

APPENDIX B

May 24, 2009

LAND OWNER RESPONSE: CONCORD PACIFIC

BACKGROUND

NEFC HLR started out as a comprehensive planning process following the same process that generated the success of the existing neighbourhoods at Concord Pacific Place. This process has provided a vast array of community amenities that not only support the residents of Concord Pacific Place but are also enjoyed by neighbouring communities where amenities are lacking.

Two provincial initiatives - BC Place and the Vancouver Art Gallery - were introduced by PavCo to the HLR almost a year after the start of the HLR. The planning and negotiations of these projects was carried out by PavCo on a confidential basis without the involvement of Concord and the City. We respect that these projects were the result of extensive multilateral negotiations and that the inclusion of additional parties might have jeopardized the negotiation process. We support PavCo's leadership in completing these negotiations, to bring these important regional amenities and public investments to our neighbourhood.

As a result of the introduction of these initiatives, City Planning resorted to a reactive planning approach to the HLR. It rendered a good deal of the work carried out in the first year irrelevant and created a long delay to the HLR schedule. Planning Staff should be commended for their efforts to advance the HLR process to this point. Overall Concord supports the NEFC - Directions for the Future as a work in progress. City Staff have done the best they can to create an example of a solution that incorporates the provincial projects into NEFC. We now look forward to submitting our plans and to working closely with Planning in the next phase of the HLR to create a world class solution.

Our specific response to NEFC - Directions for the Future are noted below.

DOWNTOWN CAPACITY & VIEW CORRIDORS STUDY

All NEFC landowners have indicated support for this study and all want to explore the potential for additional height. From a comprehensive planning perspective we recommend that this study be completed and then incorporated into NEFC, prior to the completion of the HLR process.

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY/CIVIC PLAZA

Over the last year City Staff have worked to incorporate the plan for the VAG that was developed by PavCo and the Plaza of Nations. This plan has generated a land requirement that can only be provided by Concord. At the end of the last civic administration, the general direction was to use Concord's land without any consultation with its owner. The layout and densities created by planning on the Concord lands in Directions for the Future is an example of a one solution responding to the VAGs requirements but it is premature for these design and densities to be reviewed by Council.

Concord is generally supportive of the relocation of the VAG to NEFC. We are willing to react to the VAG's spatial requirements but cannot afford to provide more land without exploring planning solutions that involve a no net loss of land to Concord. We commend Planning's expression of open-mindedness and we are excited to work with them to develop a creative solution. We are optimistic that under the HLR we can work with the City, PavCo, Plaza of Nations and the VAG on an equitable comprehensive plan for the area that could potentially create a much more exciting and vibrant waterfront as well as enhanced parks and open spaces experiences.

RESIDENTIAL & NON-RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

Subject to other considerations as an adjacent landowner, we are able to see the merit of commercial capacity at GM Place which would support the Metro Core Jobs and Economy Study. We also consider BC Place a natural and viable location for extensive commercial uses. We note that after 20 years of business, the Plaza of Nations is in the process of demolishing its existing commercial space, due to long-term commercial market realities. In such a context we are looking very carefully at the commercial uses suggested in this report for the Concord lands. To date Concord has not put forward any plans or suggested any densities allowances for its lands. We believe it is premature to discuss density until the Capacity & View Corridors Study and the VAG relocation process are completed. As mentioned above, we consider the layouts and densities generated by Planning in this Report for the Concord lands as one example of many and that it is premature to be reviewed by Council. Concord will submit its plans in the next phase of HLR, and anticipates that densiys on its land will be addressed on an equitable basis in relations to other landowners.

PARKS & PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Parks and public open space have been key contributors to the success of the False Creek North neighbourhoods. As a direct result of a comprehensive planning process the City has secured more new parks and open space in FCN than from all the new developments in the adjacent Downtown South. Under the current planning in this report Concord is the only landowner providing parkland in NEFC. The HLR should continue to explore opportunities to create more parks and open spaces and where possible and avoid the infilling of existing open spaces.

The Directions for the Future indicate that if the City's neighbourhood park ratio were to be met it would require an additional 19.8 acres of parkland for the 7,200 additional residents that could be added to NEFC. This is in addition to the 9 acres of parkland that Concord will be providing when it develops Area 6C. Given the worldwide acclaim that the City has received for the existing Concord Pacific Place neighbourhoods that have been established around George Wainborn, David Lam, Coopers and Andy Livingstone Parks, it would seem that the neighbourhood park ratio might need to be reviewed.

In Directions for the Future the open spaces around BC Place will be filled with buildings and most of the open spaces at GM place designated from the last rezoning will be removed. This removal of open space will not remove the demand for open space and parks from the future occupants of these sites; it will just transfer the pressure onto adjacent lands.

At thirteen acres the Plaza of Nations is a very large urban site that is more than capable of providing new parks and open spaces. We understand that the City is considering the VAG site as a regional amenity in lieu of parkland and also that the large existing performance space will be reduced in size. The City should carefully consider the impact of additional residents without new parks and open space. We believe that with further planning the City will be able to secure more parkland and open space in NEFC to accommodate its future residents.

NEFC HLR - NEXT STEPS

Now that these provincial investments are settled, it is appropriate to return from a reactive to a comprehensive planning process. Concord supports the completion of the Capacity & View Corridors Study and the Vancouver Art Gallery relocation in 2009 and the results should be incorporated into the HLR process.

The False Creek North amenities are the very reason that the NEFC lands are now being considered for redeveloped and/or change of existing use. Under Directions for the Future Concord is the party that delivers most of the significant community amenities and it want to avoid being burdened with expectations or additional requirements on its land that is generated by individual rezoning, ahead of a comprehensive plan. We are concerned that the City and Concord would have to address the political consequence if

Concord does not develop its land according to these expectations that it has not committed to under a comprehensive plan.

We echo the Planning Department's view on their desire to continue with a comprehensive approach. We do not see the benefit to the City to rezone any NEFC lands until a comprehensive plan is completed and we respectfully request that this be carefully considered by Council.

SUMMARY

The Direction for Future is a high quality document generated by Planning that shows an example of a solution that is a work in progress. The question of density and layout can only logically be considered after the finalization of a VAG solution and the View Corridor Study. Upon the receiving of this progress report, we look forward to Council's direction on the question of continuation of a comprehensive planning process for the HLR. With that encouragement, we look forward to working diligently with City Planning to complete this important process in an expeditious manner.

NEFC is the most important piece of the downtown peninsula and is almost six times the project size of the Olympic Village. We support Planning be given the time and resources to complete their HLR as a comprehensive planning process. This approach will secure for the City the necessary community amenities and ensure a synergy of built form and uses. It will produce a master plan for NEFC that will compliment the successes of the existing False Creek North neighbourhoods developed by Concord.

We look forward to the completion of the parks and community amenities in this neighbourhood. In 2010, Concord hopes to initiate rezoning of the remaining lands of Concord Place and to start construction during the term of this Council.