



South Campus (Wesbrook Place) Neighbourhood Plan Amendments

July 2011 Open House Summary

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campus + **community** planning



a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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1. Executive Summary

In March 2011, amendments to the Land Use Plan were adopted which remove obstacles to the vision identified by the university community during the three-year Vancouver Campus Plan process. Two important accomplishments of the Land Use Plan amendments are to:

- Make it possible to increase housing choices and improve housing affordability for our faculty, staff and students, thereby contributing to the creation of a more sustainable community
- Transfer housing density from the UBC Farm and other areas to support sustainable community development and UBC's academic mission

Amendments to the South Campus Neighbourhood Plan are necessary to bring it into alignment with the Land Use Plan and achieve the two goals above. To achieve these goals, some of the density from the UBC Farm will be transferred to Wesbrook Place, mainly by increasing building heights in undeveloped areas from 3 storeys to 6 storeys. Some taller buildings will also be required in some places. The site formerly occupied by BC Research will also be added to the neighbourhood, including provisions for housing, parks and greenways. And additional housing density transfers from the Gage South area to south campus will be considered, to allow for additional rental housing for faculty, staff and students on campus. Other issues to be addressed through the process include reconfiguring road access to UBC Farm, preserving tree habitat associated with an eagle's nest, and identifying a school site for the Vancouver School Board.

The amendment process will include multiple opportunities for community and stakeholder input as well as technical and design work, including public consultation events, an Advisory Planning Committee and a Technical Advisory Committee.

The public consultation process began with an open house at MBA House, June 28, 2011, 4:30pm – 7:00pm. The Open House introduced the objectives of the amendment process, presented background information on a series of display boards, and provided an opportunity for attendees to ask questions and offer feedback. Information on the display boards, along with sign-in sheets and feedback forms, was also translated into Korean and Chinese. Feedback forms were also available online until July 8th, 2011 and translated materials were provided to the UNA for distribution.

Thirty two people attended the open house and 11 completed feedback forms. Key issues raised related to the proposed amendments and amendment process include:

- concern about increased building height
- preserving green space and treed areas
- housing options for faculty and staff
- consideration of impacts of neighbourhood development on UBC Farm

2. Background

UBC is building a residential community as part of our dedication to achieving our overall sustainability goals, reducing the environmental and social impacts of being a commuter campus, and building a unique university community. The purpose of the neighbourhood plan is to provide detail on the types and locations of housing, shops and services and amenities. The neighbourhood plan guides development to help achieve this vision.

The South Campus Neighbourhood Plan, adopted in 2005, guides the development of the neighbourhood more commonly known as Wesbrook Place. A number of planning principles for the development of Wesbrook Place focused on sustainable community development and helped create a unique vision for a neighbourhood that is compact and complete. Key guiding principles include:

- Develop a vibrant, complete, ecologically sensitive neighbourhood that contributes to the larger UBC community with a strong emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle travel, good access to transit and a reduced need for commuting.
- Create a mixed-use neighbourhood with a distinct “urban village in the woods” character that integrates a variety of residential accommodations (to support work-study housing) with a commercial centre, community centre and school facilities.
- Use placemaking techniques to design spaces that encourage community gathering and interaction to enrich the lives of those who learn, work, live and visit here.
- Housing shall have a strong orientation to the fine-grained street and greenway network to encourage walking, to promote street activity and enhance neighbourhood safety.
- Ensure that stormwater systems incorporate Best Management Practices to manage stormwater flows to prevent flooding, to provide a community amenity where possible, and to manage discharges to the Fraser River and nearby slopes.
- The neighbourhood, as a building block for global sustainability, will achieve a high level of performance on factors such as energy use, water consumption, waste management, community health, social engagement and economic viability.

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Amendments to the South Campus Neighbourhood Plan are necessary to bring it into alignment with the Land Use Plan and achieve the two goals above. To achieve these goals, some of the density from the UBC Farm will be transferred to Wesbrook Place, mainly by increasing building heights in undeveloped areas from 3 storeys to 6 storeys. Some taller buildings will also be required in some

places. The site formerly occupied by BC Research will also be added to the neighbourhood, including provisions for housing, parks and greenways.

During the Land Use Plan amendment process, members of the student community asked UBC to consider re-designating the Gage South area (where the diesel bus loop is currently located) and removing the non-student housing from this area. Additional housing density transfers from the Gage South area to south campus will be considered, to allow for additional rental housing for faculty, staff and students on campus.

These changes will help ensure sufficient population for a livable and complete community in South Campus. Maintaining sufficient population in South Campus is key to ensuring year-round support and viability for the critical range of shops and services, transit options, amenities and the social infrastructure needed for a complete community. It will also help UBC meet its housing and sustainability goals.

The community will be constructed over many years and amenities such as parks, community centres, daycares and schools will be phased in as population increases require them.

Other issues to be addressed by the amendments include reconfiguring road access to UBC Farm, preserving tree habitat associated with an eagle's nest, and identifying an additional school site for the Vancouver School Board.

3. Public Consultation Process

The South Campus (Wesbrook Place) Neighbourhood Plan Amendment process will include multiple opportunities for community and stakeholder input as well as technical and design work. Opportunities for public input include:

- June 28th, 2011: First public open house to launch amendment process (complete)
- September: Draft amendment presented for public input
- October: Revised amendments presented for public input

An Advisory Planning Committee and a Technical Advisory Committee have also been struck, both of which will meet throughout the process. Please visit the Campus & Community Planning website at http://www.planning.ubc.ca/vancouver_home/consultations/south_campus_neighbourhood_amendments_process/public_consultation.php for meeting notes and more information about these two committees.

4. Open House

On June 28, 2011 the first public consultation events took place in the form of an open house from 4:30pm – 7:00pm at MBA House in Wesbrook Place.

The open house was hosted by senior members of C&CP and attended by Properties Trust, who were there to answer questions and provide additional context. A total of 32 people attended the open house.

Nine display boards communicated the background, nature of and process for developing the amendments, as well as the amendment process and opportunities for public input and consultation. One of the boards included space for visitors to write their own ideas, issues and concerns about amendments to the neighbourhood plan, and a two-page fact sheet summarizing the amendment process was produced as a take-away. Materials were available on the website and feedback forms were online until July 8th, 2011. Copies of the boards and fact sheet are available in appendix A.

Sign-in sheets, feedback forms and the information on the display boards in the form of hand-outs were provided in Chinese and Korean both at the event and on the website. Translated materials were also provided to the UNA for distribution.

A total of 11 feedback forms were received. Ten were completed on site at the open house and one was received online.

The event was promoted with advertisements in the Vancouver Courier and the Ubyyssey, on the C&CP website and by e-mail notification to a select group of stakeholders, including:

- UBC Graduate Student Society
- UBC Alma Mater Society
- University Neighbourhoods Association
- Botanical Gardens
- UBC Farm
- UBC Athletics
- GVRD Parks
- Vancouver School Board
- C&CP Planning distribution list

5. Feedback Analysis

Of the 32 people who attended the open house, 11 completed feedback forms.

5.1. Summary

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of 8 different community characteristics on a scale of 1 – 5, where 1 was “Not Very Important” and 5 was “Very Important”. The vast majority of characteristics listed received rankings of 3 – 5. There were few scores below 3 and only “More Commercial & Retail” received a score of 1 from two different respondents.

When considering only rankings of 4 and 5 (“Important/Very Important”), parks and green space ranked highest with all 11, or 100%, of respondents rating them as “important/very important”. Access to public transit ranked 2nd with 9 respondents (81%) rating it as “important/very important”, and the new community centre came in 3rd with 8 respondents (72%) giving it a ranking of “important/very important”. Stormwater management and green buildings each received rankings of “important/very important” from 65% of attendees, while schools, and commercial and retail received “important/very important” rankings from 45%. District energy received the lowest score with 36% ranking it in the “important/very important” category.

Respondents were also asked to share their thoughts on the issues to be addressed through the amendment process as well as other comments related to South Campus. Key issues raised related to the proposed amendments and amendment process, with references made to each by three (27%) or four (36%) separate respondents include:

- concern about increased building height
- preserving green space and treed areas
- housing options for faculty and staff
- consideration of impacts of neighbourhood development on UBC Farm

Most of the feedback on the feedback forms was also reiterated on sticky-notes left by open house attendees on display board #8 that invited attendees share their ideas about what would make Wesbrook a vibrant community.

6. Detailed Feedback

Display Board #8: Share your ideas about what would make Wesbrook a vibrant community:

- Wesbrook Place needs more green space between buildings which are very close to each other – will help screen out noise too
- Height restriction of buildings – not more than 6 storeys/limit building height
- Reduce currently proposed housing densities
- Improve affordability and include provisions for young faculty with families
- Preserve the remainder of natural forests existing within the South Campus neighbourhood
- Increase tree retention areas
- Use the greenbelt as a visual, thermal and sound buffer for UBC Farm. Keep the understory instead of putting in grass
- Design for a main UBC Farm boundary greenway – retain a natural forest structure
- Give consideration to UBC Farm’s ability to assimilate and reuse materials and energy from the neighbourhood

Feedback Form Question 1: “How important are the following characteristics to you?”

	Not Very Important			Very Important		
	1	2	3	4	5	%
Characteristic	Respondent Rankings					
Parks & green space				2	9	100%
Access to public transit		1	1	3	6	81%
Community centre		1	2	2	6	72%
Stormwater system		1	3	2	5	63%
Green buildings		1	3	3	4	63%
Schools		1	5	1	4	45%
More commercial & retail	2	2	2	4	1	45%
District energy system		2	4	2	2	36%

Feedback Form Question 2: What thoughts do you have about the issues that will be addressed through the amendments?

Comments Related to Proposed Neighbourhood Plan Amendments

Issue	No of References	Percentage	Sample Comments
Concern about increased building height	4	36%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 stories is high enough/too high
Preserving green space and treed areas	4	36%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned green space insufficient for increased density Focus should be on expanding tree retention areas and the forest buffer on Pacific Spirit Park and UBC Farm.
Housing options for faculty & staff	3	27%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need incentive – co-development and rental discounts - for faculty and staff who want to live on campus Offer variety of housing types & sizes
Consideration of impacts of neighbourhood development on UBC Farm	3	27%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sizeable green space should be maintained around UBC Farm Design with consideration of farm views, access and impact
Opposition to transfer of student housing from Gage South	2	18%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional student housing should be transferred from Gage – not part of the original plan
Transit service integration/improvement	2	18%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looks like transit will be well integrated
More shops & services	2	18%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If we don't have sufficient population we won't see more shops or services
Retaining access to UBC Farm	1	18%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate efficient access and egress to farm – cycling, walking Ensure convenient transit to/from farm and adequate parking South Campus Road should continue to provide access to UBC Farm

Feedback Form Question 2: What thoughts do you have about the issues that will be addressed through the amendments? Cont'd.

Comments Related to Proposed Neighbourhood Plan Amendments

Issue	No of References	Percentage	Sample of Comments
Concern about transfer of density from UBC Farm and BC Research	1	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No basis for transferring density from the UBC Farm. Site was notionally a "future housing reserve".
Concern about further development of Campus	1	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The scale and pace of UBC development, including South Campus is unsustainable.
Support connections btwn Wesbrook and UBC Farm	1	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community programming connections btwn Wesbrook and farm Incorporate development of Wesbrook into UBC-based academic studies of design, construction & functioning of sustainable urban development
Protect eagle's nest	1	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect eagle's nest habitat
Support for Sustainability	1	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hope that sustainability – community and environmental – will be core features of the amendments

Feedback Form Question 3: Other Comments?

Comments Unrelated to Proposed Neighbourhood Plan Amendments

Issue	No of References		Sample of Comments
Imposition of solar panels on MBA House	2	18%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panels are big, ugly and reflect too much light on adjacent buildings
Construction impacts - noise, dust & traffic	2	18%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give priority to building planned SW road to construction site to relieve neighbourhood of construction traffic
Concern about absentee owners/speculators	2	18%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many units being bought and not lived in
Concern about Public Consultation Process	1	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should undertake a more robust and informative on-line consultation process
Inadequate street width	1	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing street size too narrow for high density living/traffic

6.1. Attendee Demographics

The following represents information gathered from the sign-in sheets and the feedback forms. Note that numbers provide a general sense of attendee demographics but do not accurately reflect either the number of Open House attendees (32) or feedback form respondents (11) as not everyone identified their affiliation, residence and/or how they heard about the event, and some identified themselves as both, for example, a member of faculty and a UNA resident.

Affiliation	Student	Faculty	Staff	Alumni	UNA	Other
	5	5	1	3	10	Friends of UBC Farm Farm Stewardship Committee WBPS/PSPS/FRC GSS, AMS Tapestry

Residence	UBC	Vancouver	Other
	5	4	Tapestry, West Pt Grey

How heard of event	E-mail	Website	Facebook	Other
	7	1 C&CP web; 1 Events web	1	Friends of UBC Farm; friend

7. Appendix A – Fact Sheet

8. Appendix B - Display Boards