

# BURNSIDE BRIDGEHEAD CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## Committee Meeting

June 16, 2009

Session Notes

(Adopted as revised 7/21)

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**BBHCAC Members in Attendance:** Jim Andrews, Frank Dufay, Tim Holmes (Chair), Rick Michaelson, Geraldene Moyle (PDC Project Manager), Bruce Murray, Chuck Willis, Bob Wentworth, Michael Whitmore.

**Other PDC Staff in Attendance:** Joleen Jensen-Clausen, Trang Lam, Kia Selley.

**Others in Attendance:** Brad Malsin, Jonathan Malsin (Beam Development); Paul Jeffreys (SERA Architects); Rajiv Batra (Urban Design Collaborative).

**Facilitator:** Sue Dicile.

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The meeting convened at 3:05 pm.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no opening public comment.

### ADMINISTRATION

**Review of April 21, 2009 Meeting Notes:** The notes were adopted without revision.

**Departing BBHCAC Member Recognition:** PDC Project Manager Geraldene Moyle and CAC Chair Tim Holmes both offered recognition and thanks to Lynne Coward for her service on the CAC. The City Club, whom Lynne represented on the CAC, has declined to continue to send an appointee.

### GENERAL BUSINESS ISSUES UPDATE

*Trang Lam, PDC, provided the update. Highlights included:*

#### Interim Site Uses

**Art Screens:** CAC member Joni Hartmann and Kia Selley (PDC) attended the meeting at the Regional Arts and Culture Commission (RACC) regarding the art screens. An RFP has been drafted. Three artists will be selected from among the proposals received. In addition to site screening, using the art to create a "vertical landmark" for the site is being considered. RACC expressed interest in working with artists who are located in the Central East Side (CES), or who have focused on the CES in their work. It is RACC's intention to engage neighbors in the process.

**"No Vacancy!":** PSU students working on the *No Vacancy!* project, which advocates for interim uses of vacant urban space, did not complete their study for the Burnside Bridgehead site although they did foster a partnership with the Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC). Subsequently the CEIC has expressed interest in facilitating the occupancy of vacant space. Some of the vacant space in the CES is owned by several City bureaus, making ownership and policies difficult to determine.

### CONVENTION PLAZA BUILDING RE-USE ANALYSIS

*Geraldene Moyle, PDC, noted that SERA Architects were retained to determine whether to retain the Convention Plaza Building, how retention would impact future development, and the cost of re-use. She introduced Paul Jeffreys, who made a presentation on the preliminary findings of the Re-Use Analysis on behalf of SERA Architects. He noted that SERA was supported by KPPF on structural issues and Walsh Construction on pricing issues. An Overview of Preliminary Findings handout was distributed. (See this handout for presentation details.) Highlights of the presentation included:*

- The study considered five options. The options seek to optimize the floor area and maximize the floor area ratio (FAR) which, at this site, is allowable to 12-to-1. Options #1-#3 contemplate retention of the Convention Plaza Building and options #4 & #5 contemplate removal. Comparison of the costs among the options and a market analysis of the types of development and rents anticipated for the area have not been completed.
- For options that would retain the building, two scenarios were considered for the building re-use evaluation. One scenario included seismic upgrading and one did not.
- Unique features of the building, including the step-down on the bluff, and the wood frame construction with 20' interior spans were highlighted.

In summary, PDC staff noted that it is not yet clear whether the building should be retained or demolished, in part due to preliminary cost estimates received to-date, which vary greatly. A more detailed evaluation of the scenarios and a market analysis are needed. It was also noted that the Framework Plan may need to be completed before a decision on the Convention Plaza building can be finalized. The Framework Plan will establish goals for the site and demonstrate how the building might fit. CAC members posed a range of questions, including:

- How does parking figure into the reuse analysis and how will the parking ratio be determined?
- How much development is desirable on the site, and on what basis will the decision about “how much development” be made?
- Is there an option that could balance a lower FAR and lower land value?
- Do any of the options pencil out?

Brad Malsin of Beam Development noted that although all the analysis has not been completed there seems to be at least the potential to retain the building. He noted that FAR may be a constraint, but it may be appropriate to the market as an attractive, historic-type building. He raised the possibility that strategies such as supporting car sharing might push the parking requirement downward. He recognized that an “urban level” of density is needed but the range is still to be determined. Paul Jeffreys noted that Scenario One, which includes minimal seismic upgrade, looks more feasible on a preliminary basis.

CAC comments included:

- Retention of the Convention Plaza building may have the potential to fill a niche for “funky and affordable” space, with Option 3 seeming to fit that model while also maintaining the streetscape.
- There may be a FAR-to-parking ratio “sweet spot” that is both affordable and market acceptable.
- Tax credits for preservation of a historic structure, if applicable to Convention Plaza, could discount the cost of refurbishing the building by 20%.

Geraldene Moyle noted that the next step will be to move forward on the Framework Plan, after which Convention Plaza re-use can be considered within a clearly-defined context.

#### **FRAMEWORK PLAN UPDATE**

*Geraldene Moyle, PDC, provided the update. Highlights included:*

- The RFP is in the works, and will be reviewed prior to completion by the CAC.
- A CAC member will need to be appointed by the Chair to participate on the consultant selection team. The RFP will be distributed this summer.

Chair Tim Holmes strongly urged that the CAC serve as the Framework Plan Committee, supplemented by a technical advisors as needed.

#### **OTHER**

A CAC member requested a copy of the SERA report. Geraldene Moyle noted that the report is in draft form and not completed, but can be made available once a final version has been submitted. She also noted that copies of parts of the report deemed complete can be obtained through her office.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no closing public comment.

#### **UPCOMING DATES**

The next CAC meeting is Tuesday, July 21, from 3:00 – 5:00pm.

#### **PRIMARY OUTCOMES OF THIS MEETING:**

- The meeting was informational. No CAC actions were taken.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Handouts distributed at this meeting:

- Burnside Bridgehead Convention Plaza Re-use Analysis – Overview of Preliminary Findings.

Respectfully submitted by facilitator Sue Dicipie

Comments on the notes from this meeting can be directed to the facilitator at 503-287-9345 or [sue@suediciplegroup.com](mailto:sue@suediciplegroup.com)