

Date: September 10, 2009



TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Design for VanDusen Botanical Garden New Visitor Centre

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board approve the concept design for the VanDusen Botanical Garden New Visitor Centre Development Permit Application, as detailed in this report and illustrated in Appendix 1.

POLICY

The Park Board reviews and approves design concepts for all major projects.

BACKGROUND

In 2001, the Park Board and the VBGA undertook a design exercise to develop a strategic plan for the Garden and its buildings, which led to the development of a concept plan and, subsequently, functional program documents. In December of 2007, the Board approved the appointment of Busby, Perkins+Will as Architects for the project, with Cornelia Hahn Oberlander as Landscape Architect. In May 2008 an Open House was held and the project was very well received by community and neighbors. The Project Definition Report was completed.

In June 2008 the Board approved a concept. In April 2009 a Second Open House was held, the project presented in more detail, including an elaborate traffic study. Once again, there was very positive feedback by the public.

The new Visitor Centre will be “a living building” that will attempt to model carbon neutral “zero ecological footprint” building concepts based on the most up-to-date principles of sustainability.

The consultants have finalized a Development Permit set of drawings and have applied for a Development Permit.

DISCUSSION

Design

The size and scope of the project have been reduced since the initial Board review in 2008, due to budget considerations. The Architects have worked with the Joint Building Committee to produce a more modest design which still incorporates the programmatic needs of the Garden while also retaining the principles which will form an integral part of the Garden's sustainability message.

The Planning and Environment Committee of the Board reviewed the revised design on May 14, 2009. The design as presented in this report is substantially the same – some minor changes have been incorporated to enhance the energy performance and to further refine the building area with a view to further cost savings.

The revised plan for the Visitor Centre contains new educational, library, visitor orientation and arrival spaces, as well as an informal food service facility. The Garden Pavilion, in future, will accommodate larger rental and horticultural events. As an interim strategy:

- the existing garden pavilion building (containing the restaurant and gift shop) will be retained and will continue to accommodate Shaughnessy Restaurant with Garden administration functions in the existing renovated entry lobby and gift shop space,
- the existing education centre building (formerly MacMillan Bloedel sponsored exhibit) is proposed as home for volunteer and educational activities.

Funding and Costs

The project is jointly funded by the Vancouver Park Board and the VanDusen Botanical Garden Association.

Funding status is as follows:

Park Board previously approved funding	- \$3.05 million
Current level of fund raising by the Association (including \$2.0 million Provincial contribution)	- \$6.45 million
2009 -2011 Capital Plan Funding	- \$3.0 million
Total to Date	- \$12.5 million

Fund raising efforts of the Capital Campaign Committee continue with contacts established through both senior government programs and private donors. The Capital Campaign was the recent recipient of a private donation of five hundred thousand dollars. The project has a projected project cost of \$19.4 million. There is a shortfall in funding of \$7 million. An application for funding under the Federal Department of Heritage Cultural Spaces Program is pending. Representations have been made to the Provincial Government regarding the possibility of funding under Provincial Infrastructure programs.

Schedule

Project Milestones to date are as follows:

- Project Definition Report completed by consultants - *Complete*.
- Park Board approval of concept design - *Complete*.
- Apply for Development Permit – August 2009

To be decided relative to funding:

- Construction Documentation – October – December 2009
- Construction Procurement – January – March 2010
- Construction – April 2010 – September 2011

Since there is still a significant amount of funds to be raised, the schedule may need to be adjusted depending on the amount of funding secured in the coming months. The project is now at the Development Permit Stage. Development Permit drawings are submitted to the Board with this report for approval (Appendix 1).

Project Delivery

The architect and staff have discussed a variety of options of construction contract formats to determine which is best suited to the current construction cost environment. In order to get early construction input into the design process, the following delivery system is intended to be used:

After an open selection process, a limited number of general contractors will be pre-qualified to submit bids under a “Construction Management at Risk” method as follows:

- A fee to provide pre-construction services, including design and budget review, and to call for competitive trade tenders.
- A fixed percentage cost for overhead and profit to be applied to a stipulated sum contract based on the trade tenders received.

Once a construction scope and cost that meet the budget are agreed to, a report to the Board would recommend awarding a contract.

SUMMARY

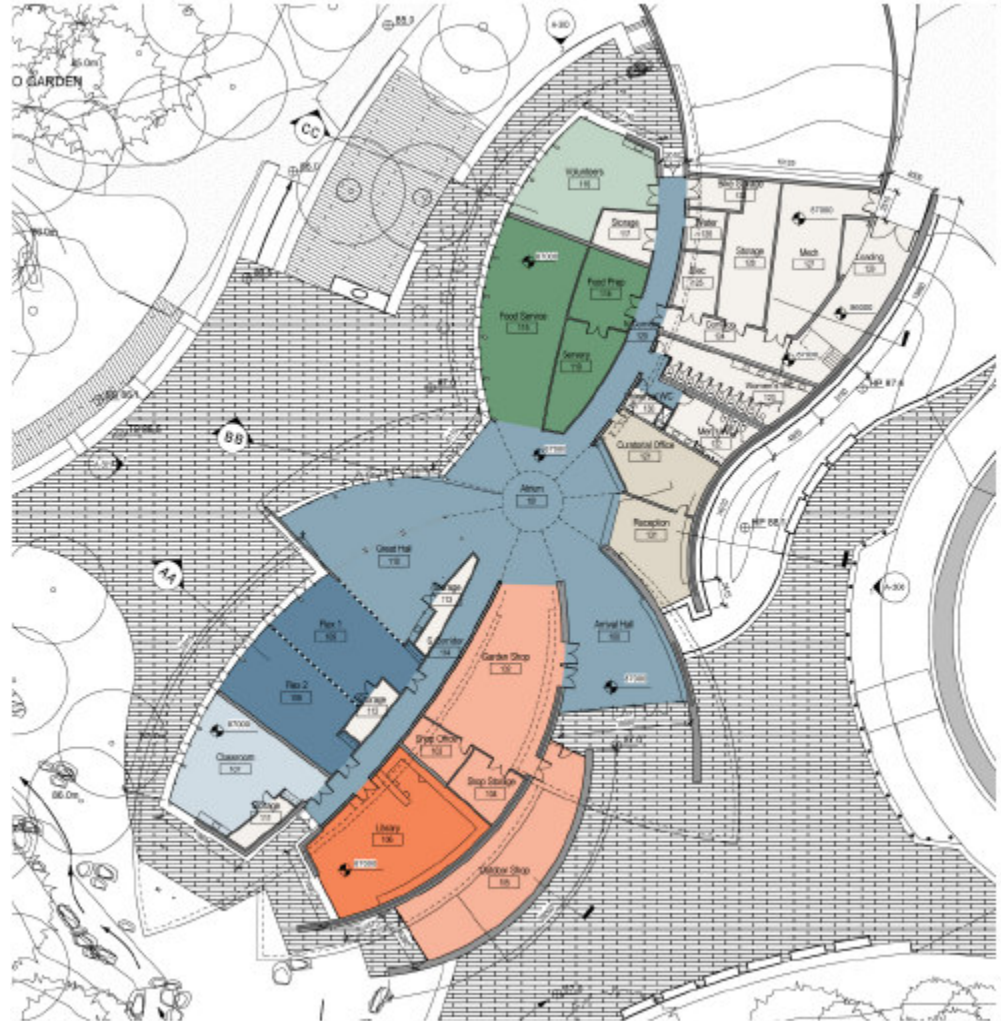
The project as designed has the approval of the Building Committee, and has been presented to the community and received a positive response.

Staff recommends that the Board approve Development Permit phase of the project, leading to the award of a Development Permit.

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JR

Appendix 1



Floor Plan



a. Night view from Oak St.

b. View of Atrium



a. View from West

b. View of Entry from South