

DRA Board Meeting Minutes

September 8, 2020

Location: ZOOM

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Present: Paul Gandall (chair), Doug Boyd, Dianne Flood, Ruth Annis, Mathew Yee, Sandra Severs

City Council Liaison: Councillor Charlayne Thornton-Joe

City Staff: Mike Hill

Regrets: Dale Dearing, Ian Sutherland, Nicholas Harrington

Call to Order/Approval of Agenda

The meeting was called to order by Paul Gandall. The agenda was approved with one addition to New Business.

Councillor's Report- Charlayne Thornton-Joe

Camping at Centennial Square- The issue of homelessness is occupying huge amounts of Council time. An amendment by Councillor Young to take Centennial Square off the list of parks where camping will not be permitted passed at a recent Committee of the Whole. The DVBA is advocating for Centennial Square to be re-added to the list and the Mayor is seeking a vote on this Thursday this week. Other motions before Council will define the distance between tents and distance from paths and school zones. If tenting is allowed in Centennial Square, no more than 7-10 tents will be permitted under the new rules.

A question was asked about whether Oak Bay Lodge is a suitable location for short-term housing or whether concern about this potential use is push-back from Oak Bay residents. Charlayne responded that there are structural issues that need to be dealt with. There does not appear to be political will in the CRD to move forward with this proposal. New properties have been purchased by BC Housing for long-term housing.

In response to a question about whether there have been proposals to mitigate the effects of encampments on housed residents, Charlayne said that the police have stepped up with more patrols, the City has budgeted for an increase in bylaw officers and both the City and DVBA have increased their cleaning support. The increase in litter is not only a result of the encampments but also a result of an increase in the use of take-out containers as residents and tourists frequent downtown restaurants.

Businesses – Over 100 businesses have applied to expand their operations to patios and have, or are, receiving approval. Concern has been expressed about the impact of homelessness on the Downtown and that fear about working, living and travelling to the Downtown is impacting the ability of businesses to find staff and attract customers. Police reports of increases in assaults and property crime are also contributing to the anxiety.

Bastion Square Mural - Concern about the placement of the acronym ACAB (All Cops are Bastards) on a mural at Bastion Square is being debated. A meeting is being set up between staff and the artists.

Cannabis application- The application for a store on Johnston Street has been approved. Councillor Thornton-Joe voted against approval of the application having been the author of an

earlier motion requiring 400 m distance between establishments.

News Boxes – The DVBA is working to remove many of the news boxes in the Downtown that are no longer being used.

Downtown Update – Mike Hill

No report was produced this month because little has happened.

Central Park – The numbers of people who are camping in Central Park has increased dramatically as a result of the action to remove campers from Centennial Square which happened prior to the vote at last Thursday's Council meeting.

Broad Street – Overhead lighting in the 1000 Block will be in place by the end of the month. Feedback to the expansion of patios on this block and others has been positive.

Garden Grant- The grant for the Yates Street Garden has been issued.

Business Arising from the Minutes

- 1) **Website** -The neighbourhood descriptions are being updated on the City's website. Mike is looking for feedback about the writeup as well as photos that could be shared.
Update: Completed. Website is ready to go live.
- 2) **Great Neighbourhood Grants** -Dianne asked for a list of residents who had made application to the program so that the DRA can connect and support
Update: Mike will put together a list and forward that list to Dianne. (Outstanding)
- 3) **Urban Ecology and Agriculture Committee (UEC)**
The Board discussed the current garden waiver signed by participants and agreed that it should be re-examined in light of COVID-19.
Update: Paul will follow up with Nicholas on the garden waiver. (Outstanding)
- 4) **Community Amenities Fund** -Ian has not received any information about the amounts collected and distributed.
Update: Completed. Charlayne has provided information.
- 5) **Cridge Park**- It is Ian's understanding that Cridge Park is not designated as a municipal park.
Action: Completed. Charlayne has provided information.
- 6) **Community Engagement** – Proposal for website redevelopment
Action: Dale is asked to provide the Board with information about the WIX platform and to approach Starling Memory Designs for a quote on website redevelopment. (Outstanding)
- 7) **Victoria Community Association Network (VCAN) Paul**
There has been a request to the DRA to consider providing administration of the insurance policy covering the six community associations which do not have property. Fairfield currently provides this service.
Update: The conversation is deferred until the October Board meeting. (Outstanding)

Feasibility of contracting for part time admin/outreach –Paul/Dianne

Our request for financial assistance is still in place for consideration in next year's budget. In order to get traction in the midst of competing budget requests and in light of COVID 19 impacts, it was suggested that the DRA demonstrate to city staff and councillors more clearly that the Downtown Residents Association is active and working to make a difference in the Downtown core. It was pointed out that this is difficult in a volunteer organization when there is

little capacity to organize and the work of the Land Use Committee should be clear enough evidence of the DRA's efforts in the face of massive redevelopment in the downtown.

Given North Park's success in finding resources to hire staff, it was agreed that the DRA will approach North Park to learn more about their strategy.

Action: Paul and Dianne will initiate a conversation with North Park and set up a meeting with their staff person, Sarah Murray. Matt will look at the budget implications for the DRA in light of additional funding this year in response to COVID 19.

AGM Planning – Paul

Given the challenges and uncertainties of COVID 19, the Board discussed whether the AGM should be held in January (its traditional time) or whether it should be postponed until March.

Discussion about the challenges of conducting the AGM on-line were also discussed.

Action: Paul, Dianne, Matt, Nicholas and Sandra will meet to discuss further.

New Business – Press Release

Motion: To approve the Press Release on camping in Centennial Square with one change: the words referencing the inadequacy of washroom facilities in Centennial Square to be removed.

Moved: Doug Boyd

Seconded: Sandra Severs

CARRIED

The Board had a conversation about the process involved in the generation of press releases or statements to the press. Because of the time sensitive nature of responses, it was agreed that committees should be empowered to move this work forward in a timely manner on behalf of the Board. It was also agreed that Committee Chairs will be the point person for media contact with the Board President serving a secondary function.

Concern was expressed about the challenges of responding to contentious issues when there has not been time for conversation at a Board level about an agreed upon Board response.

Action: Sandra to set up a conversation with the Board about the issue of homelessness.

Questions on Standing Committee Reports

1) Land Use Committee (LUC)

Report attached. Ian was not able to be present at the Board meeting.

The Board acknowledged with gratitude the tremendous amount of work that Ian does on behalf of the DRA and also are grateful to Wendy for her assistance in providing such thorough reporting.

2) Urban Livability Committee (ULC)

Councillor Thornton-Joe's report and the press release cover the work of this portfolio.

3) Urban Ecology and Agriculture Committee (UEAC)

Nicholas was not able to be present for the Board meeting. No report.

4) Communications/Membership Committee (CMC)

Report attached. Doug will be putting together the monthly newsletter next week. Any items from Board members should be sent to him by next Wednesday.

5) Community Engagement Committee (CEC)

Dale was not able to be present for the Board meeting. No report.

Action: Paul will follow up with Dale about the website questions.

External Meeting Reports

1) Victoria Community Association Network (VCAN) Paul

Conversations about the identity and role of VCAN are underway. There is tension about the impacts of homeless encampments and the importance of neighbourhoods sharing the work of supporting homeless individuals.

2) Late Night Advisory Committee (LNAC)

Conversations with the province are underway to extend liquor licenses for outdoor patios. There is great concern among businesses that many will not survive the impact of COVID 19 shutdowns. Both VIHA and WorkSafeBC are involved in making sure that COVID 19 protocols are being observed.

Adjournment-The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Next meeting- Tuesday, October 13, 2020, 5:30 p.m. via ZOOM.

2020 AUG Project List for Board Meeting
DRA Land Use Committee
Updated 5 SEPT 2020

LUC: Current

1. Meeting w Karen Hoes on 4 Sept 2020. In light of revised public consultation process related to current state of emergency, discussed need for improved information sharing through Development Tracker similar to that of City of Vancouver website (reference: Rezoning Application - 357-475 West 41st Avenue and 1640-1650 Alberni St rezoning application), need for more accurate and comprehensive information on Public Notices, timing challenges between delayed delivery of Public Notices and deadline for feedback to the City, consider basic staff review of applications for technical specifications prior to proceeding to public for comment, need planning staff reports to consistently apply DCAP and OCP policies & guidelines across all projects with objectivity and communicating how projects do/do not conform to DCAP, OCP and Heritage conservation principles. Provides objective and transparent foundation for establishing and conveying rationale for staff recommendation and helps fosters public trust in the process.
2. 1150 Cook St, Pluto's – Dan Robbins & Fraser McColl – Development Permit with Variance. At 16 storeys (+1 from previous version), it's over the 10-storey height limit that defines the density for the R-48 zone and the proposed density (now 7.78 not 8.98 FSR) is significantly above the OCP max. 129 units with 41 parking spots and 157 bike parking. Pluto's has had lease extended to Mar 2021. Revised plans posted to Devt Tracker 13 May 2020. Status: Presented at ADP on 22 July 2020 With Applicant 24 Jul 2020. Video for ADP meeting acquired from the City on 4 Sept 2020 and circulated to CALUC members. Feedback from CALUC members continues on basis of new information. Letter to be sent.
3. 1400 Quadra, Clarity Cannabis – Rezoning Application to allow for a Storefront Cannabis Retailer. Letter sent 30 June 2020. CotW on 02 July 2020: Staff recommendation was to decline. CotW approved alternate motion “add storefront cannabis retailer as a permitted use at 1400 Quadra Street and remove storefront cannabis retailer as a permitted use at 851 Johnson Street. Status: Approved at Public Hearing 03 Sept 2020.
4. 1150 Douglas, Bay Centre – Liquor Distribution Branch – Rezoning Application for retail cannabis for commercial space along Fort St. Application Received and under Review by City 20 Aug 2020.
5. 937 View St – Nelson Investments w/ de Hoog & Kierulf – Development Permit with Variance to build a 18-storey (from 15-storey or 45m to 54m) 267 (from 253) market rental units with parking for 0 (from 15) vehicles and 307 (from 172) bikes on R48 land and located in Fort St Heritage Corridor using pre-fabricated components. Proposed FSR 7.95 (from 7.27). Several setback variances are sought which negatively effect livability. Applicant is not proposing to rezone away from R-48 zone. Key messages from City staff report regarding previous plan: “still have major concerns with the overall massing, form and character of the proposed building. Although the initial 2017 submission still had challenges, the design had a few more consistencies with the design guidelines. The applicant was provided with a copy of the staff review based on the February 2017 submission for ease of reference.

- Increase separation distances on east and south property lines.
- Reduce the impact of shading on the public realm.
- Provide a radical redesign of the form and character of the building.

Staff do not feel like the application sufficiently meets the design guidelines to warrant a review by the ADP. If the applicant chooses to move ahead without any significant changes, staff will take the application forward to COTW with a recommendation for refusal. However, staff commended the applicant in the submission of a market rental proposal that would contribute towards the City's housing targets. The proponent would prefer to move to ADP with a positive recommendation from Planning staff and is actively working towards support from all departments." LUC Letter sent 2 Feb 2020 based on 2019 plan. Status: [Staff Review of Revised Plans 17 Aug 2020](#). New letter to be sent.

6. 1244 Wharf St, McQuade's Building – Robert Fung & Cascadia Architects – Rezoning/text amendment to allow transient accommodation use above and below the Wharf Street frontage. No additional storeys requested on this Heritage Designated building. Status: [Opportunity for Public Comment is open on Devt Tracker as of 14 Aug 2020](#). There is a scarcity of information available on DT about this project and this issue has been raised with Charlotte Wain and Karen Hoese.
7. Develop a draft doc outlining guidelines for Heritage Corridors as referred to in the OCP, and as relevant to Fort St. Discussed at 12 Aug 2020 pre-CALUC meeting. A CALUC member is reviewing supporting docs.
8. 610-618 Herald St – Nicola Wealth Real Estate – Development Permit with Variances. LUC members met with David Fawley and Guadalupe Font of Denciti Devt Corp (applicant's reps from Van) on 12 Aug 2020 to discuss the project. Applicant proposes 5-floor 250 unit market rental residential (most likely above the 15m height limit but specific height not provided) with ground floor commercial on lands facing Chatham, Herald and Government Sts. Central courtyard (82m wide) will provide relief for existing residents at 650 Herald. Mix of units include 35% 2-bdrm and the remaining 1-bdrm + den, 1 bdrm and studio. Wood frame construction. Will meet Schedule C for parking. Parking access off Chatham. Onsite bike storage, storage units for smaller units & several amenity rooms for residents.
9. 1314 Wharf St, Northern Junk – Reliance Properties – Rezoning for the redevelopment of existing heritage buildings and a residential with ground floor commercial, mixed use addition, concurrent Heritage Alteration with FSR 3.39. CALUC Letter submitted 10 Sept 2019. Status: Went to CotW on 11 June 2020. Council referred the application back to staff with the direction that the application adheres more to the heritage and old town guidelines. [Revised Plans Posted 10 Aug 2020](#). Status: [Report Preparation by Planner](#).
10. 749-767 Douglas, Apex Site – Telus has purchased the property for the Telus Ocean project (w Aryze as community development partner) for \$8.1 m, plus up to \$1.1 m price adjustment depending on final proposal submitted and approved during rezoning process. City will contribute \$2.37 m (half of budgeted total) for environmental and geotechnical costs to remediate the site. Telus will assume all liability for this work. On [04 Aug 2020](#) CALUC members met with applicant's rep to review early plans and discuss options for process for a virtual CALUC-type meeting. Another meeting will be required to review revisions and discuss missing information. Recently, challenges have arisen

regarding the lack of comprehensive information proposed for inclusion on the Public Notice and the LUC is waiting for advice from City Planning before proceeding. Status: Application Review by City 07 Aug 2020.

11. 901 Gordon St – Vikram Sachdeva in partnership with the Songhees Nation – Rezoning Application to permit the use of a Storefront Cannabis Retailer. Applicant notes that 901 Gordon Street is within 150 m from a school and 350 m from another Cannabis store: not in compliance with city policy. Status: Application Review by City Complete and now With Applicant as of 06 Aug 2020.
12. 1106 Blanshard St, Montrose Winter Garden Hotel – David Fullbrook with D'Ambrosio – Site Specific Zone and OCP amendment for Core Business area density. Plan to develop NW corner of Blanshard and Fort. Project proposes unique tower design for modern low-staff hotel catering to tech industry/millennials. Density requested 6.16: 1 from 3.0:1 and requested height of 65.5 m from 43.0m. The remainder of the block, The Montrose Building, will be designated heritage and maintained with residential and small CRUs (which are being renovated as vacancies arise). CALUC meeting held on Wed 29 Jan at 6:30 pm at the Christ Church Cathedral Chapter Room. CALUC letter to be sent. Status: Plans posted 04 Aug 2020. Application Review by City on 05 Aug 2020.
13. 1205 Quadra – Starlight – Rezoning for two sites on the south side of Yates btwn Quadra & Cook: 1.35 hectare full 900-block Yates and the 0.63 hectare eastern half of the 1000-block Yates, 1045 Yates. FSR 6.0. Proposal requires an amendment to the OCP. Status: Staff Reviewed Revised Plans, Provided Comments to Applicant, now With Applicant as of 17 Jul 2020.
14. 1045 Yates St, Harris Chrysler (Phase 1) – Starlight – Development Permit w Variance for 6-storey podium w 17 & 19 storey towers w 6.0 FSR. Current zone S-1 and proposed CD. Rental for 510 residential units (incl 6 townhomes). Parking stalls on site 460 (103 commercial/visitor and 357 residential) & 680 bike parking. Status: Application Review by City Complete and now With Applicant 17 Jul 2020.

LUC: Ongoing and Active

1. 1010 Fort St – Abstract Developments – Rezoning for the development of a 13-storey building with ground floor commercial and 55 residential above with 7 vehicle parking and 97 bike parking spots. Proposed FSR 5.37. CALUC letter submitted 1 Oct 2019. Status: Council on 2 July 2020. Referred back to staff to work with the applicant for possible 6-storey condo that complies with city requirements (heritage, planning, etc) with request from Council to pay the \$250k to affordable housing fund (a commitment made re Bellewood Park project) before 31 Dec 2020 deadline.
2. 504 Herald, Herald St Brew Works – Mike and Lee Spence – Development Permit with Variance: Applicant seeking a permit to construct a rooftop patio with an occupancy of 99 additional liquor primary seats; bringing total occupancy to 277 from the previously approved 178. Anticipated use is not included in this application; only construction. Letter sent 20 May 2020. Status: Proceed to Council for Public Comment as of 21 May 2020.
3. 1124 Vancouver – J. Gordon Enterprises – Second CALUC held 06 Nov 2019 but information presented was not complete. DRA LUC will postpone any additional CALUC meetings for this project until after the applicant gets approval by the Advisory Design

Panel. CALUC letters submitted for both meetings. Status: Staff Review of Revised Plans as of 14 May 2020. The DRA LUC has not been contacted regarding changes and new plans have not been posted to the Devt Tracker.

4. 975 Pandora, Seventh Adventist Church – Townline – Rezoning and BP for 121 residential rental units ranging from studio to 5-bdrm (including pods) in 16-storey tower at 5.497 FSR with ground floor commercial. Vehicle parking at 123 with bike parking at 221; both above required. There are 119 storage lockers. No retention of church building. CALUC letter submitted Mar 2019 based on previous submission. Status: Staff Review of Revised Plans completed. With Applicant since 24 Apr 2020.
5. 900-block Yates, Market On Yates & Harris Green Village between Quadra to Vancouver and Yates to View, as well as the eastern half of the 1000-block Yates (mid-block to Cook) – Starlight Investments. Status: With Applicant since 21 Feb 2020. CALUC letter submitted to City 08 Mar 2020.
6. 777 Herald, Hudson Place One – Townline – Development Variance Permit for a height variance from the previously approved plans. Note: This project was granted a 3m height variance in 2018. Construction of this building is nearing completion. Status: Application Received and Review by City 20 Feb 2020.
7. 1312 Broad, Duck Block – UVic Properties/Chard – Rezoning, Development Permit and Heritage Alteration for 6-storey 139-unit hotel with ground floor commercial with FSR 4.0 (from 4.39). Includes an OCP amendment for a very significant increase in density offside of the Official Community Plan maximum densities for Old Town and best practices of Heritage Conservation. Status: On Thurs 06 Feb 2020, CotW voted to send this project to Public Hearing.
8. DCAP Review – City Staff-led stakeholder engagement process. Ian has outlined many of the DRA LUC concerns regarding gaps and priorities. More info included in the notes attached.
9. 700 Douglas, Bus Depot – Bosa with James KM Cheng – Rezoning to construct long-term rental with ground floor commercial. Status: With Applicant since 4 Oct 2019.
10. On 04 Jul 2019 at Committee of the Whole, Council unanimously passed the recommendation “That Council consider as part of the 2020 budget discussions the allocation of some new assessed revenue for parks and green space acquisition and amenities in neighbourhoods where development is occurring.”
11. List of Community Amenities needed for Downtown Harris Green. Results from 2014 Town Hall Meeting were substantiated by comments on SM in 2020 outreach. Many other challenges and issues identified that were not related to amenities but have been noted. Will continue to collect and compile. Attached as notes.
12. 1620 Blanshard, Gateway Green – Tri-Eagle & Jawl Residential – Temporary Use Permit to demolish the two-storey commercial building and provide 62 surface parking spaces. Staff recommendation to decline the TUP. Council approved the TUP but requested that the applicant work with Staff to explore the temporary use of the site for modular housing as opposed to parking. There will be another public notice circulated (for any TUP use) before it goes to Public Hearing. Status: Report Preparation by Planner since 14 Nov 2019.

13. 550 Pandora – Housing Society with Alan Lowe - Rezoning for a 5-storey, 36-unit affordable-housing rental apartment building with ground-floor commercial use. Proposed FSR 3.62. Status: With Applicant since 4 Dec 2018.

Communications and Membership Committee Report – September 2020

Update on Committee activities:

- **Newsletter:**
 - The July/August newsletter was issued on July 31. Statistics from Mail Chimp indicate that it was opened by 44.0% of subscribers, down from our average of 46.8%. The item most frequently clicked on was the article about the North Government cycling plan. I intend to put together a newsletter in mid-September and welcome contributions from Board members.

- **Other**
 - No new members since the last report.
 - Posted the Managing Neighbourhood Construction Project Impacts document prepared by Michael Hill to our website and shared on social media.

Submitted by
Doug Boyd
Chair, Communications and Membership Committee