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**URBAN DESIGN PANEL MINUTES**

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**DATE:** July 26, 2000

**TIME:** 4.00 p.m.

**PLACE:** Committee Room #1, City Hall

**PRESENT:** MEMBERS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PANEL:  
Paul Grant [Chair]  
Lance Berelowitz  
Tom Bunting  
James Cheng [Item 1 only]  
Alan Endall [Items 1 and 2 only]  
Bruce Hemstock  
Jack Lutsky [Item 1 only]  
Keith Ross  
Sorin Tatomir

**REGRETS:** Roger Hughes  
Gilbert Raynard  
Brian Palmquist

**Acting Recording  
Secretary:** M. Penner

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ITEMS REVIEWED AT THIS MEETING	
1.	VGH Precinct
2.	500 Nicola Street
3.	VCC Skytrain Station - <b>WORKSHOP</b>

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<b>1. Address:</b>	<b>Vancouver General Hospital [VGH] Precinct</b>
Use:	Mixed
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Rezoning
Architect:	Davidson Yuen Simpson
Owner:	Vancouver General Hospital
Review:	<b>Second</b> [previous as a Workshop]
Delegation:	R. Yuen, D. Vaughn, M. Betteridge
Staff:	R. Segal, T. Phipps

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**EVALUATION: [8 - 0] Full Support**

• **Introduction:**

The Rezoning Planner, Mr. Tom Phipps, introduced the VGH Precinct Study, advising that the Precinct Policy Statement [PPS] was approved by Council on June 15, 2000, and had been a joint effort between VGH, the City and Park Board Staff. Mr. Phipps introduced Mr. Tilo Driessen, who would comment on the Park Board's perspective and Mr. Ralph Segal, Development Planner, would present the urban design issues.

Mr. Phipps advised VGH's rezoning application, in response to their Council-approved PPS, would provide up to 734,000 sq. ft. of a Medical Bio Technology [MBT] development, retain uses, provide 225,000 sq. ft. of residential development, involving potential re-use, or replacement, of the former Nurses' Residence. He noted this rezoning application would increase the overall site coverage from 50 to 55%, the FSR from 2.23 to 2.60, as well as increase the floor area potential by 553,900 sq. ft. The objectives of the PPS included the intent to establish a greater sense of order and identity for a more pedestrian-oriented precinct.

Mr. Phipps explained the PPS had established 3 acceptable scenarios for the development of new hospital facilities, approximately 620,000 sq. ft. of MBT buildings, provision of a minimum of 6 acres of public open space, and retention of the 1906 Heather Pavilion. He noted that each of these Council-supported scenarios had an internal focus of an east/west 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue and a north/south Willow Street pedestrian corridors, along with pedestrian links north of City Square. Of the three acceptable scenarios, VGH had elected to go with Scenario 'D', which offered a large, integrated and contiguous space surrounding the 1906 Heather Pavilion; the adjacent buildings would define the park with a distinctive and highly regular urban edge with Heather Pavilion accentuated in a centred formal setting. He further advised that although VGH had based their application on 'D', it did deviate from the original presentation in a number of significant aspects and that Mr. Segal would address those.

Mr. Ralph Segal, Development Planner, stressed the general configuration of Scenario 'D' would be adhered to, but sought Panel's advise on a number of varying issues. He noted the main open space of the Heritage Common in terms of the proposed park footprint was consistent with the drawings; however, the surface of the open space would not follow natural grade but be raised out of the ground on top for a parking structure. In addition, the west side buildings would be pushed much closer to the projected property line along the Willow Street alignment. Also, staff had concerns with the misalignment of 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and disappointed that the current ramp condition on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue in front of the Centennial Pavilion was to be retained. Mr. Segal noted the City's desire to close Willow Street south of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, remove the vehicular component [parking] from the alignment north of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue where there is currently no street, and make it a pedestrian-only walkway. In closing, Mr. Segal requested Panel's

reaction to this important proposed development which would shape the VGH Precinct for the next 50 years.

Mr. Driessen referred to three agreements between the City and VGH concerning provision of open space: [i] the existing four tennis courts at the corner of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Oak Street; [ii] the existing open space between the parkade and Willow Street; and [iii] the required future open space bounded by 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues and Willow and Heather Streets. In terms of quality and quantity, Mr. Driessen felt this proposed open space would not achieve what was guaranteed under the existing legal agreements. It would not be equivalent to the Park Board's interpretation and calculation.

He also advised the size of the underground parking structure severely limited the Park Board's ability to enrich the park with plantings that would grow to mature size over time and preferred downsizing the parking garage so as to have a substantial perimeter to design and construct a park place. He also stressed their concern regarding access, loading, and servicing for the Heather Pavilion in relation to the underground parking, which would result in further intrusion into the open space.

Mr. Driessen noted the open space south of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue was a functioning park now - given Engineering's willingness to close the Willow Street right-of-way with potential for a neighbourhood park, but that this area would be compromised by being squeezed between the MBT and residential buildings. He advised although Scenario 'D' had been accepted by Council and the DP Board as a possible alternative, the Park Board preferred the previously-approved plan to that proposed by VGH.

In response to a question from the Panel regarding location of the tennis courts [which the Park Board was not obliged to build] and the Park Board's initial preference, Mr. Phipps advised they were not included in the original set of options in any specific location, but that VGH was obliged to provide/create a site for tennis courts, if the need arose. Mr. Phipps confirmed the Park Board would involve the public in an open space design discussion, closer to implementation time.

Mr. Yuen added they had made no commitment to replace the existing 4 tennis courts in the location shown and had reservations about their adjacency to Heather Pavilion. He also advised that he and Mr. Driessen had discussed this matter and felt an amicable agreement would be reached.

Mr. Segal confirmed this would not be the proper spot for tennis courts, and that staff envisioned this park to be a continuous open space with the Heritage Building as the centre focal point.

In response to another Panel question concerning the amount of open space, Mr. Yuen confirmed they would be supplying more than required by the agreements. Mr. Phipps added the 1989 agreement required 5.1 acres; however, this project proposed 7.3 acres.

In response to a Member's question about below grade parking and what other parking spaces were proposed, Mr. Yuen advised most of the parking would be under the ambulatory care facility at 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Oak Street, which would contain about 450 to 500 stalls [the requirement being approximately 350], and that the proposed accesses would be off Heather Street and linked to parking under buildings entering off 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and exiting to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Mr. Phipps stressed the importance of the Panel's comments as to how well the Applicant's scheme had achieved Scenario 'D' or, perhaps, had improved on it.

• **Applicant's Opening Comments:**

Mr. Yuen referred to their 2 years of working with VGH, that a hospital was ever-changing, that their attempt to plan what health care needs would be within the next 20 years had been a difficult process and that this proposed development was their estimate in terms of:

1. health care requirements for VGH;
2. to determine VGH's health care needs in terms of medical technical research space; and
3. open space requirements.

Mr. Yuen advised that since the 1989 agreement they had also agreed to convert/rehabilitate the 1906 Heather Pavilion which had not been part of the previous scheme. In addition, their ultimate scheme proposed approximately 730,000 sq. ft. of bio-technology space, replacement of the Centennial Pavilion, and some 7 acres of open space. He also stressed the extreme difficulties of re-arranging existing building patterns, as well as moving the parking ramp.

To a query from the Panel concerning proposed uses for the Heather Pavilion and the Nurses' Residence, Mr. Yuen advised this had been discussed with the City, noting the uses for the Heather Pavilion could vary from a park community centre, to a wellness centre, possibly health and fitness, as well as other common facilities, with potential bio-tech spaces on the upper floors. Concerning the Nurses' Residence, Mr. Yuen referred to 2 proposals which had been discussed with VGH: [i] to retain and convert it to a seniors' congregate assisted living facility; or [ii] for development of a condominium complex.

Mr. Yuen confirmed that as not all of their future tenants were known at this time, they were unable to comment on the design or massing of all of the proposed bio-tech buildings; however, most laboratory buildings were 3-4 storeys, but could go up to 10 storeys. He also advised the activities in the proposed bio-tech buildings would vary from floor to floor, would have larger mechanical systems, and the typical floorplate would be approximately 10,000 sq. ft., and provide underground parking. Mr. Phipps added that the City would like to adopt guidelines that would identify acceptable heights, setbacks and massings rather than a specified set of regulations based on Form of Development [FoD], and that each building would have to apply and respond to those guidelines and obtain approval from Council each time.

The Panel reviewed the models and posted materials

The Chair reminded the Panel of specific concerns to be dealt with: the setbacks on Willow Street, the grading of the Park off 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, should the central park be flat or graded or stepped down; the alignment of 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue; orientation of residential buildings south of 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue as related to the amount and location of the green; retention of the ramp; the

vehicular component on Willow Street as presented in the scheme put forward; size of parking under the green space and whether it should be reduced to allow for large mature trees; views from 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue into the open space looking south, and views to the Heather Pavilion from the open space; servicing concerns; the size and quality of the open space south off 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the issue of tennis courts. Also, to bear in mind this was not a specific design application, but rather a rezoning application, and to direct their comments to issues of usage, nature of open space, etc., as opposed to the design specifics.

- **Panel's Comments:**

The Panel agreed they had been presented with an enormous amount of complex issues on a large scaled proposal and felt somewhat apprehensive about providing succinct comments at this time, and noted the importance of a more defined, clearer outline of proposed open space, pedestrian circulation and parking, and that Scenario 'D' should be viewed as a "master plan", as all proposed buildings were not to be built one at a time. There was a broad consensus that tennis courts should not be placed where the view of the Heather Pavilion would be obstructed; it was felt the Heritage Common should be focussed on Heather Pavilion rather than 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, projecting more meaning into that setting. The Panel felt the ramp removal would present a major undertaking and was financially not feasible. The majority also felt the alignment of the 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor should not be jogged at Willow, though continuation past the future entry to Centennial Pavilion received a mixed reaction. There were comments of approval for the proposed rehabilitation of Heather Pavilion and future plans for the Nurses' Residence. The Panel was in agreement with the appropriateness of introducing commercial at grade re the Heritage Common in order to animate this area. The Panel liked the direction this proposal was going and emphasized the fundamental importance of achieving the formal simplicity and axial formality of the Council-approved scheme "D", which would assist to integrate this area back into the city grid, and supported the notion of preserving the Heather Pavilion, but felt the issue of the parking garage and Heritage Common being on different levels could be problematic.

All agreed a presentation of a more concise illustration and conceptual diagrams of what the overall principles would be in defining the character of the pedestrian and open space linkages, would greatly assist in understanding the ultimate form of the individual parcels.

The Chair summarized the Panel's comments noting there had been strong support for the fabric generally as it was presented; there was concurrence re maintaining view corridors in both directions; and there had been a number of comments on the proposed uses being appropriate and acceptable. However, the Chair confirmed there were larger issues Staff had asked about, e.g., there was a clear message that the public open space south of Heather Pavilion must follow the grade down from 12<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue; generally speaking there were comments in favour of enhancing the Heather Pavilion and making more of it. rather than less, as the focal point in this precinct. There was unanimous agreement for the need of guidelines in terms of this development, including the open space and built form. There had been numerous suggestions regarding the extension of the 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor westward on Oak Street including one of T-boning it as it goes west of the MBT buildings, i.e., to go north and south, thereby enhancing the view corridor. Most members believed it was essential to create a clear grid alignment along 11<sup>th</sup> avenue to the future Centennial Pavilion entry and respect setbacks which would achieve the same objective along the Willow Street corridor.

- **Applicant's Response:**

Mr. Yuen noted the Panel's comments were appreciated and would be taken into consideration in the following two months when they would elaborate more on the landscaping and urban design aspects. He acknowledge a Member's comments pertaining to the simplicity and axial formality of the Council-approved scheme "D" and that the request for a more descriptive urban design would be worked on, for presentation at the next UDP meeting. He confirmed the issue of tennis courts was neither here nor there - if they needed to go, that would not be a problem. Concerning Willow Street access, their intent was for pedestrians only, and should not have been shown as a vehicular access. Mr. Yuen noted the suggestion of T-boning 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue, although interesting, could be difficult, but they would give it more thought.

Mr. Don Vaughn added that raising the parking was not a rezoning requirement, and that the suggestion of including a commercial edge would not be problematic.

Mr. Segal informed the Panel that Staff fully anticipated re-visiting this project and would be asking VGH to develop a fuller, more advanced public realm concept, taking the Panel's comments into consideration.

The Chair called for a vote, with the proviso and understanding that the Panel would see this project again in a more detailed format, with specific responses to the Panel's issues - and on that basis the Panel voted and the Chair advised the Applicant they had the support of the Panel.

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2. Address:	500 Nicola Street
DA:	404521
Use:	Mixed [21 & 26 storeys, 182 dwelling units]
Zoning:	CD-1
Application Status:	Completer after Preliminary
Architect:	James KM Cheng
Owner:	Hillsboro Development Ltd.
Review:	<i>Second</i>
Delegation:	B. Pearce, J. Cheng, D. Dumais
Staff:	R. Segal

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**EVALUATION: [6 - 0] Full Support**

- **Introduction:**

The Development Planner, Mr. Ralph Segal, introduced this project and its surrounding area, and advised that in principle, approval had been given by the Development Permit Board, with a number of conditions that needed to be addressed in terms of the townhouse interface with the streets and that Staff was pleased with the way the townhouses had evolved, creating a great edge condition on the three surrounding streets. Mr. Segal pointed out the project's commercial frontage along the water's edge at ground level with townhouses above. He pointed out that at the preliminary meeting there had been a conditions that the floorplate of 595 m<sup>2</sup> be met, along with a tower base of 8 storeys, as per the guidelines. However, the proposal exceeded these guidelines, i.e., the tower floorplates are 621 m<sup>2</sup> and 618 m<sup>2</sup>, respectively, and proposed a tower base of 10 storeys - the latter does reduce the bulk of the towers, and that Staff sought the Panel's advice on these overages.

Mr. Segal also pointed out that another condition resulting from the preliminary proposal was to widen the view slot between the towers to 20 ft. and although the amended plan now showed a 18.8 ft.-wide slot, Staff thought this to be acceptable. Another condition called for a reduction in the overall mass of the mechanical penthouses.

Mr. Segal noted Staff felt all conditions had been satisfied and that these towers/townhouses would be a terrific addition in the area, and would help to complete and compliment the array of towers along the waterfront.

- **Applicant's Opening Comments:**

Mr. Cheng apologised that the model appeared darker than intended and that the colour palette and materials would be primarily zinc, limestone and some wood on the penthouse levels. He also advised the proportion of the towers would be slimmer if the verticality were to be emphasized more, and that there had been mechanical over-runs in order to provide air conditioning for the penthouses.

Mr. Cheng felt in essence they had met the various guidelines.

- **Panel's Comments:**

The Panel referred to this submission as an “exemplary” project and was unanimous in its support, stating the Applicant had more than earned the overage in floorplate size, felt the 10-storey tower base was fine, and did not see the proposed massing as being problematic. One Member noted that the City’s restriction on height was too onerous, requiring more flexibility and rationale. Positive comments were also made about the proposed commercial aspect on the water’s edge and the way the townhouses interfaced with the streets. Several Members referred to the corner lobbies and how they added to the streetscape, with emphasis on Hastings Street. Although there was a comment about the penthouses being somewhat over-massed, others felt the mechanical suited the towers, enhanced the buildings and presented a dramatic flair. Approval was voiced for the centre space water feature, as well as the architecture, noting it was refined and classy, and concluded that the Panel rarely saw projects that had received such detailed attention.

The Chair briefly summarised the Panel’s positive comments and added his own, stating this project had been elegantly executed and would indeed stand the test of time.

- **Applicant’s Response:**

The Applicant smiled his pleasure.

The Chair called for the vote and advised the Applicant he had the support of the Panel.



<b>3. Address:</b>	VCC SkyTrain Station - WORKSHOP
Use:	Rapid Transit Station
Zoning:	I-2, I-3
Application Status:	Workshop
Architect:	Walter Francl and Architectura
Owner/ <i>Proponent</i> :	Rapid Transit Project 2000
Review:	First
Delegation:	E. Leflufy, W. Francl
Staff:	A. Molaro, P. St. Michel, J. Bird

*Mr. Alan Endall left the Panel due to conflict of interest.*

**EVALUATION:** Workshop - vote not taken

- **Introduction:**

Ms. Anita Molaro, Development Planner, introduced Ms. Jane Bird, Manager of the City's Rapid Transit Office, who would present a brief background on transit, and that Ms. Pat St. Michel, Development Planner, would direct the workshop.

Ms. Bird advised this was their fourth, and last, presentation to the Panel regarding skytrain stations, and would focus on the Vancouver Community College [VCC] connection and briefly described the responsibilities of Phase I, i.e., extensions, roles and responsibilities of the City, the Province and TransLink. Phase 1 would run from New Westminster to VCC, which would be the terminus for Phase I, and that there were 4 stations in Vancouver: at Rupert Street, Renfrew Street, Broadway and Commercial Drive, and now this one at VCC.

Ms. Bird stressed the Province, through the Rapid Transit Project Office 2000 Ltd. [RTPO], was responsible for design, planning and construction of a line; the City's responsibility was to work with the Province on the extensions and the priorities were: [i] to ensure the stations would be well-integrated into the neighbourhood, to ensure they would be seen as assets in their respective communities, rather than liabilities; and [ii] to ensure that the skytrain system itself would be part of an integrated transit system overall, incorporating bus connections, bike ways, etc. She also pointed out that by statute, the Province did not have to apply for development or building permits - but had agreed to participate in a process with the City whereby they would go through a development permit review-like process, i.e., appearing at Urban Design Panel meetings and the Development Permit Board and that the comments of the Panel and the Board would be treated as advice and considerations, which the Province would take in good faith.

Ms. Bird noted that although this Workshop would deal with the VCC Station, comments would be sought on the connections which would be critical in this case because of the existing grade challenges. The Proponent would seek advice as to the best way to make connections to the station - via bikeway, Clark Drive bridge, etc., and advised of a further complication in their analysis which concerned the land that was on the site of the proposed station and upon completion of this station, would result in "residual" land - a potential development site.

Ms. St. Michel advised this SkyTrain station would serve the neighbourhood of Grandview/Woodlands to the east, VCC College and Mt. Pleasant to the south, and future developments on the False Creek Flats [the Flats].

She commented on recent rezonings in the Flats to I-3, to allow for high tech developments, and briefly touched on recent rezonings of the Fining site, proposed development of the Schroeder site, and that CN had approached the City concerning a potential subdivision of lands in the central portion of the Flats. A further potential for change in the Flats was the on-going urban design structure study.

Ms. St. Michel noted City's concern and anxiety that the VCC Station and its precinct serving the residents in the Flats and existing neighbourhoods to the east, would be well-integrated into the neighbourhood and the City-wide transportation system.

The proposed location of this station was at the Flats level at the bottom of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, which leads up to Clark Drive, and would be accessed from 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue at Keith Road - that would also provide drop-off service and emergency access. This 'side-platform' designed station would incorporate a high degree of transparency for security, visibility and access to day-lighting as this design would have a single entry provided at the Flat's level to a ticketing concourse, providing elevator and stair access to platforms above.

Ms. St. Michel noted Staff's concern regarding the connections this station would provide and sought Panel's advice on the proposed connection to the east of the station, considering Clark Drive was approximately 15 m above the proposed entry level, and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue - between Clark Drive and the station, was at a 10-11% grade, creating difficulty in general, and making it impossible for the disabled to access from Clark Drive. It would also necessitate transit users of one #22 bus negotiate this 15 m grade in order to return to platform level; however, the RTPO was in the process of negotiating options for the corner site in order to provide a lower-level transition grade. Also under consideration to be provided by development on this residual site was a combination of ramping and elevator access which could provide that change in grade.

Ms. St. Michel advised Planning had the following concerns with providing access through this potential development site, and would appreciate the Panel's comments, suggestions, ideas, etc., regarding the following issues:

- the uncertainty of development of a residual site in relation to the VCC Station would require conditions and agreements to ensure it provided public access to the lower level, and that the requirement for implementing such various conditions/agreements could discourage this development;
- the perceived publicness of such a route, i.e., the corner site has been rezoned to I-3 for potential high tech tenants who might have securities issues with a highly public route through the site;
- in general, Staff are concerned with the potential options incurred by the problematic issue of bringing people down to grade and then up to the station - which was not perceived as being viable; and

- the evolving neighbourhood and employment centre to the east, along with the bus connections, would not be well-served without a second access to the station from Clark, [Ms. St. Michel noted the No. 22 bus route would not provide a direct transfer point to the skytrain system, and any attempt to re-route this bus to do so, would increase travel time by 5-7 minutes].

Ms. St. Michel mentioned another major component of the SkyTrain system was continuation of the Central Valley Greenway, which would connect Burnaby to False Creek. Connecting the greenway to the Flats faces the same grade challenges as access to the station.

Options include:

- a pedestrian crossing provided at Clark Drive, which could be combined with a route that goes under the Clark bridge as well; and
- to access the cut at a point further back [i.e., Woodland] down to Flats level.

At this point the Greenways Team hadn't developed a position or preferred concept of how best to connect the Greenways to the VCC Station and the Flats, and would appreciate the Panel's comments.

A third area of concern regarding connections is access across 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue at Keith for students of VCC. VCC is concerned about students with varied disabilities crossing 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and options of providing a pedestrian bridge were discussed.

In summary, Ms. St. Michel request the Panel's input so as to better resolve the integration and connection with the surrounding community, in particular:

1. connection to Clark and resolution of the grade change;
2. connection to Central Valley greenway with the Flats and the station;
3. connection to VCC, and crossing 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Keith; and
4. more specific aspects of the station design, for entry to the forecourt and drop-off area.

Mr. Leflufy presented a brief overview, and stated the importance of understanding that the City, TansLink and the Rapid Transit Project Office [RTPO] represented three different respective roles and responsibilities, and their efforts to date were to try to "make the whole greater than the sum of the parts" - therefore by understanding the respective limited responsibility, ensuring that their own parts contributed to a broader whole would influence significantly their functionality, as well as the community's appreciation and use of the facility being constructed. The RTPO was interested in Panel's commentary both in the station architecture, as well as the activity issues.

Mr. Leflufy advised their consultants were the station architects and had also been retained to undertake "connectivity" studies [i.e., studies of the various connections: east, west and south] and to assist the RTPO to understand some of the implications of the residual property.

At this point the Chair requested Mr. Leflufy's indulgence in allowing a Panel Member, who had to leave the meeting, voice his comments at this time: The Member noted the upper access from Clark Drive was not only desirable but essential from a City point of view, and would be critical re integrating this back into the community to the east - either by stairs, ramps, etc., and felt the optimum place would be the north end of the bridge. He felt the station itself was exemplary - the architecture combined a dynamic, contemporary and exciting design and that it captured the spirit of many of the public process comments the Proponent had heard from community. He found the forecourt to be an important component of the functioning of the station and should portray a more vibrant and animated public space. Interesting commercial activity will be important to the forecourt. He also felt the crossing of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue from the south would be challenging and would cause extreme difficulty for the disabled. While crossing at-grade maybe difficult, overhead crossings are fraught with problems - an at-grade properly designed crossing would be preferable. Concerning the greenway, he felt many options to achieve the transition to grade needed further exploration, and noted that the greenway needs to work on both the regional and local access level.

Mr. Francl informed the Panel they had come up with several options for the residual site development, the crossing of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the elevations involved in reaching the skytrain platform from either at-grade, below-grade, via elevators, stairs, ramps, etc., and delved into a number of variables and problematic issues involved in each scenario.

In terms of the station, Mr. Francl advised a contemporary design had been selected, incorporating a taught, billowing roof form stretched over a structure which would be stayed below to a cable support system. In all other respects, the station design would be as mandated, i.e., an open, transparent station for security reasons, all of the public enclosures weather protection areas would be glazed, including the platform concourse - providing overviews from upper and lower levels onto the public areas. The weather protection area on the upper platform would feature glazed walls on both sides to a height of approximately 8-9 ft. Mr. Francl requested Panel's observations regarding improvements on their proposed design.

The Panel and Chair stressed concern about the problematic access from Clark and noted that while most of the stations were free-standing the VCC station would be hard to get to, and would be largely hidden from the south and the east. This proposal would be more difficult in that the development of this station would need to incorporate the residual site as part of the development in order to provide access. The Panel queried whether providing a fully integrated access from the east had been investigated as part of the station design, and expressed concern that it would be difficult to accomplish this access with a private development.

Mr. Leflufy noted their experience and research supported that an associated development as opposed to an integrated one was far easier to achieve and tended to be more successful, which had been the case in Vancouver. Their mandate for all the stations' architects had been to develop a station architecture which would make provision for, and allow for the association to evolve over time. Mr. Leflufy referenced the Burrard Street SkyTrain station which had a series of provisions that allowed connections to be built - One Bentall Centre, initially, subsequently to the Royal Centre and that there were provisions for connections to Bentall V and part of Park Place as well. In this specific case they felt development of the residual parcel might allow them to address a number of vertical connections; however, their primary mandate was to ensure the functionality of a station on opening day - with or without an associated development.

When questioned by a Member about the need for a residual site, Mr. Francl explained they needed to acquire a piece of property for a number of reasons and upon completion of this transit facility, there was likely to be some property left over which could become a development site which could evolve into a more active space than turning it into open space.

Ms. Molaro advised that access right now to the station is limited to the entry level at the Flat's elevation - and one of the concerns that Planning had was that all pedestrian access movement would be limited to that entry point, in accordance with the station's design. She referred to an entry point at Clark that could be made into a 2<sup>nd</sup> entry point to the station in order to avoid having pedestrians going all the way down to the entry level and then back up to the platform level.

A Member of the Panel felt it was unfortunate to have this beautifully designed station stuck down well below grade and not be visible from the street. Mr. Francl responded advising it would be visible from Clark Drive, but would be obscured from the corner of Clark and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

A discussion ensued regarding the importance of Clark as a connector to the station, the use of ramps, etc., was explored and that perhaps the proposed residual site could be utilized to make it a transitional integral part, working together with the station.

The Chair queried the use of escalator/mechanical movement systems and noted that many transit stations around the world utilized this method of moving people lengthy distances from different locations. At VCC station making pedestrians go down to the "catch basin" level only to return back up to platform level is bothersome and the need for an alternate design was crucial. It was also confirmed from the intersection of GNW and Keith down to the station would be a 1.5 to 2 m drop.

In response to a suggestion of adding a 2<sup>nd</sup> platform access, Mr. Francl advised that it would not be technically/functionally impossible to add a 2<sup>nd</sup> platform access and that it had been done before, but their concern resulted was 2-fold: [i] their experience had been that there's no such thing as a partial or secondary entrance, that if a station house were built, it would need to be a complete station with all of the allowances for space, escalators, etc. as if it were the only entrance; and [ii] when a station has 2 equal entrances, creating bi-directional movements on the platform level [left or right] would create an impact on the platform widths, as well as confusion on the platform level.

There was a lengthy discussion about the differences of various heights to the platform, from Clark, from 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Keith, the bridge, GNW, etc., and the general level of the Flats. The Panel questioned whether the station could be moved closer to Clark to facilitate access and suggested that at a minimum the planning for provision of a second station house should be undertaken now.

Mr. Leflufy added that TransLink's position was they felt strongly about a 2<sup>nd</sup> station house but only once the line had extended west into the Broadway corridor because at that time there would be more demand to use this station to go west.

The Chair stated this very elegant and well-designed station could stand alone; there could be access downward from Clark Drive that could interface at the upper level and carry on into the proposed high tech area; however, elevators would still be required for the handicapped train users but need not to be built now. He suggested they commence with the VCC station and then proceed with the planning - considering both directions; however, the varying grade levels, crossing 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, etc. would still be a challenge. He felt this wouldn't compromise the Phase 1 development of the station - but the design should be taken further in terms of what the future considerations are.

There was also a question about possibilities north of this site, e.g., the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue right-of-way and voiced interest in contemplated development immediately west of this site. Also where they intended to put the next station.

Mr. Francel advised the Finning site would be the next station site, and that they had undertaken some preliminary work with the City and with Finning's consultants to identify a station location immediately adjacent to the park in the triangle centre of their property - approximately 900 m between the 2 stations. Ms. St. Michel noted although much of the area had been rezoned to I-3, the Finning site was a comprehensive development zone, allowing for high tech users, hotels and an additional amount of retail which wouldn't be allowable under the I-3 zoning. The City had also had discussion with CN regarding their interest in possibly subdividing some 50+ acres, and that the City would also require approximately 4 acres of dedicated land for park space, i.e., about 10% of what the area to be subdivided. It was also noted that the Greenway, once down to the Flats, might use the Finning lands as a temporary route and in the long term may cross through the CN lands.

Ms. St. Michel mentioned a probable workforce of 20-30,000 additional persons in this area over the long term - a substantial work force and community that would need to be served by the rail line and the City would look to the Finning site station to serve much of that potential need.

The Chair emphasized that the purpose of the proposed VCC station would really be to satisfy a bus connection, the connection to the VCC and the neighbourhood to the east.

Mr. Leflufy confirmed that initially the primary draw was clearly to VCC; they have some patron movement analysis and are doing some further work but don't believe a significant population movement across from Clark; however, they have moved the station as far east as possible due to civil engineering issues associated with the alignment, getting under Clark Drive bridge, design criteria, etc. and confirmed this station would primarily serve a circle of 500 m, most of which was west of the site.

The Chair noted that the main skytrain objective would be to serve as a bus connection to VCC, and that the rest didn't play a part at this time.

More discussion ensued about the crossing of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, how it should be treated, e.g., with a 4-way grade level crossing, rather than just 2 ways, etc. General concern was expressed by the Panel regarding provision of a pedestrian bridge crossing and how it would affect the character of the street - the Panel expressed a preference for an at-grade crossing generally. The Panel commented that the proper widths of sidewalks and streetscape treatments were necessary, particularly on the residual site.

The Chair asked if the Panel would agree that the station as designed complied with the urban design point of view as an excellent piece of architecture - one Member responded that although the station was spectacular from an architectural point of view, it did not meet the requirements because the architect should have provided the Clark Drive connection to the site. The Chair commented that because the demand from Clark Drive was small and didn't feel it was a criteria that required an answer right away and thought the key to this project was the residual site and somehow there had to be a covenant-type arrangement between the vendor, the purchaser, and the City [in partnership] to make that connection an elegant and functional part of this station.

Ms. Bird noted that we needed this site to do more and were presenting a greater challenge to the development community in doing so.

Ms. St. Michel commented that a proper connection to the station from the east was necessary to serve the existing neighbourhood and to promote the future of that area, along with the Clark Drive industrial area.

Mr. Bird advised there would be an improved pedestrian connection across Clark Drive with Greenways - whether Greenways goes under Clark bridge or not - there would be an on-surface connection for late night users.

The Chair would be interesting in seeing the residual site become an integral part of the planning process to this station. As there were no further comments, he adjourned the meeting.

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