

Victoria West Community Association - Land Use Committee Report
Annual General Meeting
November 27, 2012

Following are the significant land use projects that were undertaken and status of ongoing major developments during the past year:

Johnson Street Bridge Approaches

- City staff met with members of the Victoria West Community Association (VWCA) in February to plan how input could be best solicited from community members. Representatives of the VWCA provided strong recommendations to engage the community in meaningful consultation that directly informed the final design of the bridge approaches. The City subsequently hosted open house input sessions, with focused invitations to the Downtown Residents and Victoria West Community Associations memberships. Several members of the Victoria West Community attended these sessions, and had mixed reviews regarding the quality of consultation.
- PCL Constructors Westcoast Inc. (PCL) has been selected as the “preferred proponent” under the Request for Proposal to build the new Johnson Street Bridge. Council directed staff to proceed to negotiations to finalize the details of the fixed-price contract.
- City staff has offered to provide regular general update meetings at joint Downtown Residents Association/Victoria West Community Association meetings once the contract with a successful proponent has been finalized and a schedule of construction has been established.

Bayview Place Precinct

- Plans regarding the Seniors’ Housing on Lot 4 of the precinct were finalized in the spring and submitted for review by City staff. A Victoria West Community Association letter to the City had been previously submitted that summarizes the overall community support for the project.
- Representatives from the Bayview development also presented an update of their development plans at the regularly scheduled Community Association meeting in June. According to the project team, the Promontory, a 21 storey residential building currently under construction will likely be followed by development of commercial amenities at the site of the Roundhouse.

Dockside Green

- Additional construction at Dockside Green is still on pause, awaiting a development partner to support future phases, and a more favourable housing market.
- Updates are provided to representatives of the Victoria West Community Association by Vancity staff, and future plans will be communicated, as they are surface.

Railyards Development Inc.

- Development at the Railyards continues as per the Masterplan.
- Community Gardens that were originally committed to the site by the City in 2004 apparently did not make it into the development agreement between the City and the developer. Discussions have occurred between the City and the VicWest Food Security Collective to rectify the oversight and to locate a community garden on site.

OCP Input

- City staff came to the Victoria West Community Association – Land Use Committee in May to provide an overview of changes made to previously published draft Plan.
- Final public input into the Plan was welcomed up until a Public Hearing held on June 27th. The Chair of the Victoria West Community Association – Land Use Committee presented community input at the Public Hearing, focusing on two major considerations; that the final Plan consider more diverse and mixed land use designations for the Victoria West community, and; that the Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan be considered a first priority among the neighbourhood planning update schedule.
- The City of Victoria Official Community Plan was adopted on July 30th, 2012.
- In the Final OCP, the creation of a Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan remained a second tier priority
- Some of the other interests identified by community input has been recognized in principle or concept within the body of the Plan, and is to be further defined and articulated when the Neighbourhood Plan is developed. The expected timeline of the Neighbourhood Plan development is in the range of 4 – 6 years.

310 Henry Street

- The new owners of the property (formerly St. Saviour’s Church) presented their interest in using the facility as a ballet school. Discussion ensued with the City to determine options on re-zoning the property to accommodate the intended use.
- The owners determined to proceed with re-zoning the property to a site specific zone that would allow for a centre of the arts (specifically, a ballet school) and accessory small-scale retail and food amenity for clients.
- Professional planners (land-use and transportation) were hired by the property owners to support a re-zoning application that would meet community and City interests.
- The required Community Meeting was held recently in November to present the overall re-zoning application. Many interested community members attended the Community Meeting and provided input, including overall support for the facility use as a centre of the arts, as well as significant concern regarding parking congestion associated with facility use.

- The owners are working to ensure the proposed enterprise is a positive contribution to the community as a whole by preserving the heritage aspect of the site, builds on the cultural heritage of the neighbourhood, and addresses parking issues through a comprehensive Transportation Demand Management strategy.
- More information is available on the proponent's website - <http://www.mapleleafballet.ca>

502 Selkirk Avenue

- The new owners of 502 Selkirk presented plans at a preliminary community meeting in July to “clean up” the zoning of the site and to allow for a proposed remodeling and slight expansion of the small cottage that sits on the waters edge.
- After receiving feedback from Land Use Committee members and others in attendance at the preliminary community meeting, the owners determined not to proceed with a re-zoning application.

634/638 Craigflower

- The new owner of 638 Craigflower is applying to re-zone 638 Craigflower from its current R1 – B (Single Family Dwelling) to a multiple dwelling zone, with plans to design the existing primary on-site building as a triplex. Under the same application, the owner proposes to re-zone an adjacent property (634 Craigflower) to allow the development of a duplex.
- The proposal was presented to the Land Use Committee in October to receive preliminary feedback, which was primarily favourable over the historical use of the site.
- The Community Meeting, required of a re-zoning application, was recently held in November. There is some confusion regarding the orientation of the 638 property, affecting clarity on parking and driveway access
- Overall feedback has included appreciation and interest to the change in quality of residential housing supply, mixed sentiments about the relocation of site access from Alderman to Craigflower Rds, and receptiveness for sensitive densification within the neighbourhood.
- The owner is working with surrounding neighbours to understand their concerns and interests

Bernie Gaudet

Chair – Victoria West Community Association - Land Use Committee