

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

September 11, 2012

A meeting of the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee was held on Tuesday, September 11, 2012 at 5:34 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 (arrived 5:54 p.m.)
Carla Graebner (arrived 5:40 p.m.)
William Ma
Councillor Tony Tang (departed 7:19 p.m.)

ABSENT: Jun Ing
Oliver Lang
Chris Kean
Mike Newall
James Tan
Grace Wong

ALSO PRESENT: Paul Cheng, Development Planner
Scott Edwards, Manager, Street Activities Branch, Engineering
Department (Item 1)
Zlatan Jankovic, Heritage Planner
Neil Peacock, Engineering Department (Item 1)

RECORDING SECRETARY: Rae Ratslef, Raincoast Ventures Ltd.

Quorum

Although a quorum was not present, members agreed to proceed with the meeting with the understanding that any proposed motions would be subject to ratification at the next meeting where a quorum was present.

Adoption of Minutes

MOVED by Shirley Chan
SECONDED by Alan James

THAT the minutes of the July 10, 2012 meeting be adopted as circulated.

SUBJECT TO RATIFICATION

1) Public Bike Share

Utilizing an overhead presentation titled "Vancouver Public Bike Share Program September 2012", Scott Edwards, Manager, Street Activities Branch, Engineering Department, provided an overview of the Public Bike Share (PBS) project.

Mr. Edwards discussed the overall premise of the PBS project; successes and challenges of similar projects in other cities; financial disincentives for long-term rentals; and key challenges relative to helmet distribution, maximizing ridership, impact on other entities and urban realm and transportation adjustments.

5:40 p.m.

Carla Graebner arrived at the meeting.

Information was provided regarding key opportunities to create a flexible and responsive system; ensure local businesses lever benefits; and enhance mobility. Mr. Edwards discussed the Vancouver-based PBS system Phase 1; station placement and importance of linkage to transit; system operator and the role of the City of Vancouver; and next steps and timeline.

5:54 p.m.

George Chow arrived at the meeting.

Comments were offered on: suggestion that the PBS offer a lower increment of cost for single use on a single day; insurance and risk of theft/damage; implementation costs and the City's role in the PBS launch; and emphasis of the marketing and outreach to address how to safely use the system on an ongoing basis. Any further comments/questions can be emailed to publicbikeshare@vancouver.ca.

2) Chinatown Character and Advice to Developers and Architects

Joe Wai, Architect, and members of the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee (VCRC), provided background information on the VCRC meeting earlier in the year, which resulted in the creation of the document "Chinatown Character and Advice to Developers and Architects - Summary Notes of a Discussion in Chinatown".

In the document's development, the VCRC considered the origins of Chinatown as a 19th century ghetto and the culturally derived intangibles that form its current overall character, which includes the blurring of public and private open space. Comments were offered on the rhythm of Chinatown's buildings and activities, and how design can encourage certain uses.

It was questioned how best to encourage and enable designers and architects to become sensitized to the desired character for Chinatown developments, including the potential for sensitization workshops. The overall usefulness of the VCRC document in providing context for the guidelines was noted.

Comments were offered regarding: outcomes of VCRC's meetings with developers; influence of the community on the vitality of a building; suggestion that the City could address some concerns, i.e. cornices, through regulation; CHAPC's role in helping the Planning Department with the philosophical and inspirational elements of proposals; value of the VCRC document to reflect and remember; heightened sensory experience of Chinatown compared to other neighbourhoods and how to achieve this experience from the buildings themselves; suggestion to create a 15-20 minute video about the history and character of Chinatown; and the possibility of requiring a charette for every project considered.

Discussion continued in which staff noted the importance and value of CHAPC's critique on proposals. It was added that the clearer CHAPC's feedback, the easier it was for staff and the developer, and ultimately Council in making a final decision.

Members unanimously agreed that the VCRC document should become required reading for all existing and future CHAPC members.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee encourage staff to provide developers and architects of all new development projects in Chinatown with the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee (VCRC)'s document "Chinatown Character and Advice to Developers and Architects - Summary Notes of a Discussion in Chinatown", in addition to the HA-1 and HA-1A Design Guidelines; and invite the applicants to present their proposals to CHAPC as early as possible, at the conceptual design stage.

SUBJECT TO RATIFICATION

7:19 p.m.

Councillor Tony Tang departed the meeting.

3) Setsuko Sonoda, Ph.D. (University of Tokyo), Associate Professor of University of Hyogo, Japan

Dr. Setsuko Sonoda, Associate Professor of University of Hyogo, provided a verbal presentation of her findings regarding the history of Chinese communities in Kobe and in the Americas, and introduced her current work and findings relative to historical conservation efforts of Vancouver's Chinatown.

CHAPC was informed that Vancouver's Chinatown is unique for many reasons including, its location in an urban centre; social functions for the residents are contained in the area; and that huge numbers of Chinese visit frequently or on weekends. Dr. Sonoda discussed the preciousness of Chinatown's historical materials and the importance of their preservation, and noted their vulnerability in times of war, natural disasters, or rapid political change.

Dr. Sonoda welcomed any feedback that CHAPC members might have as a contribution to her current research.

Next meeting:

DATE: October 09, 2012
TIME: 5:30 PM
PLACE: Chinese Cultural Centre Boardroom, 50 East Pender Street

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

* * * * *