UBC Community Conversations Event Summary

Chancellor Place - October 7, 2015

This document provides a summary of the discussions and feedback received during our most recent UBC Community Conversations event for neighbourhood residents.

The Chancellor Place Community Conversations event was held on Wednesday, October 7 from 5:00pm – 7:00pm in the Isabel MacInnes Ballroom at the Walter Gage Residences. Display boards and print materials were available, and Campus and Community Planning staff, UNA staff and members of the UNA Board of Directors were on hand to discuss topics of interest and answer questions from attendees.

A total of 23 neighbourhood residents attended the event and 19 feedback forms and five written submissions were received.

1. Background

As part of UBC’s commitment to community engagement, Campus and Community Planning (C+CP) has created ten engagement principles to enable constructive dialogue with our community. The UBC Board of Governors adopted the principles in September 2014. Through these principles, we launched a new initiative, UBC Community Conversations, in partnership with the University Neighbourhoods Association (UNA). Designed to strengthen communication with UBC students, faculty, staff and residents, these two-way conversations include updates on upcoming planning, development projects and community programs and provide an opportunity for Campus and Community Planning and the UNA to hear what is important and top of mind for residents with regards to planning and development of campus.

At this UBC Community Conversations, information on the following topics was presented: the community garden expansion proposal for Chancellor Place and Wesbrook Place, updates on Iona Drive traffic flow and the Iona Green playground, the Wesbrook Place Neighbourhood Design Vision process, and an update on University Boulevard area construction. Information on current and upcoming projects on campus was also provided at this event.

2. Discussion Summary

Discussion Topics

Ten (10) display boards were set up around the room with information on a range of topics, including:
• Proposed community garden expansion at Chancellor Place and Wesbrook Place
• Traffic flow on Iona Drive
• An update on Iona Green playground noise concerns
• The Wesbrook Place Neighbourhood Design Vision process
• An update on University Boulevard area construction, and
• Current and upcoming projects on campus

Here is a summary of questions and concerns we heard from residents through discussion, the feedback forms and written submissions. Our responses are also included below.

**UNA Community Garden Space Expansion Proposal**

**What We Heard:**

Overall, we heard that people are interested in community gardens and that they are happy to see a proposal to expand community garden space.

Below is the breakdown of the 15 responses we received from the questionnaire, which asked which location best supports the expansion of neighbourhood community garden spaces. Iona Green, behind the Corus building, received the most support, followed equally by expansion of the existing Nobel Park community garden and the ‘none of the above’ option. Iona Drive received the least amount of support with only one respondent indicating support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What location do you feel best supports new community garden spaces?</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nobel Park Community Garden (Wesbrook Place)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iona Green, Behind the Corus building</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iona Drive, behind the Epiphany Chapel</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the Above</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total responses</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the residents we heard from are generally in support of adding community garden spaces, we also heard a number of concerns, including:

• Iona Drive:
  ○ It should stay as is since there is very little green space in the neighbourhood
  ○ The green space is currently well used by residents, students and the church congregation as a gathering space or ‘outdoor living room’ which would be lost with the addition of the community garden spaces
There is a desire to ensure children can still play in front of the Epiphany Chapel if a garden is installed

- Lack of sun at this location to support plant growth
- Current landscaping doesn’t fit well with a community garden
  - Iona Green landscaping should remain as is to preserve the existing trees, park area and maintain the uniformity of the existing landscape
  - Suggestions to replace the Iona playground equipment with a community garden. That said, we did hear support for co-locating the community garden spaces next to the play equipment.

**Our Response:**

The UNA is currently reviewing the options for community garden space expansion and will present recommendations to the UNA Board in early 2016.

**Iona Green Playground**

**What we heard:**

We heard support for the playground in principle, but noise continues to be a persistent issue of concern for residents living near the playground.

There were suggestions and questions about relocating the playground equipment to another other location in Chancellor Place, such as at the open space at St. Andrews Hall.

We heard support for leaving the playground in its current location as well as requests to remove the playground equipment altogether. There was also a suggestion to cover or enclose the playground for weather proofing which could also act as a noise buffer.

We also heard concerns regarding the process to address the playground noise and/or relocation issue.

**Our response:**

The UNA is sensitive to the concerns regarding playground noise that have been raised by residents. The UNA has committed to hosting a public meeting on the Iona Green Playground to listen to residents concerns and to work together with neighbourhood residents towards a resolution. The meeting is scheduled to take place in March 2016 and more information on the date, time and location will be shared soon.

**General Questions on Transportation**

**What we heard:**

We heard a request for increasing fees for resident parking permits.

**Our response:**
UNA resident parking fees are reviewed annually and have been increased for the past 3 years. Chancellor Place residents are not charged for on street parking because there is little parking in the area.

**What we heard:**

We heard concerns about speeding along Iona Drive and a suggestion was made to put up a sign indicating that Iona Drive is not a through road.

**Our response:**

C+CP’s traffic engineer has been closely monitoring the traffic on Iona Drive and is in the process of collecting the speed data.

A “No Through Road” sign has been installed on Iona Drive, beside the Allard Hall building, to discourage drivers from using this route.

**What we heard:**

Concern about the volume of construction traffic on Iona Drive.

**Our response:**

Truck traffic on Iona Drive has been due to construction on the Iona Building over the past 8 months. Iona Drive was the only access route to the building under construction and all efforts were made by C+CP and the UNA to reduce potential impacts to the neighbouring residents. Construction on the Iona Building is nearly complete.

**What we heard:**

Can a roundabout be put in at Marine Drive and University Boulevard?

**Our response:**

A roundabout at Marine Drive and University Boulevard falls under the jurisdiction of our partners at the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure as they are not UBC roadways. There is currently no plan or funding available to install a roundabout at this intersection.

**What we heard:**

There was a question regarding the status of installing 30km/h signs at Thunderbird Blvd.

**Our response:**

The 30 km/h signs on Thunderbird Blvd and West Mall have been installed and C+CP is in the process of trying to fix the speed reader boards for future speed monitoring in the area.

**What we heard:**

The traffic island at Walter Gage Road is a particular area of concern for litter and maintenance.

**Our response:**

In addition, the traffic island on Walter Gage Road has been removed to accommodate construction of the 18-storey Brock Commons (Tall Wood) student residence near Chancellor Place Neighbourhood to
eliminate the issue of damage and litter. Once construction of Brock Commons is complete the roundabout will be redesigned with a more optimal layout to reduce maintenance and repair costs.

During construction of Brock Commons, smaller trucks (dump trucks and concrete trucks) will access the construction site from East Mall to Walter Gage Road, then leave the site via Student Union Boulevard in the first six weeks of construction (Nov. 9 to December 24th). During this time, site and roads will be swept daily as needed.

For more information and updates on Brock Commons construction, go here.

What we heard:
Litter on Walter Gage Road is an ongoing problem.

Our response:
C+CP has passed on the litter concern to UBC Building Operations, which oversees the ground maintenance of the road.

Other Concerns and Suggestions

What we heard:
Concern that noise in Chancellor Place is constant due to construction, demolitions (GSAB), grounds maintenance, building maintenance, garbage pick up, and student parties.

Our response:
Residents with concerns regarding noise in their neighbourhood should contact the UNA as a first step. C+CP, the UNA and other UBC departments work closely together to resolve noise issues on a case-by-case basis as they arise.

What we heard:
Concern that UBC’s tax rate for neighbourhood residents is too high.

Our response:
UBC is required to ensure that the total property taxes paid by UNA home owners is the same as the property taxes of a comparable property in the City of Vancouver. The Rural Tax that resident pay to Province of British Columbia and the Services Levy paid to UBC are together the same as the City of Vancouver municipal tax for a property with the same assessed value.

To learn more about the Rural Tax and Services Levy that property owners at UBC pay, please go here.

What we heard:
Some small trees have been removed around the north and west side of Corus as they were dead or dying. These trees have not yet been replaced.

**Our response:**
If the trees are on private property it is the responsibility of the strata to replace them. For dead or dying trees located beyond the property line, residents are encouraged to report them to the UNA office.

**Future Community Conversations Topics**
Topics suggested for future UBC Community Conversations events include:

- Noise
- The condition of the roundabout at Walter Gage
- Maintenance and repair of UBC grounds
- Community gardens
- Construction projects on campus
- First Nations projects
- Campus signage
- Sustainable landscaping

**3. Next Steps**
The next UBC Community Conversations will take place in May 2016. More information will be shared on the date and location in the New Year.

Please contact us at any time if you have questions, C+CP staff can be reached [here](#) and UNA staff can be reached [here](#).