

## **MULTICULTURALISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, April 25, 2018 at 5:30 p.m.  
Council Chambers, City Hall**

### **MINUTES**

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mary Campbell	- Community Member
Mike Coca	- Community Member
Rozina Jaffer	- Community Member
Maria Marcu	- Community Member
Liyang Ning	- Community Member
Angela Sealy	- Community Member

#### **MEMBERS REGRETS:**

Councillor Chuck Puchmayr	- Chair
Gurveen Dhaliwal	- Community Member
Karim Hachlaf	- SD40 Representative

#### **GUEST:**

Joseph Fry	- Hapa Collaborative
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#### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Claudia Freire	- Housing and Social Planner
Erika Mashig	- Parks and Open Space Planner
Heather Corbett	- Committee Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 5:34 p.m. Angela Sealy assumed the role of Chair.

#### **1.0 ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the April 25, 2018 agenda be approved.*

**CARRIED.**

All Committee members present voted in favour of the motion.

## **2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

### **2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of February 28, 2018**

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the Minutes of February 28, 2018 be adopted.*

**CARRIED.**

All Committee members present voted in favour of the motion.

## **3.0 PRESENTATIONS**

### **3.1 824 Agnes Street Park Design Concept Options**

Erika Mashig, Parks and Open Space Planner, and Joseph Fry, Principal, Hapa Collaborative, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the 824 Agnes Street Park design concept, covering the following information:

- Overview, location, site history and context of the project, including a timeline, and two questions that informed the design;
- The project originally started with a working group in September 2017, comprised mainly of members of the Chinese community, in addition to the New Westminster Business Improvement Association, Parks and Recreation Department, committee members, and City staff;
- Three design options went to a public open house in January, and were narrowed down to a final preferred concept featuring the porch, which will be presented at the upcoming May 16, 2018 public open house;
- Due to site topography, the design includes terraces in addition to elements that honour and celebrate the contribution of the Chinese community and immigrants, who founded the site in 1858.
- The conceptual design principles being used are to:
  - Tell the story of the site and make it universal for all immigrants;
  - Create a rich “sense of place,” with character that feels special, has texture and creates interest without being exclusively traditional;
  - Make the site accessible to all;
  - Design the park so that it can be both ‘open’ or ‘closed’;
- The preferred design concept features the following elements:
  - Gateways into park, inspired by Chinese garden architecture;
  - Steps to indicate big porch;
  - Community Plaza with deck area to increase the community amenity space being built by the development;
  - Lower steps to lower verandah connecting to Victoria Street;
  - Accessibility features, including an elevator off Agnes Street;
  - Planting, featuring “Chinese winter scholars”, i.e. bamboo, winter plum, pine;
  - Water features, likely rain and storm water based; and,

- Flex space for daily activities such as Tai Chi, Mahjong/games tables, and space for other City activities, e.g. children's programs from Anvil, walking tours, and workshops.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Fry and Ms. Mashig provided the following information:

- As the surrounding buildings are new developments, they would be constructed to include noise mitigation measures to reduce the potential noise from the park's community plaza;
- The view from the top of the park (across Victoria Street) will be of a façade on the building opposite that would have some form of public art, which would be coordinated to complement the park – this has already been discussed with the developers of the PALS building;
- The park has been fully disclosed to the owners of upcoming surrounding developments and the developers are viewing the park as a “bonus” amenity, providing activity and animation to the area;
- As the expense of maintaining a large water feature is quite high, the City would likely choose a smaller, rainwater-based feature;

Discussion ensued, with the committee noting the following:

- Appreciation was shown for the initial concepts;
- The selection of seasonal trees will be very important, as each one has a different symbolic meaning;
- A grove of trees should be of different sizes and ages in order to better appreciate the individuality of each tree, and also to help mitigate sound;
- The use of rain water for the water feature was appreciated;
- It could be interesting to use small balcony features in the areas that would be screened off to add textural context;
- The portrayal of the Chinese community and ensuring that the garden provides an authentic representation of the culture would be important;
- It would also be important to ensure that the park educates and tells the history of the Chinese community in the City, including the treatment of Chinese Canadians and the subsequent apology from the City;
- The terraces at Pier Park which contain photos of the history of the City work well in terms of showing the history of the community, and a similar approach could be considered for this garden;
- Appreciation was shown for the seating areas, as they show welcoming spaces;
- The garden would benefit from the addition of a cherry or plum tree;

Mary Campbell, Community Member, offered to guide the committee on a tour of the Sun Yat-Sen Garden to give an understanding of symbolism within Chinese gardens. She will organize the tour with the help of the Committee Clerk.

## **4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **4.1 New Westminster Newcomers Festival and Information Fair Recap**

Claudia Freire, Housing and Social Planner, updated the committee on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual 'Newcomers Festival and Information Fair', which took place on Saturday, March 24, highlighting the following aspects of the event:

- 21 tables were registered as part of the resource fair;
- 5 performers were included in the program, including a ukulele group, youth dance group from Syria, Chinese cultural dance group, Mexican Folklore dance group and Oud performer;
- 300 people attended, exceeding the target;
- Interactive activities included turban tying; arts and crafts, and food sampling;
- A survey indicated excellent feedback and participation; and,
- A map was posted at the event for visitors to indicate where they were from – this was compared to diversity statistics in the City and showed good representation of the immigrant population in the City.

Ms. Freire thanked the members of the Committee who were part of the planning committee and indicated that the City would be looking for more funding in order to hold another event in 2019.

### **4.2 NWSS Welcome and Integration Centre Update**

Claudia Freire, Housing and Social Planner, updated the committee on the Welcome and Integration Centre that was previously proposed to form part of the replacement of New Westminster Secondary School. The motion passed at the February meeting.

The next step is to send the motion passed at the February meeting to Council for direction, likely May 28<sup>th</sup>.

## **5.0 NEW BUSINESS**

### **5.1 World Refugee Day – June 20, 2018**

Claudia Freire, Housing and Social Planner, inquired whether the Committee would be interested in requesting that the Mayor make a proclamation to mark World Refugee Day, which is on June 20, 2018, noting that the proclamation could be read at the Council meeting on June 11.

The Committee discussed several ideas to mark World Refugee Day, and noted the following:

- It would be appropriate to request a proclamation, and discuss the importance of this day with Council;

- For next year, marking the day with an event or a feature in the local newspaper may also be worthwhile – it could be possible to tie in with Canada Day; and,
- This would be a good opportunity to provide education on issues facing refugees, acknowledge that coming to a new country as a refugee is a very difficult process, and recognize that refugees often come with very little language skills.

The Committee formed a small subcommittee of members, and decided to request that Mayor Coté make a proclamation at the June 11 meeting. Ms. Freire agreed to facilitate the application process and also to ask Oana Capota, Museum Curator, to request that her refugee friend (whom she had spoken about at a prior MAC meeting) come to speak at Council as well.

## **6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION**

### **6.1 Inter-Governmental Committee on Settlement**

Claudia Freire, Housing and Social Planner, updated the Committee on a new Inter-Governmental Committee on Settlement, which had just been formed, incorporating several Governmental bodies and local municipalities. The intent of the committee is to meet 3-4 times per year in order to form an informational exchange on issues of refugees and settlement, with the intent to inform policy making and priority setting in the region. Ms. Freire noted that John Stark, Acting Manager of Planning, was representing the City on the Committee, and would provide a further update at a future MAC meeting.

The Committee commented that collaboration between levels of government is important and it was encouraging to hear about the formation of this committee.

The Committee held a moment of silence to reflect on the tragic events in Toronto and lend thoughts and prayers to the families of the victims who suffered.

## **7.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items.

## **8.0 NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday, June 27, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers, City Hall.

**9.0 ADJOURNMENT**

**ON MOTION**, the meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Certified correct,

ORIGINAL SIGNED  
**ANGELA SEALY**  
**CHAIR**

ORIGINAL SIGNED  
**HEATHER CORBETT**  
**COMMITTEE CLERK**