

University Hill Secondary School

Project Reconciliation



January 25, 2010

Project No.: 08233

This project is a Secondary School for 800 students from grades nine to twelve. Provision is being made to expand to 1000 students in the future depending on the pace of development on the south campus. This is a replacement school for the existing University Hill Secondary which is currently located on Acadia Road (UEL).

The project benefits from a Memorandum of Agreement between UBC and the VSB; utilizing the vacant former NRC building as an opportunity to advance the project at this time. The proposal is to convert the existing 70,000 sq. ft. facility and add 56,000 sq. ft. of new construction to accommodate the Secondary School.

The 1.65 Ha site is restricted both in size and access. To offset this, an all weather artificial turf sports field will be constructed by UBCPT adjacent to the site for school use.

Although there is frontage on 16th Avenue, there is no viable access possible from that street. The only vehicular access is from the West. This access provides the only opportunity for staff parking. About fifty (50) cars are provided. Up to Eighty (80), will be required and the proposal is to negotiate with UBC Properties Trust to rent the additional spaces located in the underground Village Centre. The village centre and the future community centre form the immediate context. It is expected that the south campus will be built out over time adding a greater population and more urban context to the site.

A proposed North South pedestrian walkway and crossing at mid-block on 16th Avenue will link to the school and to a proposed extension of the walkway to the east of the building. There is also an East-West route proposed along the South frontage of the building. Only emergency vehicles will access this southern route.

The desire lines for students are expected to be about 400 from the North-East (Acadia), 100 from the North-West (Hawthorne) and 300 plus, from the South campus. Therefore the pedestrian, bike, and vehicular traffic will mostly come from the North-East and East and in the future from the South. Most pedestrian and cyclists will follow 16th Avenue; come southward at the and mid-block crossing, or come through the village. We anticipate a morning drop off to occur on the West and a vehicular loop is provided. There is also a bus stop on 16th Avenue near the pedestrian route.

The existing building has a two storey spine running East-West and we have used this circulation spine to organize the school. There are access points at both ends of the spine. The major entry plaza is located on the South side facing the Sports field, pedestrian route and the future community centre. A North entry from 16th Avenue is located at the centre of the school forming a cross roads with the East-West spine at the multi-purpose area.

The VSB has Initiated a new instructional model which will link the school with the opportunities presented by proximity to the University Learning environment. The plan of the school has subtle shifts from current thinking.

The learning paradigm is shifting to a Learner based model emphasising project based Learning, integration of subjects, and group and peer learning. So we have science, language arts, history and mathematics located in integrated groupings around project spaces. These learning communities are built around "cul-de-sacs" located along the street; the "Street of Learning". At the existing rotunda we have the Library on the second floor and a "Learning Lounge" on the bottom floor. This area is intended for individuals, small groups and teachers to pursue their projects. A more social space is located at the multipurpose area located at the South entrance and circulation crossroads. This space can be converted to a presentation space or be divided off for community use.

The exterior of the existing building is a combination of curtain wall with black tinted glass and alucobond panels. It is an introverted secure building reflecting the former research function. The design intent is to transform this into a transparent, inviting, and less formal building appealing to the clientele while respecting the value of the learning institution.

The existing 1500mm horizontal and 720mm vertical planning modules have been carried forward to the extension. It is proposed to replace the black glass with transparent glass where there are instructional areas behind it and to reuse the glass on the South facing two storey spine. In the new portion transparent glass will prevail and on the South side: the entry, the studio and the gym will have glass walls at grade to increase the transparency of the school. This same transparency will prevail on the interior with the classroom walls glazed to the corridor and project spaces.

Visibility and presence on 16th Avenue has already been greatly enhanced through a major culling of the existing trees on 16th Avenue. This will greatly improve the security of students and pedestrians.

The long linear building on the North will be interrupted by the new Library projection and two projections of the Learning Communities of the new extension. These projections will be augmented by horizontal roof overhangs as a means to intervene with tight skin of the existing building. Roof projections are proposed, as well, for the new Gym and Studio on the south side.

The exterior cladding will be prefabricated metal cladding which visually will be equivalent to the existing material. We are proposing to maintain the colour of the existing except to add stronger accents at the entrances, at the exterior of the Library and Learning community projections and to the two major new walls on the gym and the studio on the south elevation. The addition of colour will assist way finding, will be an intervention of the existing white and black colour scheme and will add a casual element.

The height of the building matches the existing and the new gym block is about the same height as the podium of the adjacent building which houses the garage entrance and Save-On-Food delivery area.

The Structural System will be a steel frame, except the roof structures will be designed to be in wood. Which will be visible on the interior and on the cantilevered projections.

We have conducted an energy model charrette to make a business case for alternate approaches to energy and we have also conducted a LEED® Charette with all of the stake holders to develop a sustainable LEED® Gold standard. The LEED® check list is attached.