



Online Feedback Summary

File: DP 15011: Brock Commons Student Residence
Date: April 30, 2015
Re: Online Feedback

Comment Period: April 7 to May 8, 2015

The online comment forms were available on the DP15011 Brock Commons Student Residence project page on Campus and Community Planning's website from April 7 to May 8, 2015. <http://planning.ubc.ca/vancouver/projects-consultations/application/academic-lands/brock-commons-student-residence>. As of May 8, 2015, fifteen (15) online comment forms were completed and one (1) email received. In summary:

Online Feedback	C&CP Response
<p>Feedback: <i>Staff</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What a disappointing design. This is a unique opportunity to market UBC as a living laboratory and the WORLD'S TALLEST wood/concrete hybrid construction. But the final building design shows hardly any wood at all. Yawn. 	<p>The building will be concrete at the base and, on the upper storeys, mass-timber construction with cross laminated timber floor membranes. The mass-timber framework will be clad with gypsum board and the CLT floor membranes topped with concrete. These measures are required to ensure fire rating safety.</p> <p>There will be some wood features visible, including the soffit of the exterior canopy and the foyer interior which is easily seen through the double height glazing.</p>
<p>Feedback: <i>Student</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello. My name is XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX and I am the XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX of the AMS Bike Co-op. Looking at the plans for the new building, we are concerned at the appropriation of our bike storage shed for new resident bike storage located to the northwest of north parkade. <p>While we are pleased that bike storage facilities have been planned into the new building, this storage shed is vital to operations at the Bike Co-op and kitchen. We are hoping that if our shed does need to be removed that a suitable replacement shed would be provided or constructed. Thank you.</p>	<p>There is no intention to displace the bicycle parking allocated to the AMS Bike Co-op. Staff is currently working to identify locations for both long and short-term bicycle storage which includes the potential use of an enclosure in the North Parkade.</p>
<p>Feedback: <i>Alumnus/Staff/Resident/UNA</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I prefer this area to be left open, as the green spaces at UBC are disappearing. 	<p>This is a development site in the Vancouver Campus Plan. (Map 2-2) That Plan was approved by UBC Governors in 2010 following a four-year campus consultation program. Open spaces are also identified and protected in the Plan (Map 1-3).</p>

Online Feedback	C&CP Response
<p>Feedback: Alumnus/Staff/Resident/UNA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this in addition to, or instead of a proposed Arts Hub? I hope neither happens. Let's preserve open space on campus! 	<p>Brock Commons is one of five mixed use hubs identified in the Vancouver Campus Plan (Policy 17; and Map 2-2).</p> <p>This building is the first building in the hub which will also include other student amenities in the future.</p>
<p>Feedback: Alumnus/Staff/Resident/UNA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am NOT in favor of this new building--especially with its height, the building material (please experiment with wooden skyscrapers somewhere else!) and adding to the density of the neighborhood. 	<p>At 18-storeys and 53 metres, this building is within the permitted height limits in the UBC Land Use Plan (section 4.1.3 c)). This provision was carried over from the Official Community Plan (1997) and was retained when the Land Use Plan was amended in 2011.</p> <p>The 408 student beds will help to respond to the considerable wait list for students who wish to live on campus. The development is outside the Chancellor Place neighbourhood.</p>
<p>Feedback: <i>Resident/UNA</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This 17 storey building is way too tall. It will definitely destroy the character of the beautiful UBC campus. That would be a real shame! 	<p>At 18-storeys and 53 metres, this building is within the permitted height limits in the UBC Land Use Plan (section 4.1.3 c)). This provision was carried over from the Official Community Plan (1997) and was retained when the Land Use Plan was amended in 2011.</p>
<p>Feedback: <i>Staff</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks great! You should give priority to Law students as it's right next to Allard Hall. One more thing that wasn't mentioned was whether it's for winter or year-round housing. I hope it's for year-round housing, given your ridiculous 20% hike in winter housing fees. 	<p>The rooms will be on a 12-month rental period and available for upper year and graduate students from across the campus.</p>
<p>Feedback: Alumnus/Staff/Resident/UNA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop the Manhattanization of UBC. 	<p>Manhattanization is a new term coined to describe the construction of many tall or densely situated buildings and used as a pejorative word by critics of high rise buildings.</p>

Online Feedback	C&CP Response
<p><i>Feedback: Student/Resident</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do all the new hubs have to look the same? Ponderosa and Vantage College have essentially the same design as this proposal. The hubs were each supposed to have a unique character that distinguishes them from each other and creates specific neighborhoods for each faculty. i.e. Arts district. • MOST IMPORTANTLY: During the UBC Campus Plan Consultations we were assured that each of the hubs were supposed to have a specific plan and consultation process to determine the "feel", "look", and space allocations for each hub. This has not occurred. How can the community evaluate the design of this building if there is no hub plan? • Furthermore, there are no massing studies to evaluate the distribution of building heights within the hubs zone. Most planning departments - including the City of Vancouver - utilize the concept of graduated heights from the centre of density. This building is too tall for the site. • Even without a neighborhood design framework to evaluate this building, the structure does not have enough articulation. 	<p>Guidelines for each of the mixed-use hubs are contained within the Vancouver Campus Plan Part 3 Sec. 3.5.1..</p> <p>Each mixed-use hub is intended to have its own identity guided by its context. The proposed Brock Commons Residence is in keeping with the guidelines and the western façade is being design with the later development phases for Brock Commons.</p> <p>The June 9, 2015 report to the Board of Governors (on line end of May) has massing drawings attached.</p>
<p><i>Feedback: Student/Resident</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am currently a civil engineering student at UBC and I think that building the Brock Commons Residence out of wood is the best option! It speaks to UBC's culture and is a testament to the Forestry and Wood Science programs at UBC as well as the rapidly developing Structural Wood Engineering program at UBC. Furthermore, wood is the most environmentally friendly building material, it will reduce the construction time, and residence will appreciate its beauty. Lastly, as a university UBC should approach such innovative projects, there are other places in the world such as Sweden and Norway which will construct wood building over 20 stories however no place exists in North America. Thus, by building an 18 story wood structure, UBC will be at the forefront of "wood skyscrapers" and in turn the academic world, industry, and general public will take notice. 	<p>Your support is recognized.</p>
<p><i>Feedback: Resident</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1. I would like to thank the Planning and Housing departments for bringing in the senior architect himself to make the presentation. The gesture is much appreciated. • 2. As you heard from the comments, the design of the building itself is of less concern to the residents than its impact on the Chancellor neighbourhood community - noise, traffic, greenspace etc. • 3. That said, the University is to be commended on combining building research with operational requirements. • 4. The lack of balconies in the new building is a definite plus - creates fewer opportunities for noise. • 5. Services - garbage pickup, deliveries etc... seem to be clustered between the building and the parkade, with entrance via the "Gage lane way" (west of Gage towers). This orientation makes sense. The service traffic should be routed via Student Union Blvd (rather than Walter Gage Road) to minimize traffic and noise. • 6. The landscaped areas around the building should be as lush as possible to soften the hard acoustics of the area. There is a lot of concrete already, and the echoes are quite distinct. 	<p>Your comments 1 through 8 are recognized</p>

Online Feedback	C&CP Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7. Regarding the existing Gage towers - I feel overall that the noise issues are minimal, although there seemed to be some additional noise in the first term (Sept-Dec 2014) due I suspect to the inclusion of first year students in the towers. There are also regular noise issues during the summer when conference attendees celebrate their new-found knowledge by announcing it in loud terms from the balconies. To mitigate both of these issues, it would be appreciated if Housing could house the first year students and the summer hotel guests in the southern towers, and on the south side of those towers. One way of managing the summer guests might be to charge a significant premium for "rooms with a view", and let the market assist in placing the guests. I understand that the summer occupancy needs to factor in the annual repair and maintenance programs, but doing the best you can within this constraint would be much appreciated by many neighbours. • 8. The prefab construction techniques proposed for the new building should be applied to other high rise construction on campus. Shortening the part of the construction cycle that takes place on campus will go a long way to mitigating the noise, dust and traffic concerns that invariably arise. The company broad.com in China has pioneered these techniques - with money savings that are applied to sustainability features such as heat recovery systems and recycling/garbage chutes. Check their website for "30-storey built in 360 hours" - something that could be applied to the two other high rise buildings slated for Brock commons, as well as those in Armouries. The techniques work for conventional steel / concrete buildings, not just for wood buildings. • 9. And of course the Question I Forgot to Ask the Architect: why were steel studs (vs wood) chosen, given that double drywall will be used for fire and acoustics reasons. It would seem that in a building full of small rooms, that the studs are one of the higher-volume components. I am sure there is a good reason, as the rest of the building seems well thought-out. • 10. Is this an opportunity to consider alternate systems for fire suppression - using techniques other than sprinklers to allow occupants to escape a fire. False sprinkler releases cause significant damage in any building, but a wood building would likely need much longer to dry out after such an occurrence - contributing both to the cost, and to the inconvenience of the students who would need alternate living space. There must be a better way, with today's monitoring systems for early detection, and confirmation that the threat is real, as well as use of pressurization for stairwells to create a "clean-air" pathway for egress. Even if water continues to be used, the improved monitoring might be used in conjunction with a "dry sprinkler system" to make sure the threat is real before turning on the water. Thank you again for providing an in-depth presentation, by the principal architect. Corus 	<p>9. Steel studs will be used for a few reasons: to best take advantage of trades skilled in high-rise construction where steel stud designs are the norm thereby helping to reduce cost.</p> <p>10. Given an objective of the project is to utilize systems that are typically used in high-rise construction and to deliver an economically competitive construction cost, traditional sprinklers are being used as dry sprinkler systems are more expensive.</p>

Online Feedback	C&CP Response
<p>Feedback: <i>Student</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PARKADE FOREVER? The biggest problem with this project isn't the proposed building, it's its neighbour: the North Parkade. The proposed siting and massing of the Brock Commons Student Residence, on a narrow site butted up against Walter Gage Road, is a direct consequence of the monstrosity to the south. Parkades are arguably the greatest blight on UBC's campus, and their monolithic concrete forms mar scenic views, obstruct pedestrian circulation, and facilitate further generations of unsustainable activity. Imagine what this neighbourhood would be like without the North Parkade? The whole space between the SUB and Allard Hall would be opened up, with potential for student services space, outdoor recreation venues, a better-situated bus loop directly across from the IKB, and more. Before throwing good design after bad, take the opportunity to consider whether the proposed building helps or hinders the revival of this neighbourhood and the healing of the wounds caused by parkade construction of the 1970s and 80s. Could a combination of buildings on this site incorporate underground parking into their design and rescue this precious central location for more worthwhile purposes. • ELEVATOR CAPACITY: Are two elevators sufficient for a population of 408 students coming and going? 	<p>Over the last two decades, policies have been realized to encourage the use of transit, walking and cycling. Nevertheless there is still a demand for parking in the existing parkades. The architects have designed the residence so that there is sufficient separation between the existing parkade and the new building. The 18 storey building efficiently uses a small site while respecting the neighbourhood to the north and framing the Brock Commons mixed-use hub.</p> <p>Elevators are provided in compliance with building code and UBC technical guidelines.</p>
<p>Feedback: <i>Resident</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is far too high and far too close to a UNA building across the street • rear bottom 3 floors face parkade. Is this legal (say a car blows up) ? • Not enough greenspace on UBC Campus, certainly on the north side • where is the subway ? More and more folks are crammed in here and want to visit folks, go places, go downtown and/or get visitors. UBC needs to promote subway with its political capital AND AMPLE DOLLARS. 	<p>The building complies with the height limits in the Vancouver Campus Plan at 53 metres and has been designed to respect its surrounding neighbours including the institutional residences Chancellor Place neighbourhood immediately to the north.</p> <p>The project will be built to adhere to strict building safety standards that will require Provincial approval.</p> <p>Green areas are valued at UBC and protected through the Land Use Plan, Vancouver Campus Plan and neighbourhood plans. UBC is an active and vocal participant in its work to advance a transit rail link to the campus.</p>

Online Feedback	C&CP Response
<p>Feedback: <i>Resident</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think that adding more student residences is always a good thing for UBC. UBC has a reputation as a bit of a commuter school, which is in direct contrast to the world's premier institutions such as Harvard and Stanford. Harvard has 97% of it's undergraduates living in residence for all four years and Stanford has 96% of its undergraduate students in residence. • I understand that UBC should have a distinct identity, but there is a very wide school of thought that says living in student residences is a major facet of the undergraduate experience. I believe that this ideal should be made available to at least half of the undergraduates at UBC. This residence should definitely be built to help enrich the undergraduate experience of that many more students at UBC. • Also it may be nice to have a cafe and a restaurant in the building, sort of like having a very convenient meeting place for students living in this residence, just how there is The Beanery at Fairview. I understand that this residence will be very close to the Sub, but having more options is better than having limited options, though I do think it would be a nice touch. 	<p>Land Use policies aspire to provide housing for up to 50% of full-time students on campus (2010 pop). This project as well as other student housing projects are built to fulfil this goal.</p> <p>The Brock Commons residence will have a collegium on its main floor to welcome students who are in need of social and study space on campus. Other amenities will be provided in the future phases of the Brock Commons mixed-use hub.</p>
<p>Feedback: <i>Student/Resident</i></p> <p>I'm writing to provide feedback as someone who has been a resident of Ponderosa Commons since it first opened in September 2013. As you know, Ponderosa Commons and Brock Commons are similar projects – both are intended for upper-level undergraduate and graduate students, and both are split into two phases, where Phase 2 will be responsible for providing the bulk of the amenities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concerning difference between the two projects is that while Ponderosa Commons' Phase 2 will be completed in Sept 2015, two years after the completion of Phase 1, it is currently unknown exactly when Brock Commons' Phase 2 will be completed – the planning team has hinted at between 3 to 7 years after the completion of Phase 1. Hence, it is much more imperative that proper, sufficient amenities are included in the Brock Commons Phase 1 building. Please remember that while 3 years may be a short timespan for the university in the long run, 3 years may represent more than half of the length of a UBC student's degree. • My experience living in Ponderosa Commons Phase 1 has been that while Ponderosa residents had convenient access to some amenities that residents of other buildings do not have, namely, Mercante, amenities could definitely have been improved. Here are some suggestions that I believe are particularly valuable and relatively practical: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A laundry card dispenser and reloading machine should have been an easy amenity to include, right from opening day. I've seen on our Ponderosa Facebook group posts by some residents who expressed safety concerns regarding walking over to Marine Drive or Vanier's Commons block to purchase laundry card credits, especially in light of the sexual assaults and other crimes that occurred on campus for the last two years. • The bike storage room in Ponderosa is very frequently full, forcing residents to resort to "storing" their bicycles outside the entrance to Arbutus House. The planning team at the Brock Commons open house have told me there is no provision for a bike storage room 	<p>Your comments are recognized. While Brock Commons amenities may be a few years away, residents can use facilities in nearby Gage Towers.</p> <p>Your suggestions on operational improvements have been referred to Student Housing and Hospitality Services.</p> <p>Your comments about bike storage at Ponderosa Commons have been forwarded to Student Housing and Hospitality Services. There is an active proposal to add bike storage nearby to the second level of the West Parkade, which is a condition of their Development Permit.</p>

Online Feedback	C&CP Response
<p>inside the Brock Commons Phase 1 building, because UBC has insufficient data to determine how many bike storage spaces are needed. I find that to be a wholly unsatisfactory rationale. I would respectfully suggest that UBC Campus + Community Planning survey the usage levels of bike storage facilities inside the student residence buildings on campus, perhaps by informally asking UBC residence buildings' maintenance and service staff, to gauge the merits of providing a bike storage room in Brock Commons Phase 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As Ponderosa Commons Phase 1 had no Residence Life Manager of its own, all of our concerns had to be handled by the Residence Life Manager at Marine Drive. Perhaps there was a lack of foresight, but we Ponderosa residents had many, many concerns over the past two years, so many that I'm sure overwhelmed the Marine Drive Residence Life Manager at some point. I would highly recommend that SHHS consider hiring a Residence Life Manager for Brock Commons in time for the opening of Phase 1, rather than wait until the completion of Phase 2 at some time in the unknown future. 	
<p>Feedback: <i>GSS Correspondence</i> Please accept this feedback about the proposed design of the Brock Tall Wood student residence. I commend the university for its ongoing commitment to increasing the supply of student residence spaces, and the exciting opportunity presented by this project to showcase state-of-the-art wood construction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the initial plans presented, there is a worrisome lack of amenities for residents included in the building program. It was suggested that in the short term, residents of Brock Tall Wood would access residence services at the Commons block of the nearby Gage student residences and in the long-term, a second phase of the Brock Commons development is planned in which more amenities will be included. I recognize that space-intensive amenities such as a fitness centre or music practice rooms is impractical and likely unwarranted in the Brock Tall Wood. • However, the timeline for the development of the remainder of Brock Commons is still undetermined. Even once developed, the remainder of Brock Commons will not be co-located with the Brock Tall Wood building meaning that a large portion of the amenities for Brock Tall Wood residents will perpetually be located off-site. • In this context, I suggest including as many small amenities within the building as possible. In particular, having residents be able access mail in the building, as well as the installation of a machine to load funds onto laundry cards should be prioritized. These may seem like minor grievances, but that is precisely why they should be included in the building; it should not be necessary for residents to go off-site in order to perform minor tasks. • Another amenity that warrants closer consideration is bike parking for residents. In the initial plans presented, bike parking was located to the west of the residence site, in a structure currently housing motorcycle parking and an enclosed bike cage. The conversion of the underused motorcycle parking into secure bike parking for residents is appropriate. However, the existing bike cage is used as storage for the AMS Bike Co-Op, which had not been informed of the plans to repurpose their space. The Bike Co- 	<p>These suggestions for additional amenities have been forwarded to Student Housing and Hospitality Services for follow-up.</p>

Online Feedback	C&CP Response
op should not be displaced unless equally suitable space can be found for them to relocate to and we urge the identification of another location to accommodate secure bike parking for residents of Brock Tall Wood.	