agenda Varied

The order of the Agenda was further varied to consider Item 3, Other Business, prior to Item 2.

3) Other Business

3.1) Celebrate Vancouver 125 / Mural Program - Update 525 Carrall St. (C, M) - Mural Proposal

Zlatan Jankovic, Heritage Planner, informed that the proponents for the 525 Carrall Street Mural Proposal, which was considered by CHAPC at its February 14, 2012 meeting, had decided not to proceed at this time. An emailed memorandum had been sent to the Chair explaining in detail the rationale for not proceeding, which the Chair would forward to the members for their information.

3.2) Heritage Alliance

Chair Tom and Vice Chair James reported on a recent meeting of the City's heritage committee Chairs and Vice Chairs. A decision was made at that meeting to form a Heritage Alliance the idea of which would be to promote heritage ideas in the City, the first being to update the current heritage inventory of buildings. A letter would be sent to City Council in this regard.

Zlatan Jankovic, Heritage Planner, provided background information leading up to the meeting. The intention was to unify the heritage thinking to promote that interest and to articulate concerns with a stronger voice. It would be concentrated locally, provincially and nationally as well. Heritage BC was the provincial effort developing a new strategic plan to work further on the development of these linkages. It was hoped that financing would be approved for community based heritage programs. A further detailed presentation would be provided to CHAPC at a future date.

It was confirmed that there had previously been two presentations to Council seeking to update the heritage registry. While some provincial funding had been received in the past, it had in the past been redirected to other initiatives.

2) 189 Keefer Street - DE 415496

The proposal was received to develop a new mixed-use building containing commercial use on the ground and mezzanine floors and 81 residential units on the 2nd to 9th floor, over three levels of underground parking. The project is located at the northwest corner of the Main and Keefer Streets in HA-1A area of Chinatown.

Although the overall height of the building, as per the HA-1A Guidelines, is 90 feet the upper façade has setbacks at different elevations, to give an impression of varied building heights. The break-up of facades has been achieved by a regular rhythm of pilasters, changing in massing, and variegated street-wall and rooflines. Both principle facades are segmented over the entire height, into vertical bays with the maximum widths of less than 25 feet. Upper massing is designed to be visually subordinate to the lower portion of the principle façade. The materials proposed for the project include two colours of brick, both compatible with the brick colours extensively used in Chinatown, and three different colours of coated concrete.

Without replicating the heritage facades, effort has been made to create a level of complexity and an architectural expression, compatible with the heritage character of the area.

Zlatan Jankovic, Heritage Planner, introduced the project, noting that it was the second development being processed through the newly developed Guidelines. The technical review by staff indicated that the proposal was quite responsive to the key elements of the Guidelines.

Garry Papers, Development Planner, reviewed detailed design drawings, building renderings, and composite renderings illustrating the proposed development in the existing context, to scale and with shadowing. Staff felt the proposal supported the Guidelines well, and would take it forward to the Urban Design Panel the following week. Staff had no major issues to be brought to the attention of CHAPC and was of the view that this was a very thoughtful and well resolved proposal.

Referencing displayed presentation materials, Foad Rafii, Rafii Architects Inc., offered a further detailed review of the proposal.

Discussion ensued on: incorporation of car share spaces and electric car charging facility; use of materials; mix and affordability of residential units; ability to facilitate a restaurant; site size; separate addresses for residential and commercial; parkade access; use of the clock tower and potential use of neon; sign bylaw permitting process; usability of the landscaped deck off the amenity room; landscaping on rooftop areas; accessibility of the building; firewall finish; accommodation of commercial and residential garbage and recycling; programmatic needs of the site; potential to provide electrical supply for public use, in the context of City planning for the area.

Members were complimentary about the execution of the project; use of materials and colours; thoughtfulness in breaking up of storefronts; separated visitor parking; roof top gardens and common spaces; consideration given to lane animation, lighting and plantings; contemporary expression respecting the Chinatown character; and the mix of units which allowed for family housing.

Members expressed minor reservations about the incorporation of a clock tower as an icon with consideration to the residential across the street; minimizing impacts on the Night Market especially during construction; and suggested consideration of the following: incorporation of artistic elements; lessening contrast between the brick and the light on the firewall; provide for attaching blade neons; opportunity at corner of Keefer and Main to make the individual bay characters stronger by raising the cornice line; and need for sufficient space to allow for businesses to encroach on the sidewalk without creating an issue for pedestrians.

MOVED by Alan James
SECONDED by William Ma

THAT the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee support as presented the proposal for 189 Keefer Street - DE 415496.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Next meeting:

DATE: April 10, 2012
TIME: 5:30 PM
PLACE: Chinese Cultural Centre Boardroom, 50 East Pender Street

The meeting adjourned at 6:47 pm.

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