



Steering Committee Meeting #1: Meeting Minutes

Project: Ladysmith Arts and Heritage Hub
Meeting Date: March 30, 2021 10:00am - 11:00am
Meeting Location: Zoom
Minutes Issued: June 1, 2021

Attendance:

Aaron Stone	AS	<i>Mayor, Town of Ladysmith</i>
Roxanne Harris	RH	<i>Chief, Stz'uminus First Nation</i>
Allison McCarrick	AMC	<i>Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Ladysmith</i>
Chris Barfoot	CB	<i>Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture, Town of Ladysmith</i>
Jake Belobaba	JB	<i>Director of Development Services, Town of Ladysmith</i>
Mike George	MG	<i>Communication and Engagement Specialist, Town of Ladysmith</i>
Marsh Stevens	MS	<i>Town of Ladysmith Councillor</i>
Ben Checkwitch	BC	<i>Checkwitch Poiron Architects Inc.</i>
Brett MacIntyre (X̱uut'a K'ii)	BM	<i>Checkwitch Poiron Architects Inc.</i>
John Marston	JM	<i>Design Consultant</i>
Kelty McKinnon	KM	<i>PFS Studios Landscape Architects</i>
Sofia Martinez Costa	SMC	<i>PFS Studios Landscape Architects</i>
Ray Gauthier	RG	<i>Stz'uminus First Nation Representative</i>
Ora Steyn	OS	<i>Arts Council of Ladysmith and District Representative</i>
Quentin Goodbody	QB	<i>Ladysmith and District Historical Society Representative</i>
Marnie Craig	MC	<i>Ladysmith Maritime Society Representative</i>

No. Item

1. **Introduction:** Mayor Stone recognized Stz'uminus territory and welcomed everyone to the meeting before giving a short introduction to the project.
2. **Description of Scope:** Ben Checkwitch gave a short introduction to the design team, as well as a short summary of what items are and are not the scope of the project. It was further clarified that there are some items that are not within the scope of the project that the design team will still need to understand as they will have impacts on the project.
3. **Stz'uminus Project Goals:** Chief Harris spoke about the goals of the Stz'uminus community for the project:
 - It is important for people to be aware that the Stz'uminus people are present and are part of the community.
 - It is important for Stz'uminus culture to be visible on the site. The heritage of the Stz'uminus people is not limited to the reserve.

- The project is an opportunity for Reconciliation and “Reconciliation”. The Town of Ladysmith has spoken at length with the Stz’uminus community about making Stz’uminus culture visible throughout the Town, they are eager to turn words into concrete action.
 - This project represents a reciprocal relationship between the Town and the Stz’uminus community. Now that everyone is “at the table” it is time to get to work.
 - The project should welcome people, make them feel safe and included.
 - The welcome figures at the Ladysmith High School are a successful example of how a project can make people feel welcome and invited. They also highlight the importance of ensuring youth feel safe and welcome to the site. Youth will be continuing the efforts of Reconciliation and Reconciliation begun with this project, so it is important that they be considered.
4. **Relocation of the Artists Studio Building:** Mayor Stone gave a short summary of Councils decision to approve the investigation to relocate the Artists Studio building from the location identified in the concept plan prepared by Hotson Architects to a location across Oyster Bay drive, closer to the water. Ben Checkwitch followed up with a summary of the status of this investigation, which outlined the geotechnical and structural steps underway to assess the feasibility of the new location.
5. **Arts Council of Ladysmith and District Project Goals:** Ora Steyn spoke about the goals of the Arts Council for the project:
- The Arts Council is in need of studio space.
 - They are interested in the potential of the Cafe/Gift Shop for both members as well as the community as a whole.
 - The Arts Council has worked extensively with the federal government, which has invested money towards the goal of fostering the Arts on Vancouver Island, particularly Digital Arts. This project represents a great opportunity to further this goal.
6. **Historical Society Project Goals:** Quentin Goodbody spoke about the goals of the Historical Society for the project:
- The Historical Society is very excited about the projects potential; it is a great opportunity for all the stakeholder groups to collaborate and work together.
 - The focus of the Historical Society is the industrial heritage of the site. The site is a pivotal piece of the development of the Town of Ladysmith, particularly after the decline of the coal industry.
 - The Historical Society is working with the Maritime Society on the harbour area heritage. This project has great potential to help showcase this heritage.
7. **Maritime Society Project Goals:** Marnie Craig gave a short presentation on the industrial history of the site and the goals of the Maritime Society for the project:
- A large part of the Maritime Society presentation was intended to focus on the challenges associated with the location of the Artists Studio as described in the concept plan prepared by Hotson Architecture. They support reviewing the possibility of relocating the Artists Studio across Oyster Bay Drive.
 - The Maritime Society has a strong working relationship with the Historical Society.
 - The Maritime Society has existing space inside the Machine Shop which houses the Harbour Heritage Centre. The Centre supports a popular heritage program which includes field trips for local children. The program works with the Elder College on the content for these field trips, and has fostered a strong working relationship with members of the Stz’uminus community.
 - There is a large heritage component on the waterfront below the project site which includes a cafe, moorage, a floating museum, and heritage centre. This project is an opportunity to create a “synergy” between the waterfront activities and the activities on site.

- The project site is a rare example of an intact historical industrial site. It is likely one of the only remaining examples left in British Columbia. As such, preservation is important. The Maritime Society and Historical Society are very focused on the preservation of the rail spurs, and they feel the concept plan prepared by Hotson Architecture did not adequately address this preservation.
 - The project is an exciting opportunity to provide a “journey through time”, from the past through the present, into the future.
8. **Background of Artists Studio:** Allison McCarrick asked if John Marston could elaborate on the background of the Artists Studio, given his close involvement with the project from an early stage:
- The development of the Artists Studio has been under discussion for a long time.
 - One of the challenges of the project will be how to sensitively mix the industrial and First Nations heritages of the site.
 - However it can be done. It is important to try to align these histories, rather than separate them. This will allow the site to acknowledge both histories in a positive way, so they can grow and evolve into the future together.
 - The location of the Artists Studio building as described in the concept plan prepared by Hotson Architecture is not the best way to move forward. It would be preferable to move the Studio closer to the water.
9. **Introduction to Landscape Architectural Consultants:** Keltie McKinnon gave a short introduction to PFS Studios, the landscape consultants for the project:
- PFS Studios is very excited about the potential for this project. There are lots of histories that can be expressed in exciting ways.
 - They have experience with projects that have a similar mix of indigenous heritage and industrial heritage. They have learned that every site has layers of history from time immemorial for all of us; it does not need to be antagonistic towards anyone.
 - These histories are entwined and cannot be divided, they can be expressed in beautiful ways together.
 - Neither history has stopped evolving, they are moving into the future. This highlights the importance of children, as described by Chief Harris.
10. **Closing Remarks:** Mayor Stone thanked all participants for attending, and gave a short closing statement:
- It is exciting to hear all the different perspectives on the project.
 - The potential relocation of the Artists Studio respects everyone's desire to tell “the greater story of our place”. It shows everyone is listening.
 - It is a small step that reflects our shared history and how we can move forward together in a good way.
 - The potential relocation is also a strong move from a design standpoint; it allows for a strong connection to the water, and it changes the nature of Oyster Bay Drive from a thoroughfare to an access point for the site.
 - It is important to acknowledge the colonial history embodied by the industrial heritage of the site. We need to “own it” in order to move forwards towards “Reconciliation”.