MINUTES OF THE
GASTOWN HISTORIC AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 19, 2012

A Regular Meeting of the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee was held on Wednesday, September 18, 2012, at 4:06 pm, at the Water Street Café, 300 Water Street.

PRESENT: Carol Sill, Community Resident Owner, Chair
Glenda Bartosh, Local Property Owner*
Chris Fair, Community Business Representative, Vice-Chair
Sean Farell, Community Business Representative
Ariella Stoeber, Community Hospitality Representative

ABSENT: Will Beale, Community Resident Tenant
Jim Lehto, Community Heritage Representative

ALSO PRESENT: Tony Tang, Council Liaison
Zlatan Jankovic, Heritage Planner

CITY CLERK’S OFFICE: Bonnie Kennett, Meeting Coordinator

* Denotes absence for a portion of the meeting.

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.

1) Public Realm Maintenance in Gastown

Neal Carley, Streets Division, Engineering, provided an update on maintenance issues and problems along Water Street and the surrounding area. One of the underlying issues is an unstable sub-base and a consultant needs to be obtained to look at options to firm up the sub-base in Gastown. He also noted that asphalt patches are the current quick fix solution with a long term plan being to manage the sub-base.

Mr. Carley encouraged the conversation to continue and report any issues directly to himself or via 311.

Some issues and concerns raised by members included:

- What is the time frame for temporary asphalt patches to be in place?
- With the removal of the viaducts, how will changes with traffic levels be dealt with?
- Maintaining heritage and historical values of Gastown.
- City-wide policies versus National Historic Sites Guidelines.
- Has research into alternative products / materials to cobblestones currently being used been conducted? Mr. Carley indicated replacement cobblestones have been ordered and offered to provide a sample to the Committee once received.
- What happens to the cobblestones that have been replaced? Are they reused?
• The sidewalk at the corner of Columbia and Cordova had bricks that appeared to be in good condition stacked. When work was complete, the sidewalk was patched with asphalt. Why were the bricks not replaced?
• Is there a policy in place at City Hall for staff to refer to / be aware of guidelines in Gastown and other historic areas in the City?

2) Public Bike Share

Scott Edwards, Streets Activities Branch, Engineering, provided a presentation on the Vancouver Public Bike Share Program which included 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 public / private entities, perception of safety and location of stations.

Information was also provided regarding key opportunities to create a flexible and responsive system and enhancing mobility by providing a network of short-term self-service bicycle stations providing an extension to other modes of transportation such as walking and transit. Next steps and a timeline for the project were presented with a projected implementation date in late spring 2013.

Additional comments and questions can be emailed to publicbikeshare@vancouver.ca.

Some issues and concerns raised by members included:
• Consulting with GHAPC in the future with potential sites and locations for placement of bike stations taking into account historic reference and point of view, pedestrian traffic, tourist flow and residents of the neighbourhood.
• Will there be flexibility with where stands will be positions and aesthetics (eg: colour, style)?
• Concerns were raised with regards to the bicycles being a target for theft.

3) Viaducts Concept Plan Presentation

Karis Hiebert and Kirsten Robinson, Planners, Central Area Planning and Devan Fitch, Strategic Transportation Planning, Engineering provided a presentation and overview of the Viaducts Concept Plan and along with Lon LaClaire, Manager, Strategic Transportation Planning responded to questions.

Some issues, concerns and comments raised by members included:
• Concerns with increased traffic on Water Street and Cordova Street.
• An increase in truck traffic.
• Cost of maintaining the viaducts versus maintaining streets and heritage in Gastown.
• Lost ambiance.
• Impacts of vibrations on heritage buildings and area.
• The Plan will provide Gastown with a north-south connection and not just east-west.
• General support from those present for removal of the viaducts.
As there was a lack of quorum, the following draft motion will be considered at a future meeting.

THAT the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee supports the Viaducts Concept Plan as presented at the September 19, 2012, meeting.

FURTHER THAT the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee requests that traffic impacts on the historic area be further assessed to ensure that the outcome does not create an unnecessary increase in traffic in the area including the vibration impact on heritage structures.

Next Meeting:
DATE: October 17, 2012
TIME: 4:00 pm
PLACE: Water Street Café, 300 Water Street, Vancouver, BC.

The meeting adjourned at 6:39 pm.

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