

False Creek South Community Meeting
1869 Spyglass Place
June 11, 2008, 7 – 9 pm

Meeting Notes

(58 residents in attendance plus 6 members of the steering committee)

Welcome

Arthur Brock, chair of the False Creek Community Association welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Introductions

The steering committee for the False Creek South planning group introduced themselves:

John McBride (chair), Wes Knapp, Jack Chritchley, Stan Clark, Margaret Mitchell, Kathleen MacKinnon and Arthur Brock.

Unfortunately, Dave Osborne the drafter of the planning documents was out of town and not able to attend this meeting.

John Mc Bride reviewed the agenda and the purpose of the meeting and that our concern about the traffic patterns motivated us to move up the meeting with the city which was originally slated for September. John explained that members of the steering committee would review critical pages of the documents provided and then the meeting would break into small groups so that residents could give their comments on the draft plans.

Stan Clark Traffic on 1st Avenue. (page 6 in plan) The city proposed 1st Avenue continue along Commodore and go up Ash. This could create a very broad thoroughfare, 4 lanes in places.

Issues include the design of the thoroughfare, shortcutting, potential of 15 000 new residents using the roadway, security issues around the RAV line, and our desire to use the area as a community space.

Calming measure completed some years ago reduced cars from 8 000/day to 3 000/day. The traffic volume has increased considerably.

Wes Knapp – Under the Bridge – Critical to integrating the two communities.(page 8) Objective is to have walls come down, to reduce parking, and to make this the gateway to the Creek and seawall. The city has proposed basketball courts and/or a skateboard park for under the bridge . However feedback from a community survey and from previous meetings is opposed to those activities.

Another issue under the bridge is 1800 Spyglass. This building was meant to be a temporary structure. It blocks access to the seawall and would be a barrier to the integration of the two communities. The steering committee is attempting to get a report on this building from the city without resorting to a Freedom of Information request. City is currently fitting this building out with electronics for a call centre (311).

Ron vander Erden - Arbutus Greenway (page 5) – Ron reviewed the ‘Streetcar Greenway’ on page 11 and explained that a modern streetcar would be running between the RAV station and Granville Island by 2010. A future streetcar would be completed to run all the way downtown. Inter-connected transportation network is more progressive than just dedicating this to a highway.

If part of the greenway is used for a streetcar, then the rest could be used for a walking path, a commuter bike path, community gardens, or tennis, basketball, or skateboarding.

Kathleen MacKinnon reviewed the principles agreed to at previous meetings. The principles can be found on page 4 of the document.

John McBride set up the task for the small groups to ‘flag’ any concerns and identify issues that needed further consideration and process. He underscored the importance of the process of meeting and planning together. He said that 1) the numbers of neighbours involved in the planning, 2) their thorough knowledge of the plan so they can explain to their fellow residents, and 3) the degree in which we are united on the plan is what will give us credibility with the City.

The small groups were used to encourage individuals to question and discuss aspects of the draft. Those small groups reported as follows:

Group 1

- The plan would be stronger if play activities for all groups were included, rather than name no basketball, no skateboard park.
- Prefer that the building 1800 Spyglass were not there
- Split opinion about off-lease dog park
- If promenade is lit, be careful not to intrude into residential units
- First Avenue should not go through to Ash. Unanimously agreed, but don’t penalize residents ability to come and go.

Group 2

- Agreed there should be 2 exits in and out. Perhaps Heather and Ash
- Signs that should state “resident parking” only

Group 3

- The housing mix: third subsidized, third market, and third “affordable” needs to be revisited so we all understand what it means.
- New housing would have to be height and density appropriate
- Inadequate parking in area generally
- Under the bridge – athletics OK if it considers all people and all ages.
- Suitability of waterway under the bridge is questioned. Does it work? Is it safe? Is it environmentally appropriate?
- Perhaps there could be a tennis court and parking near the RAV station
- Under the bridge, landscaping and gardens may be better than water.
- Need some parking
- Community gathering area – may be achieved if it is not skateboard park or tennis court
- 1800 Spyglass should not be a call centre. Too many people
- Everyone loves the promenade.

Group 4

- Not enough emphasis on cycling in plan (the question was asked how many really cycle – show of hands indicated 75% do and of those 47, 12 bike to work)
- Alternate route for bikes needed – seawall is not divided and needs slow bikes only
- Remove bus loop at Heather – need to address where we would like to see bus loops
- Under the bridge – concern about water feature – we should tear down walls and experience what the space is like before a final decision is made on what to do there.

Group 5

- Concern about height of new buildings on 6th Ave, by RAV station
- All in favour of promenade
- There is a parking facility new bus loop, concern if this disappears
- Is there really space for housing if Charleson is closed?
- We should show parking around RAV station
- What about having a covered parking spot for bikes

Group 6

- Noise under the bridge is a big factor in deciding what goes there
- Lighting on the promenade could be a problem for residents.

Group 7

- Parking needs to be considered
- Noise under the bridge is a concern

Group 8

- New buildings on the north side of 6th could conflict with greenway

Traffic Patterns

Following the discussion on aspects of the plan needing attention, we asked the small groups to consider the various traffic patterns that were included in the appendix to the plan. There was a caution that this decision might be a difficult one and discussion was not intended to come up with answers. People were asked to kept in mind.:

1. This is a time to explore various options
2. It is important to listen to one another
3. Identify the positive aspects of each of the traffic patterns
4. Suspend judgment and work towards finding a consensus

Comments follow

- We need two ways in and two ways out
- “Local traffic only” signs
- No through traffic
- Commuter bike routes
- Emergency vehicle lane an option if there is only one way in and out
- Heather comes to an awkward end now. Should be through to seawall
- Prefer option that severs traffic flow under the bridge
- Let’s not dump our traffic into their neighbourhood. Deal with our own
- East and west access needed
- Use Ash and Heather, we don’t need first avenue entrance
- If we get traffic experts in, we need people who live in the area so they understand the issues.

There was strong interest in dealing with housing at our next meeting.

The Steering Committee promised to report after meeting with the City department managers.

John McBride outlined that the next step is to meet with the city about the plans and the ideas that have been generated. A follow up meeting of Creek residents will be called to report back on the meeting with the city.

Ron vander Erden alerted the meeting there was a plan for 8 lanes along 6th Avenue. He mentioned how difficult this would be for pedestrians crossing to the RAV station. The meeting voiced their surprise and concern.

Meeting notes and a copy of the draft documents prepared by Dave Osborne can be found at the False Creek South website: falsecreeksouth.org