



OTHER REPORT

Report Date: January 30, 2009  
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Meeting Date: February 19, 2009

TO: Standing Committee on Planning and Environment  
FROM: Vancouver City Planning Commission  
SUBJECT: Report for the period 2007 - 2008

**RECOMMENDATION**

THAT this report be received for information.

**CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

The City Manager submits the foregoing for INFORMATION.

**PURPOSE**

To provide Vancouver City Council with a report on the activities of the Vancouver City Planning Commission for the period 2007-2008.

**BACKGROUND**

The Vancouver City Planning Commission (the Commission) was established by Council to assist Council in an advisory capacity by considering and submitting reports to City Council on matters relating to the planning and development of the City, including:

- (a) representing ideas and opinions about the future of the city, as citizens of the City of Vancouver, and
- (b) considering and reporting to Council on any proposal likely to have a significant effect on the future of the City.

## SUMMARY

The Commission carried out a work plan covering the duration of its 2-year term with the theme of "Vancouver: A City Built for Change." The core idea that emerged from the Commission's work on change and urban resilience is that a longer-term view of adaptability and a reasoned response to change need to be embedded in city design.

During this period, the Commission also provided comment to Council and heard presentations from speakers seeking to address the Commission.

Submitted with this report are two publications produced by the Commission providing a more detailed account of its work:

- *A City Built for Change: Vancouver City Planning Commission 2007-2008*
- *Change Charter: How Vancouver Will Be "Built for Change," Becoming a Resilient City through Adaptability*
- *Market Rental Housing in Vancouver: A Strategy to Increase the Supply*
- *YouMap Vancouver Neighbourhood Amenity Mapping Project - Grandview Woodlands and Douglas Park*
- *The Future of the Commission: Alternative Roles*

## DISCUSSION

The "Vancouver: A City Built for Change" program provided the framework for the Commission's work during this period. The Commission set out to examine the City's resilience in the face of change by asking the following questions:

- How ready is Vancouver for new societal, economic and environmental issues?
- How can Vancouver encourage innovation and go beyond what is already being done?
- What does adaptability mean for the development of buildings and the public realm?
- What are the principles and guidelines for adaptability?
- How does Vancouver build a city headed for resilience rather than obsolescence?

### 1. Events, Workshops, Studies

Under the "Built for Change" program, the Commission conducted the following public events, workshops and studies, culminating in the development of the Change Charter encapsulating key principles for an adaptable city:

- Public presentation by Councilor Robert Liberty, Metro Portland, on the Politics and Principles of Urban Sustainability.
- Summit on Change exploring the drivers of change in the city with thought leaders in government, technology, non-profit sector and business.
- Public presentation by Professor Robert Kronenburg from the University of Liverpool on Flexible Architecture that responds to change.
- Youth Challenge workshop where high school school students planned city neighbourhoods for the future.
- Adaptability workshop where community leaders and planners explored strategies for adaptability in neighbourhood centres, single-family neighbourhoods, and gathering places.
- YouMap Vancouver, an innovative neighbourhood mapping project to engage citizens in mapping tangible and intangible community assets and in creative thinking about change.

- Rental Housing Policy review and recommendations to accelerate the production of rental housing.
- Research projects in building for adaptability by planning student interns.
- Change Charter, defining adaptability as the key tenet of sustainability and outlining a set of adaptability principles that should underlie planning and decision-making in the interest of creating a resilient city.

## 2. Comment

During this period, the Commission also provided commentary on the following subjects:

- Ecodensity
- Laneway Housing
- Country Lanes
- Venables Greenway
- UBC Farm

## 3. Speaker Presentations

Numerous of speakers made presentations to the Commission:

- Marta Farevaag, Lance Berelowitz, Harry Hawthorn, Past Commission Chairs  
*Panel Discussion on the Role of the Commission*
- Brent Toderian, Director of Planning  
*Planning Issues in Vancouver and Ecodensity*
- Tom Timm and Jerry Dobrovolny, Engineering  
*Overview*
- Thor Kuhlmann, Planning  
*Ecodensity Initiative and Charter*
- Mary Clare Zak, Social Planning  
*Social Planning in Vancouver - Overview*
- Kevin McNaney, Planning  
*Metro Core Jobs and Economy Land Use Plan*
- Mark Roseland, Professor SFU  
*SFU Urban Studies Program*
- Adam Vasilevich, Andrew Pask, Vancouver Public Space Network  
*Background of the Organization and Projects*
- Jill Davidson, Vancouver Housing Centre  
*City's Regulatory, funding and Advocacy Roles*
- Trish French, Karis Hiebert, Planning  
*False Creek Flats*
- Z Smith, Architect  
*Schools as Neighbourhood Amenity and Energy Centres for Ecodensity*
- Vickie Morris, Social Planning  
*Social Facilities Infrastructure Project*
- Peter Burch, Planning  
*Mount Pleasant Planning Project, CityPlans*
- Richard Johnson, Planning  
*Granville Loops Plan*
- Jacqueline Gijssen, Cultural Planning  
*Cultural Facilities Priorities Plan*

- Richard Penneway, Mike Carr  
*Venables Greenway Grassroots Initiative*
- Ronda Howard, Planning  
*Laneway Housing*
- Peter Newton, Professor, Swinburne (Australia) University of Technology  
*Transitioning Cities to Sustainability*
- Michael Gordon, Planning  
*BC Place Stadium Development*
- Tony Astles, Executive VP Real Estate Services, Bentall  
*Perspectives on Downtown Zoning and Office Space Plans under Metro Core Study*
- Kathleen Kern, Planning  
*Neighbourhood Centre Planning Program and Norquay Village*
- Samara Brock, Social Planning and Mark Bomford, UBC Farm  
*Vancouver Food Policy and Food Security*

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR THE COMMISSION

The Commission has a long and, at times, illustrious history. The Commission believes that it needs to have a more engaged and defined role within the City process in order to more effectively fulfill its mandate. If the City of Vancouver is to continue to thrive, it needs to address its future in a more conscientious and direct manner. The VCPC should play an ongoing role in this and, moreover, should assist Council in the long-term oversight of City issues as the Commission was originally designed to do. This report includes an outline of alternative roles for the Commission in the future.

## COMMISSIONERS

This report is presented by the following Commissioners whose term expired at the end of 2008:

Alan Boniface, Chair  
Frank Ducote  
Jillian Glover  
David Godin  
Neil Griggs  
Michael Klassen, Vice-Chair  
Ray LeBlond  
Jennifer Parsons  
Setty Pendakur  
Robert Ransford  
Mark Shieh  
Andrew Shui-Him Yan  
Sharleen Suszezwiez

## CONCLUSION

The foregoing information is presented to Vancouver City Council for information.

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