

**Grandview-Woodland Area Council  
Public Forum on the Community Plan  
July 6, 2013**

**Opening Remarks:**

GWAC President Jak King made welcoming remarks and outlined the structure of the meeting. Members of the audience who signed up to speak will be called in order and given 3 minutes to speak. After 5 speakers, Andrew Pask will give brief answers to any questions raised. City Planner Andrew Pask gave a brief synopsis of the work done on the Community Plan to date and an overview of the Emerging Directions document.

**SPEAKERS:** The main points made by each speaker have been recorded:

Barbara Cameron:

- 25 year resident of 7<sup>th</sup> and Lakewood
- Concerned about proposed density
- Feels that the amount of density in the plan was not included in the community consultation and this has created a lack of trust
- She signed the petition requesting more time for the plan. Asks whether the deadline will be extended

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Pina Campbell

- Concerned about cars speeding along Victoria Drive
- Wants more traffic calming on Victoria Drive

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Lisa Bryson

- Lives on Victoria Drive
- Cites parking problems in the area due to Via Tevere restaurant. Wants resident only parking
- Wants a crosswalk at William and Victoria
- Concerned about density proposed, wants to retain a “people friendly neighbourhood”

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Patty Davis

- Lived on Francis Street 1989/90 when 12 story highrise went up there
- Residents went to City Council and then Councillor George Puil promised that would be the last highrise to ever be built in the area without community consultation

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Nancy McRitchie

- Executive Director of Kiwassa neighbourhood House
  - They feed 400 hungry people every day, significant poverty in the area
  - East Hastings shopping area is a “gem” just like the Drive.
  - Affordable quality food is available from the small shops
- Concerned that rezoning the area for 6 to 8 story buildings will result in higher values,

higher property taxes and the resulting forcing out of small businesses, regardless of whether the 8 story buildings are built or not

- Wants to know if the City has any policy dealing with poverty

#### Andrew Pask Answers:

- Deadline for feedback has been extended from July 3 to August 3. So far they have 1600 responses, would welcome more
- They will analyze the feedback during August and report back in September
- Proposals dealing with heights and density around Broadway and Commercial have been taken off the table
- Acknowledge that they have made a mistake in this sub area
- Will circulate new information about Broadway and Commercial this week
- Victoria Drive is designated a neighbourhood Collector
- They are looking at traffic calming south of Hastings to 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue
- They have identifies possible locations for new traffic lights
- Heritage is a big issue in Grandview, references Plan map to show areas untouched and areas where densification is planned
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#### Eric Fergie

- Concerned about density along Nanaimo and in the Adanac/Templeton area
- Will have 4 story building behind his home, blocking views
- Opposed to heavy density surrounding parks and school fields
- Concerned about Kettle tower at Commercial and Venables

#### Blair Redland

- Lives at Georgia and Semlin
- Thanks GWAC for organizing this meeting
- Feels this has been a dishonest process. He participated in good faith in the Plan events but none of this density was discussed. No discussion of 4 and 6 story buildings around Garden Park, Templeton and Nelson schools.
- Asks what the planners have to say tonight about these areas?
- Planners have put out an “ aggressive set of proposals”
- Emerging Directions suggests closing Templeton Pool, currently very well used
- Must restore trust in the process
- Supports GWAC’s call for a 6 month extension
- Believes Plan materials should be available in Cantonese, Italian and Vietnamese
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#### Mike Tropp

- Makes historical comments about the area
- States that planners in the 50’s referred to congestion and overcrowding, which is now called ‘ecodensity ‘
- Believes Vision is a development council, cites Oakridge redevelopment, removal of Viaducts for more development etc
- Only solution to overarching development in Vancouver is to vote Vision out

Andrew Pask answers:

- Nanaimo Street: looking at new housing forms, also at adding crosswalks, pedestrian safety lights and a median
- Heard from residents' reaction that it was a mistake to carry this housing form back to Garden Drive
- People seem to be ok with new housing forms facing Nanaimo
- States that this is a 30 year plan, change will be gradual
- Plan has 3 to 4 stories around Templeton field, 4,6 or 8 stories at commercial nodes along Nanaimo
- States that this was not a dishonest process, they haven't got it all right yet, but planners and Council are listening to residents
- Hastings Street: Have heard that 8 story buildings are too aggressive, but sites possibly being developed are Canada post Site, Waldorf site, UNYA site, Friendship Centre
- Need for housing in this area, and to retain social services
- Plan is being developed to support local economy, including small businesses
- Yes, there is a tax increase with land use changes and rezoning: if the value of the property goes up, the taxes go up
- Rezoning is only 1 tool in the Plan process

Morna McLeod

- Has lived 30 years in a coop west of Commercial
- Asks for respectful hearing
- Was on GWAC in the late 80's when they fought proposal for 8 to 12 story towers at Commercial and Broadway
- At that time GWAC's reception at City Hall was hostile and uninterested
- Feels that this time, the City is listening
- Is glad the 36 story tower is off the table
- Believes we have to accept more density, single family homes are not sustainable
- We have to increase density sustainably
- Believes the 2 key issues are creativity in planning and pace of change

Monica Dare

- Has lived at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Commercial since 1988
- Concerned that document suggests increased height and density at First and Commercial and along Commercial south of 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Barbara Moyle

- Information in Emerging Directions doesn't reflect the consultation, the Plan represents selective listening
- Who came up with the low-medium-high density in cedar Cove sub area?

- Where is due process? Why should we trust the planners?

#### Zena Campbell

- Born and raised here, longtime renter near Hastings
- Parents are feeling pressure to move out of the area because of the new developments
- Affluent people are moving in, more vulnerable on fixed incomes are being forced out
- Don't relocate them, leave the low rent, sometimes "scruffy" buildings
- There's an ecosystem now but the consultation did not reach these vulnerable people
- Plan should look at "gems" in the community such as Strathcona gardens

#### Alex Zemmer

- Lives in North G-W, wants Plan dialogue to include Hastings, Dundas and Lakewood area
- Shares Nancy McRitchie's concerns about this area

#### Andrew Pask Answers:

- Their goal is environmental creativity, compact walkable neighbourhoods, important to creating the Greenest City
- First & Commercial: Highest point of the Drive, planners want significant height to mark this corner
- Proposing up to 6 stories rather than 4 for the RBC site
- Kettle site: Commercial & Venables: wanted Plan to develop space for Kettle to expand its necessary services
- Suggests people talk to Kettle about their needs
- Canada post site is for sale on East Hastings, suggests "architectural creativity" and an opportunity to build higher
- North end of the Drive, UNYA site at Commercial and Hastings, supports their plan to build there
- Wants to add plaza to the site to mark gateway to the Drive
- Bus routes/community shuttle: they have discussion of these elements into the Plan
- North end of Wall Street: encourage development of 4 story buildings rather than 3
- Dundas street: encouraging 6 stories
- Insert 'pace of change' and 'rate of change' elements into Plan

#### Harold La

- Was displaced from his home in G-W when he became disabled, now living in DTES
- Plan doesn't address housing crisis for low income
- Plan is going to upscale G-W and low income, disabled, and people on welfare won't be able to live here

- Need national Housing Strategy
- Plan is going in wrong direction

Andrew introduces Dan Garrison, Housing Planner who responds:

- Agrees with the call for a national Housing Strategy
- Provincial Funding also needed for housing
- City is dealing with this the best they can with the resources they have
- Want to protect existing housing stock
- Coop leases with CMHC will end in the next 10 years
- If we need social and coop housing in G-W, more density is needed
- If we don't encourage additional density in moderate rental, displacement will result
- Rate of change provision can slow conversion of current rental stock

Garth Mullins

- Has lived in the area for a long time, currently is a home owner in G-W
- Concerned with what's going on with the Plan, adding height and density but no social housing
- Large towers will loom over the Drive
- Feels this is "social cleansing" by the City
- Others in his generation can't afford to live here
- "We already have diversity, mixed income... This is the model. Don't come here to fix it. Export it."

Fruma Sloan

- This is a dishonest process, an attack on the neighbourhood
- Plan directions would never be recommended for the West Side, Pt Grey

Maryann Abs

- Home owner at Kitchener and Victoria
- Plan doesn't reflect housing emergency: people moving out because they can't afford to live here anymore
- There's no definition in the plan of what affordable housing is. This definition should include welfare and low income residents
- Need subsidized low income housing not connected to housing towers
- Concerned about lack of translation of documents

Bruce McDonald

- Lived at William & Commercial 25 years
- G-W began 100 years ago, before there were planners
- Drive is only 4 lanes wide which slows traffic, is more intimate space
- Drive works because the City was planning to widen it, so shops are set back 7ft
- "Maybe we need a little less planning."
- There will be density all along Broadway out to UBC
- "Leave our neighbourhood alone"

#### Cynthia Farnsworth

- Co-Chair of Lord Nelson School PAC
- Expresses appreciation to GWAC, the Planners, Adrienne Carr and Shane Simpson for attending
- Neighbours who told others about this meeting and those who came out
- Concerned about density along Nanaimo, Plan doesn't address traffic and parking problems
- Questions why density is going to increase while the size of the school is being reduced
- There's no guarantees of any amenities in this Plan (community centres, parks etc)
- Proposed town houses are not affordable
- Existing homes have affordable basement suites, adding housing options

#### Colin Stark

- Has lived 16 years at First and Nanaimo
- Opposes the Plan which is all about growth
- Everything key to no growth is missing
- Wants a referendum on the Plan, residents do not now have a vote
- We are run by an elite. COPE and greens would not support a referendum either

#### Daphne Martin

- Has lived 25 years at Kitchener and Victoria
- Our neighbourhood is getting density
- Why is there no densification in Pt Grey and Shaughnessy?
- Planners propose 36 stories which means they will give us 20
- People living east of the Viaducts like the Viaducts
- Everything here is going to be a condo in 30 or 40 years

#### Bing Jensen

- " This is not our community plan, it's the City's community plan for us....by the rich,for the rich"
- Andrew Pask is a captive, he has to do what his bosses want
- Increase density with 4 story buildings, follow the Florence model, not the HongKong model
- We need an economy that's not built on expansion
- Everyone should go to Council: we can stop this thing!

#### Patricia Barnes

- Executive director of the Hastings North BIA which covers the Drive north of Hastings
- Thanks planners for being here
- Businesses need density to survive but she doesn't support 8,10 or 15 story towers along East Hastings
- New young independent businesses are now coming to Hastings, upzoning will increase property values and force them out.

- There are lots of jobs in the light industrial area
- Wants Plan to look at traffic management and goods movement
- Wants a Plan workshop for residents and businesses north of Hastings

#### Shane Simpson

- Born and raised in the area
- Concerned about Plan
- Hundreds of constituents have emailed him questioning the integrity of this Plan process
- Sometimes plans go sideways
- This plan is fundamentally, possibly fatally flawed
- Urges planners to take advice from GWAC and extend deadline 6 months then go back to the drawing board
- Total spectrum of the community has told him the plan doesn't reflect their views
- Move on, start again. Constituents are telling him this isn't the right plan for this community

#### Andy Longhurst

- Is a student, rents at 4<sup>th</sup> and Woodland
- Plan has no safeguards for affordable housing, nothing concrete on amenities
- Says apartment buildings did not get flyers or notices about the Plan [Andrew categorically denied this.]
- Concerned about upzoning: developers make money from this, but asks what low income people get out of it
- Rate of change bylaw only requires 1 for 1 replacement, existing affordable suites are replaced with more expensive ones
- Wants the City to come back to the community with a legally binding document addressing displacement
- Wants a "bold solution"...a community land trust preserving affordable rental housing
- "This is a status quo pro-developer document."

#### Andrew Pask:

- He has 3 pages of questions that need answers
- Feels that misconceptions have been introduced
- Discussion with Jak on time allotments, Andrew invites people to speak with him after meeting ends if they still have questions

#### Alan Lecoutier

- Lives at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Garden
- Doesn't like plan for Nanaimo area
- Concerned with stacked townhouses and apartments all around parks and schools

- 2300 block of First and around parks and schools near Nanaimo sub area has been densifying for the past 10 years with developers building laneway houses and basement suites being created
- Try to preserve what we have, don't dump apartments and townhouses into it

#### Petronella Vander Valk

- Has lived in the neighbourhood for 23 years
- Plan does not reflect what she heard in the workshops
- Wants to make sure we are heard and reflected in the plan
- Takes issue with a 15 story building at Venables and Commercial
- Andrew said in workshops that he heard us loud and clear about no highrises
- The Kettle is tied to the developer
- Wants to protect G-W's light industrial areas
- We need to maintain the human scale
- We are not a glass and steel neighbourhood

#### Maria Genovese:

- Has lived on Kitchener Street her whole life
- Especially loves the gardens in the area
- Concerned with Nanaimo and hates the Plan's yellow line
- Does not want row houses along Nanaimo
- Suggest we densify with secondary suites and laneway houses
- Traffic is already a problem in the area with existing density

#### Carol Rosette

- Lives at Kitchener and Nanaimo
- Shops on East Hastings
- Concerned about small businesses there with increasing heights
- Wants container truck traffic off East Hastings
- Proposals for Nanaimo have fingers reaching back into the neighbourhood which will affect the whole block
- Plan will eliminate benefits of traffic calming
- Townhouses/rowhouses ok densification as long as they only face Nanaimo

#### Robin McKinney

- Wants affordable housing
- When you upzone, property raises in value
- Process seems to be driven by developers, not planners
- We have one fifth of the park space the West Side has, so why not add density in Kerrisdale where they have enough parks to accommodate it
- It's our community, leave us be

#### Andrew Pask is given 10 minutes for a wrap up:

- Can't answer all the 30 questions that have been raised in 10 minutes



- Can compile a document to answer all the questions and share it back
- This is just the first draft of the plan
- They are listening
- They want to keep the dialogue going
- Takes issue with Shane Simpson's comments that they are conducting a process that is disingenuous
- Comments tonight came in clusters around Hastings Street, Nanaimo Street, Public Benefits Strategy, Affordability
- Will give examples of a public benefits strategy that includes the costing
- Tonight Andrew heard "We don't want change." [Crowd objects vocally]
- Heard from renters that they are getting bounced out due to costs
- There's no budget for amenities without development
- Understands G-W is underserved for parks and childcare
- Planning process is about trade offs
- Creating supportive housing is expensive
- Plan tries to develop a range of housing, for instance stacked townhouses on Nanaimo
- No one has redlined any area for bulldozing, plan is for the long term
- They are trying to make a plan for the community now and the community in 40 years

Question from audience: Will they extend the process for 6 months?

Matt Shillito responds: They need to look at additional steps

Adrienne Carr

- At the end of tomorrow's Council meeting, under Inquiries and Other Business, she will put forward GWAC's desire for an extension

Andrea Reimer

- She goes to many meetings like this one
- Wants the plan to reflect the community's vision even if it takes another 6 months, 1 year or 12 years
- The deadline of 21 months was arbitrary

Jak King

- Apologizes to speakers on the list who weren't heard due to time constraints
- Urges attendees to attend future GWAC meetings and to sign the petition requesting a 6 month extension
- Says GWAC will respond in writing to the City
- Wants all sub areas to have workshops like the one last Saturday on Broadway and Commercial