



January 3, 2019

Dr. Murray McCutcheon
murrmcc@gmail.com

RE: STADIUM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Dear Murray,

I am writing to respond to the November 16, 2018 letter to me, as well as the recent delegation you made to the Property Committee of the Board of Governors.

In my October 18, 2018 letter on the Stadium Neighbourhood planning process, I described how UBC would take the time to further explore three key areas of community concern: 1) additional opportunities for UBC community housing; 2) community service levels, including schools, child care and retail space such as grocery stores; and, 3) further engagement with Musqueam.

With respect to UBC community housing, we have heard strongly through this and other conversations that UBC must do more to address affordability for the campus community and, more specific to Stadium Neighbourhood, to maximize the rental and restricted rental opportunities. As a result, the Board of Governors has reconvened its Housing Action Plan Working Group to look at the overall issue of affordability and within that, the role that Stadium Neighborhood can play. Our inaugural meeting took place on December 4, 2018. We had an active discussion and focused on enhanced and new programs to increase faculty home ownership opportunities. We also explored scenarios for Stadium Neighbourhood to dramatically increase rental housing as described below.

The 1.5 million square feet of housing proposed (enabled by additional density and height achieved through proposed amendments to UBC's Land Use Plan) is what allows us to explore more UBC community housing options. Of that amount, approximately one-third of the development must be leasehold housing in order to generate revenue to: 1) respond to the Board of Governors direction to site a new Thunderbird Stadium on a more efficient footprint, resulting in more site area for residential use; 2) fund the servicing and amenities for the new community; and, 3) provide the equity that UBC must invest in rental projects in order to secure external financing. Given that need, combined with the tremendous pressure for more UBC community housing options, the Housing Action Plan Working Group expressed its support for considering up to two-thirds of the planned Stadium Neighbourhood as rental housing. This would include below-market rental options for faculty and staff, as well as market rental options for those who work or study at UBC. The full Board of Governors will consider this option when the Stadium Neighbourhood Plan is finalized.

Regarding community service levels, the Stadium Neighbourhood Plan will provide space for a new mid-size grocery store, up to three child-care centres, a network of parks and open space, buildings and public realm designed to enable social interaction, and opportunities for shared use of UBC facilities such as the new Stadium.



We have also worked closely with senior Vancouver School Board (VSB) Facilities and Education staff to further understand school demand on the Point Grey Peninsula. Two elementary schools and a high school serve UBC's campus. We have shared with them growth projections for UBC and our neighbour, the University Endowment Lands. VSB has shared information on current school enrolment and capacity, projections, and assumptions around school-age children per future household. UBC staff are happy to share these projections with community members through the Stadium Neighbourhood Planning Advisory Committee and other channels.

VSB has told us that of UBC's three schools, Norma Rose Point Elementary is the only one operating near capacity. They also told us that there are a number of tools for relieving this enrolment pressure. After consulting with the campus community, in June 2018 VSB decided to implement the first of these tools by rebalancing campus school grades. Starting in fall 2019, this will shift some enrolment from Norma Rose Point to UHill Elementary and University Hill Secondary. VSB believes this will relieve enrolment pressure at Norma Rose Point Elementary.

VSB is also finalizing its Long Range Facilities Plan in early 2019. The Plan looks at ten-year demand for facilities. Using UBC's growth projections, VSB expects the three UBC-serving schools can accommodate growth – including Stadium Neighbourhood – for at least the next ten years. VSB tells us the Long Range Facilities Plan will designate UBC as an “area to monitor” with respect to a new school. UBC and VSB staff will continue their semi-annual meetings to share information on development and enrolment, and to ensure the VSB projections are accurate. Should it be required in the future, UBC has also reserved a site in Wesbrook Place for a future elementary school. As is typical across the region, UBC would provide the land at no cost. The province and VSB are responsible for planning, building and operating schools, and for deciding when to expand capacity based on need and available funding.

On engagement with Musqueam, as I said in my previous letter, UBC places tremendous value on its relationship with the Musqueam community, reflected through the recently adopted UBC strategic plan (*Shaping UBC's Next Century*), the development of an Indigenous Strategic Plan, and the creation of the Indigenous Engagement Committee of the Board. As such, we are taking the time to deepen this relationship beyond activities of the current Memorandum of Affiliation with Musqueam as well as the neighbourhood-specific level of engagement that has taken place to date for Stadium Neighbourhood. This includes better defining and strengthening the relationship between Musqueam and UBC as a post-secondary institution, employer and neighbour.

Beyond the further exploration in these three areas, you have also identified other questions regarding the plan's readiness to address a range of supporting infrastructure and services. In parallel with the extensive consultation process, it is important to know that UBC has undertaken a comprehensive technical process to develop the Stadium Neighbourhood Plan. In the coming days, staff will publish the technical studies that have been used to support the planning process in the following areas (www.stadiumneighbourhood.ubc.ca):



- Built form (views, shadowing, building height, affordable typologies, stadium integration strategies)
- Open space needs and design
- Livability of higher-density neighbourhoods (sustainability indicators, case studies)
- Transportation network (road capacity and design, parking, demand, transit)
- Natural systems (tree health, biodiversity, rainwater management, solar analysis)
- Whole systems infrastructure (water, rainwater, sanitary sewer, district energy)
- Community amenities and services (retail assessment, schools, child care, community space, operational models)
- UBC community housing demand

Two areas of concern that you have mentioned more specifically are development impacts on the transportation network and Rhododendron Wood. The transportation analysis shows the future neighbourhood will not significantly impact the road network, particularly with higher amounts of UBC affiliated housing as these generate more walk and cycle trips for those who work or attend UBC. However, as Wesbrook Place and the campus as a whole continues to grow, the analysis shows added pressure on the existing 16th Avenue roundabouts. UBC is working with TransLink and with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to mitigate this pressure through a range of design and programming improvements.

With regard to Rhododendron Wood, certified arborist studies have concluded the proposed development will not negatively impact the adjacent Rhododendron Wood or Botanical Gardens. To ensure this, the Stadium Neighbourhood Plan and subsequent design guidelines will be guided by best practices for development adjacent to treed areas, something that is supported by extensive precedents in greater Vancouver and other cities with similar ecological contexts. This will include requirements for specific technical work and mitigation measures – such as appropriate building setbacks – for future development.

In closing, I want to repeat my appreciation on behalf of my colleagues on the Board of Governors for the tremendous level on engagement in the Stadium Neighbourhood Plan process. I also mentioned to you that we would be pleased to invite you to the late January 2019 meeting of the Board of Governors Housing Action Plan Working Group to further discuss your concerns and to ensure that they are being addressed through this planning process.

Yours sincerely,

Michael J. Korenberg
Chair, Board of Governors

Attachment:
November 16, 2018 letter from UBC community residents to Michael Korenberg

16 November, 2018

Dear Mr. Korenberg,

We are writing to thank you for delaying the decision by the Board of Governors regarding the Stadium Road Neighbourhood in order to fully address the interests and concerns heard from residents and others during the planning process. We are pleased to see that you are considering more affordable housing options on the site for Faculty and Staff, and that you have reconvened the Housing Action Plan Working Group.

At the same time, residents and others connected to UBC feel that the two issues we are most concerned about – density and the height of buildings – have not been addressed. Given our experience with the consultation process to date, we are not confident that these issues will be dealt with by any level at the University lower than the Board of Governors. Despite two years of “consultations” and increasing opposition from residents, Campus and Community Planning has not shifted from its preferred option of last spring, namely 1.5 million sq ft of residential space and five towers taller than permitted under the currently approved Land Use Plan, with at least one as high as 32 storeys.

Although we were grateful to have had the chance to speak with Board Vice-Chair Sandra Cawley, unfortunately we have not been given the opportunity to speak with any other member of the Board – in particular, with members of the Finance Committee or Executive Committee (other than Ms. Cawley). Although we understand our previous letter was copied to all Board Members, we do not believe that our concerns have been properly presented or debated. As representatives of one of your major constituencies, we would like to request the opportunity to address the Board of Governors at the forthcoming meeting on December 4, in addition to meeting with members of the Executive next week.

Among the questions we would still like to have answered are:

- 1) Why does the Board need to get \$360 million out of this one small plot of land (recognizing that \$50 million will be used for rebuilding the stadium)? We fully understand the principle behind the University Endowment Fund and appreciate all the worthy projects to which income from the Fund is allocated. But we do not understand why such a massive windfall is sought from the SRN alone, given the amount that UBC deemed appropriate from all other neighbourhoods in the past. We sincerely believe that this is short-term gain for long-term pain, and that the cost-benefit analysis has not been properly presented to the Board. Reducing the height of towers by reducing market housing to, say, 500,000 sq ft would still provide a healthy contribution to the University Endowment Fund; providing an equal amount, 500,000 sq ft, for Faculty and Staff rental housing would contribute to your goal of affordable housing while reducing the density of the neighbourhood to that which was approved in 2011.
- 2) Why the insistence on tall towers for the SRN? By comparison, the Musqueam Block F development on University Boulevard will have towers no taller than 18 storeys, which is in line with the Land Use Plan. We also note that the new University Boulevard Neighbourhood Plan is carefully consistent with the current Land Use Plan, with a height limit of 6 storeys along

University Boulevard with the *possibility* of exceeding that limit to go to a maximum of only 8 storeys. The guidelines for the new Walter Gage towers stress that Building heights along Wesbrook Mall will be 6-8 storeys “to minimize view and shadow impacts on adjacent residential areas”. The tallest building we see on the planning horizon is one for additional Walter Gage housing where approval is being sought to increase the height from 53 to 65 metres (22 storeys). We do not understand why you are not applying the current Land Use Plan to the SRN. We know of no study that claims that tall buildings are good for building community; in fact, quite the reverse.

- 3) We are happy that you plan to engage the Vancouver School Board with regard to building a future elementary school, but challenges in finding a local school already exist for residents on campus. What is the projected population of school-aged children that you expect to see in Electoral District A in the next five and ten years, and what guarantees do you have from Vancouver and the Provincial government that funds will be there to accommodate them and their teachers? This issue is a top priority for residents on campus, as expressed at the UNA Resident Forums convened in early October.
- 4) Your letter speaks about transportation studies that have concluded that the proposed development can be managed within UBC’s Transportation Plan. We respectfully question this conclusion and believe that some of the assumptions made are faulty. May we see those studies? If an extension of the proposed subway line beyond Arbutus is considered part of the solution, we would like to point out that your own urban planners at UBC have explained why this is unlikely within a time frame that would be required by all the development that is being proposed.
- 5) There is widespread concern about the negative impact of tall towers on the local environment, including the adjacent Botanical Garden and Rhododendron Woods. It would be useful to see results of environmental and engineering studies on existing underground water patterns, the increased underground depth for the foundations of taller buildings, and the impact above ground on trees, flora and fauna. These studies are important to understand the impact above and below ground of the proposed buildings for the whole neighbourhood.

As you are no doubt aware, a second petition asking the Board of Governors not to approve any plan for the Stadium Road Neighbourhood that exceeds limits to density and building heights approved in the 2010 Land Use Plan is in circulation. At latest count, there are more than 1200 signatures representing a wide cross-section of concerned residents, donors, faculty and staff and individuals with connections to UBC.

In advance of the December 4th Board meeting, we understand that the Board of Governors’ Executive Committee will be meeting in Open Session on Tuesday, November 20. Would it be possible for a representative from our group to address that meeting at that time, or, at the very least, to ask you to instruct your office to arrange a meeting with several members of the Executive Committee on the margins of that meeting? Alternatively, would such a meeting be possible on the date of the Committee meetings on Monday, November 26? In the spirit of consultation, we would also be grateful for the

opportunity to address the Board of Governors at the December 4th Board meeting to ensure they are able to consider all dimensions of the development.

We thank you for your continued consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Murray McCutcheon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "M" at the beginning.

Murray McCutcheon, Ph.D. on behalf of the Undersigned
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604-704-8601

Akira Furuzawa, Alex Volkoff, Fangfang Zhang, Jade Zhang, Joyce Ternes, Kevin Liu, Simon Zhang,
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