

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE NORTH VANCOUVER MUSEUM & ARCHIVES COMMISSION  
COMMENCING AT 5:30pm ON MAY 19, 2016  
IN THE COMMUNITY HISTORY CENTRE MEETING ROOM  
3203 INSTITUTE ROAD, NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C. V7K 3E5**

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PRESENT: COUNCILLOR DON BELL (City)  
VICTOR ELDERTON (Vice-Chair)  
JAMES FOX  
COUNCILLOR ROBIN HICKS (District)  
SANFORD OSLER (Friends Society Representative), Chair  
SHERRY SHAGHAGHI  
NANCY KIRKPATRICK, Director  
JAN MANATON, Recording Secretary

REGRETS: CATHARINE DOWNES  
KEVIN EVANS  
SHERYL FISHER-RIVERS  
TERRY HOOD

GUEST: Mike Robinson, principal, Michael Robinson Consulting

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:48pm. The Chair introduced Mike Robinson of Michael Robinson Consulting, who had been retained to update the Lord Cultural Resources Business Case for the New Museum. The agenda was amended by deletion of Item #2, as minutes were not available, and the order of Items under #3 was changed, with the last item (First Nations Partnerships Update) postponed. The revised agenda was approved on a motion by Mr. Elderton, seconded by Mr. Fox.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

***New Museum***

*General Update*

Ms Kirkpatrick noted that comments from the May 11, 2016 Open House for the Site 8 Development Proposal by Polygon Homes had been compiled by the City's Development Planner and a Report to Council will be reviewed by the City's Directors Team prior to it going to Council. Council's first reading of the bylaw to rezone the site is currently set for May 30, 2016. The application from Polygon Homes will in all likelihood request an amendment to the Official Community Plan to allow 13 storeys that includes the museum in a proposed community amenity space. City staff had indicated that it is not essential for Council to see the Business Plan review by May 30, 2016 or at the time of the Public Hearing scheduled for June 20, 2016. Regardless of the decision to include the museum, the City will receive a public amenity space in exchange for additional height to the building. City staff had indicated that, by May 30th, a review of

floor, mechanical and electrical plans, and high-level costs for the museum will be required.

Councillor Bell noted that he had expressed concern about the timing of submission of the Business Plan; he stated that the City is controlled by the Community Charter and, as such, Council cannot receive new information after a Public Hearing. (If information is received after a Public Hearing, a new Public Hearing is required.) Councillor Bell reported that he had raised this concern with the City Clerk and had also met with Barbara Pearce, City Director, Special Projects, who said that staff understood that it will be difficult to provide a review of the Business Plan by the June 20th date for the Public Hearing. She had discussed the matter with CAO Ken Tollstam and their approach was to have the bylaw amendment refer to a 13-storey building with *community amenity space*. While the museum may be that amenity, what goes into that space is yet to be decided, and more information on the museum would be required after June 20th. Councillor Bell stated that it will be necessary to have confirmed by June 20th that the space is architecturally appropriate for a museum. The Business Plan could be dealt with after the Public Hearing, considered as a separate report prior to adoption of the bylaw. At the Public Hearing, the museum can be talked about, but the zoning amendment will not be dependent upon its inclusion.

Councillor Bell explained further that in order for the Business Plan to be available at the Public Hearing, it would need to be presented before June 20 to avoid the public process being challenged. He stated that he would ask the Mayor whether Council preferred to hear a presentation on the Business Plan. Councillor Hicks noted his preference that City Council confirm the museum as the occupant of the community amenity space at the Public Hearing.

Mr. Robinson stated that he would be able to provide a 30-page analytic assessment and set of assumptions by June 15, 2016. Ms Kirkpatrick pointed out that the next Commission meeting would be held on June 16, but there would be no time to digest the report prior to approval. Councillor Bell said that the Commission should be prepared to accept City staff's cautious approach of not naming the museum as the community amenity space in order to allow the zoning amendment to pass without delay.

#### *General Update – District of North Vancouver*

Ms Kirkpatrick noted that once the City has made its decision with respect to inclusion of the museum in Site 8, she would make a presentation to District Council. Of key concern to the District were service levels in the Archives at the Community History Centre, collections storage, a distributed exhibit system and a business plan that shows no increased cost to the municipalities.

#### *General Update – Studies*

Ms Kirkpatrick circulated the current floor plan being worked on by Urban Arts and noted that they are considering how animation of the exterior can be used to call attention to the building and attract visitors to the museum. She went over the current floor plan, reported on use for the catering space and a proposed method to move people up from the entrance level to the museum level. Ms Kirkpatrick noted that the use of technology has been scaled back to address concerns of Council, and there are no plans to use virtual reality or high level technology at the site. The focus will be on a more tactile experience, with visitors interacting with touchable artifacts. The Chair noted that the main strategic change was the elimination of the children's gallery in favour of a temporary exhibit gallery. It was noted that it would still be possible to focus on children

in that space in between temporary exhibit installations. Ms Kirkpatrick stated that she expected capital costs to be identified by the end of the following week.

### *Business Plan Strategic Issues*

Ms Kirkpatrick reported that Mike Robinson and Scott Hean of Michael Robinson Consulting had been retained to review the Business Plan for the new museum. Mr. Robinson has degrees in anthropology and law, and was former director and chief executive officer of the Glenbow Museum in Calgary and founding director of the Bill Reid Gallery in Vancouver. Scott Hean has a masters degree in business administration, is a former vice-president with the Bank of Montreal and past chair of the board for the Bill Reid Gallery.

Mr. Robinson noted that the scope of his review was to undertake a high-level, third-party test of the assumptions underlying the Lord Cultural Resources Business Plan, and to provide recommendations. He said that while the Lord Plan was based in theory, he brought to the table practical experience in running a cultural organization. Mr. Robinson had read and annotated the reports prepared for the New Museum in the Pipe Shop. His experience with the Glenbow Museum and the Bill Reid Gallery, both registered charities, has led him to the conclusion that it is important to look at operations from an entrepreneurial perspective. He stated the importance of not over-hiring at the outset and of phasing in programs, and concentrating on retail and event activities at the beginning. Site 8 provides both event space and good visibility for a gift shop. He would be suggesting graded admission fees with no giveaways. He noted that memberships, while a good idea, generate a constant expectation of programming and this expectation, coupled with the cost of privileges, can represent a net drain on an organization. Events and rental space managed by professional marketing staff will generate revenue and the quality of the design and feel of the space will be integral to success. The development of relationships (for example, with the Pinnacle Hotel) will be essential. Social media should be used to reduce marketing costs and will be an especially effective way to communicate with millennials. He stressed that the Commission will need to exercise due diligence with respect to the lease with the owner, and especially with respect to common area maintenance costs. HVAC systems will not necessarily be up to Class A standards and it will be very important to get that aspect right.

Mr. Robinson noted his belief that the first-year attendance figures in the Lord Cultural Resources report were over-stated and that care should be taken to be reasonable in that regard so as not to leave room for criticism. He felt that a café is not a good idea. The museum gift shop would provide an opportunity to sell First Nations art, for which there is a big market. He stressed that appropriate curatorial decision-making when choosing items for sale, coupled with an entrepreneurial attitude, would result in good store revenue. Mr. Robinson stressed that a shop manager should be hired rather than contracting this out to a third party.

Fundraising initiatives will be necessary to attract grants and sponsorship in support of temporary exhibits. He pointed out that quality exhibits generate good attendance, shop revenue and event attendance, and that quality exhibits require good content. Content cannot be static as lack of change presents serious challenges. Therefore, a “super manager” of content will be necessary to ensure continual refreshing of permanent exhibits, good content in the dialogue space and turnover in the temporary exhibit area.

A business manager with an entrepreneurial understanding of relationships and the benefits gained from collaborating, sharing and cooperating will be essential. Frequent sharing with other organizations will help form the cultural district and a political lobbying group. Working with First Nations will be necessary, as will taking a statistical sampling of reaction to changing exhibits to figure out what people want to see. The dialogue space will provide an opportunity to develop relationships with immigrants and provide a safe environment for contentious dialogue.

The development of school programs should take place slowly; Mr. Robinson suggested that a curriculum-based museum school be phased in. The need to recognize the seasonal nature of attendance and take advantage of peak times was seen as necessary to contributing to the success of the organization.

Overall, Mr. Robinson was optimistic that a successful museum in Site 8 was achievable. He recommended that all new hires be entrepreneurial with good skills and knowledge, and that front of house staff be knowledgeable. The museum should be focussing on stories rather than objects.

The Chair asked that Commissioners forward their feedback and ideas to Mr. Robinson via Ms Kirkpatrick.

#### *Mobilizing Public Support*

The Chair reiterated that First Reading of the Bylaw will take place on May 30, 2016 and the Commission discussed how support can be shown, bearing in mind that it would be important not to overstate the case so as to avoid the museum being associated with the height increase being requested.

On June 20, 2016, a Public Hearing will be held and Council will likely vote on the Bylaw. Councillor Bell agreed to clarify with the Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer whether they expect the Business Plan to be discussed in camera ahead of the Council meeting. The Chair noted that supporters need to be lined up to speak in favour of the museum at the hearing; Councillor Bell stated that Council will be looking for broad support in the community for the museum as a good amenity for the public in return for the additional height being requested, and Council will expect that public support to be demonstrated at the hearing. There will need to be more people speaking in favour of the museum than those opposing the height increase. The Chair encouraged Commissioners to send out letters to potential supporters.

## **4. REPORTS**

#### *Director's Report*

Ms Kirkpatrick had nothing new to report.

#### *Museum & Archives Operations*

Ms Kirkpatrick reminded Commissioners of upcoming book launches and the Friends Society Annual General Meeting in June. Four students will be hired via student employment grants. She noted that work is commencing on distributed exhibit content.

### *Governance Committee*

The Chair spoke to the minutes of a meeting held on May 17, 2016 that had been circulated ahead of the Commission meeting. Progress is being made with respect to identifying a new City appointee to the Commission. A facilities committee that includes people external to the Commission will likely be required and suggestions of individuals with appropriate expertise should be forwarded to Ms Kirkpatrick and the Chair.

The Chair noted that the City's Director of Finance is considering how to respond to the 2014 and 2015 deficits caused by a restatement of the liability for post-employment benefits (the matter had been the focus of the April 12, 2016 Governance Committee meeting). Councillor Hicks noted that the District's acting chief financial officer has drafted a letter to the City proposing that an account receivable representing each municipality's share of the deficit be created, and suggesting options for reducing that over time. This would provide an avenue to eliminate the deficit on the financial statements but both Councils would have to agree to this. The Chair noted his understanding that the municipalities have historically underwritten staff cost liabilities and expressed hope that the liability would be transferred to the City and the District.

Ms Kirkpatrick reported that she had just received a request from the City's Director of Finance for an explanation of the 2015 deficit and a suggestion as to how that deficit can be eliminated, to be authorized by the Commission. He will then prepare his report to Council and will want to see approval from the District's chief financial officer and District Council.

### *Friends Society Report*

The Chair noted the following:

- The Annual General Meeting will take place on June 14, 2016 from 7:30-8:00pm, followed immediately by Ms Kirkpatrick's update on the museum and at 8:15 by an author's talk by Eric Jamieson on his new book about Maisie Hurley.
- The board had approved the 2015 financial statements at its May 17, 2016 meeting. This year's preparation of the statements had been complicated by the large number of accounting entries resulting from the necessity to contact all donors to the new museum campaign and redirect or refund those donations.

## **5. ITEMS FROM COMMISSIONERS**

### ***Report on Municipal Heritage Symposium***

This item was postponed to a future meeting.

## **6. OTHER BUSINESS**

- Commissioners were reminded to note the dates for the book launches, Friends AGM and Council meetings.
- Mr. Elderton noted that he will be driving MP Jonathan Wilkinson in the Lynn Valley Day Parade in June and would be happy to convey appropriate messaging to him.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm. The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for June 16, 2016 and Commissioners were asked to please hold the third Thursday in July and August open.

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Sanford Osler, Chair  
NORTH VANCOUVER MUSEUM & ARCHIVES COMMISSION

Minutes prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jan Manaton, Commission Secretary