

BURNSIDE BRIDGEHEAD CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Committee Meeting
June 25, 2008
Session Notes

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**BBHCAC Members in Attendance:** Jim Andrews, Norm Chusid, Dike Dame, Tim Holmes, Bruce Murray, David Neumarnik, Bob Wentworth, Michael Whitmore.  
**Ex Officio CAC Members in Attendance:** Kia Selley (PDC Project Manager).  
**Other PDC Staff in Attendance:** Trang Lam, Bruce Allen.  
**Others in Attendance:** Chris Armes (PDOT), Lee Jimerson, Lee Perlman, Jim Kautz.  
**Facilitator:** Sue Dicile.  
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The meeting convened at 4:00 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no opening public comment.

PROJECT UPDATE

PDC provided an update.

- Clean-up and site preparation: Site clearing is continuing, including scheduled removal of underground storage tanks, hazardous building materials abatement and demolition of the Ararat building on Block 76 (scheduled for August 2008), and demolition of Convention Plaza (anticipated in the fall, 2008).
- Convention Plaza Building Demolition: The building is 80 years old. There is no likelihood, if left intact, it could provide above Class B/C space, due to, among other factors, low ceiling height, narrow column spacing, low energy efficiency and a single elevator. Any attempt to improve the economic viability of the building, e.g. adding additional height, would trigger a seismic upgrade. It is currently an impediment to clearing the site and having it shovel ready, which is essential to marketing the site. Steps taken to prepare the building for demolition are on schedule, and the bid phase will be advertised mid-July. Tenants have all been re-located.
- *<Discussion of this topic was moved forward in order to first hear the briefing on the Eastside Burnside-Couch Couplet.>* A CAC member proposed that demolition of the BBH project should be revisited when a new developer has been selected, with the thought that the developer may want to include the building in their concept. Upon consideration, the CAC agreed that the demolition of the Convention Plaza Building should proceed.

EASTSIDE BURNSIDE COUCH COUPLET UPDATE

Kia Selley provided the update.

- In the interest of accomplishing the Eastside Couplet within the money now available, PDOT is seeking money-saving measures. Three options of Couch Street transition onto the Burnside Bridge are being considered. Option #1 would move the Couch Street alignment through the site slightly to the east of the NE 3rd Avenue right of way, approximately 18 feet, in order to avoid a sewer line located in the street. Options #2 and #3 each move the alignment further to the east thereby decreasing development potential of Block 76, with Option #3 bifurcating Block 76 as a means of avoiding any structural change to the Burnside Bridge. Other savings being considered include not rebuilding sidewalks, not replacing street trees, and eliminating some street lights and greenstreet features.

Chris Armes from PDOT added the following:

- Range of cost as previously designed (at completion of 60% design and engineering) came in at \$26 million - \$28 million. Current resources available for the project are at \$23.8 million, which includes \$10.1 million coming from the CES URA. PDOT has developed cost cutting options to bring the project within its resources. PDOT will meet with Commissioner Sam Adams next week to get direction on a preferred option.

The CAC discussed the couplet update. Other configurations/options were suggested, based mostly on alternative treatments of 6th Avenue and of Martin Luther King Blvd.

- CAC members unanimously expressed concern that the City is not considering the impact on the value of Block 76. Devaluing that block will affect the development of the Bridgehead project and TIF generation, thereby costing the city more than what is saved by value engineering the couplet project. The primary concern framed by the CAC is lack of consideration of cost/benefit and value of both projects (Bridgehead and Couplet) for the city overall. (It was noted that the CES URA contribution relied heavily on anticipated TIF income driven by the couplet design that had the Couch transition running on 3rd Avenue through the Bridgehead project.) CAC members expressed concern that decisions on the couplet are being driven by narrow bureau priorities, and not with a holistic perspective of how much value is being created (or destroyed) for the city.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the CAC supported the following: "Put the option of the Couch transition on 3rd Avenue back on the table and give consideration to the total value equation. If after due analysis and consideration, a near-term, cost-saving option is to be selected, then go with Option #1, Couch transition moves slightly east of 3rd Avenue with least impact on Block 76."

INTERIM USES OF THE SITE

Due to time constraints there was not a full discussion of interim uses of the site. Representatives from The Collins Companies presented the concept of temporarily foresting the site with Collins Pacific Albus hardwood trees. On average, the trees can be harvested after 3-4 years for renewable energy use, and after 6-8 years for paper pulp use. They noted that it would "send a message" about Portland's commitment to green industry and help with marketing the site as such. Other suggestions included a community garden, a dog park, plant storage area for local nurseries, and simply seeding the site with grass so that it is attractive and negative uses are avoided.

NEXT CAC MEETING

CAC members agreed that it may not be necessary to have another meeting until September, but that an update, via email, is needed on what PDOT is proposing for the Eastside Burnside/Couch Couplet.

PRIMARY OUTCOMES AT THIS MEETING

- The CAC supports demolition of the Convention Plaza building in the interest of clearing the site and making it shovel-ready.
- The CAC strongly urges the City to put the Couch transition on 3rd Avenue design for the Eastside Burnside-Couch Couplet back on the table and give consideration to the total value equation. If after due consideration a near-term, cost-saving option is to be selected, then go with PDOT's Option #1, Couch transition moves slightly east of 3rd Avenue with least impact on Block 76.

There was no public comment at the end of the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Handouts distributed at this meeting:

- Collins Pacific Albus promotional brochure.

Respectfully submitted by facilitator.

If you have comments about the notes from this meeting please direct them to the facilitator at 503-287-9345 or sue@suediciplegroup.com