



# OLD TOWN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

c/o Catriona Grant, Chair 259/5 Canongate, Edinburgh, EH8 8BQ  
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## Committee Meeting

Tuesday 13 March 2007

## MINUTES

**Present:** Anja Amsel (Vice-Chair), Peter Sharma (Treasurer), John Stewart (Minutes), Julie Logan (Secretary & Planning) plus one public visitor.

In attendance: Mark Cummings (Associate Director, PPS Scotland), plus one other, for Mountgrange.

Anja Chaired the meeting. John Stewart took the Minutes.

- 1 **Apologies:** *Jane Yeoman, John Thompson, Sally Richardson, Bruce Borthwick, Bill Cowan* (Planning), *Catriona Grant* (Chair), *Cllr Bill Cunningham*

Action  
JL

- 2 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING** (*Tuesday 13 February 2007*).  
Not distributed and not available at the meeting. Ken Smillie took the last minutes but was not at this meeting – Julie needs to check the minutes have been done and distribute

- 3 **MATTERS FOR DECISION/DISCUSSION:**  
Training – Cat sent email to everyone about the possibility of new training course to take place. Since Cat couldn't make this meeting it was agreed she should email everyone to get names and book as appropriate.

CG

- 4 **POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:**  
Planning - see Caltongate

- 5 **SUBGROUPS**  
Publicity – nothing has happened

CG

- 6 **LICENSING**  
The public visitor was recommended to come to this meeting by Bill Cunningham. She spoke about her problems with the application for a license application and extension to a venue in Hastie's Close. She had attended a number of Licensing committees over the past few years to complain and object. She continues to have problems with noise caused by visitors to the club standing outside smoking and playing music, sometimes up to 30 people at a time at the weekend.

JL

She was told Hastie's Close is not the Cowgate so they can have a night club  
Julie agreed to contact Sam or Murray to find out the procedure to make an objection before Friday 16 March 2007.

- 7 **PLANNING**

### **GRASSMARKET public realm**

Update – Cllr Wigglesworth said there will be a hearing but it is still to be confirmed.

### **St James Centre Development**

Discussion about this was postponed since there were so few people at the meeting

### **'The Venue' development**

Discussion about the re-development of the former night club 'The Venue' into offices. Julie presented the development drawings and pointed out key features such as extra floor and removal of the turret.

Julie to object due to the design.

Anja stated the Old Town Association objected on the same grounds.

JL

Bill Cowan supplied the following Planning list for inclusion.

**PLANNING LIST**

07/00461/FUL 20 Holyrood Road C/u refectory to public house and frontage alterations Moray House Bld.

07/00552/FUL 101 Canongate CEC Place recycling facilities

07/00578/FUL 20-48 Blackfriars St. Erection of flatted student accommodation

07/00583/FUL 22 Holyrood Road 24 hour drop-in centre

07/00489/LBC Greyfriars Kirkyard CEC Upgrading and improvement works within graveyard, including pathways, ironwork, new cast iron bollards, introduction of handrails for Candlemaker Row entrance

07/00448/FUL 12 - 26 St Giles St Change of use from office to aparthotel, restaurant & cafe

07/00560/CON 20 Calton Rd. Mountgrange, Demolition of whole building and adjoining walls

07/00560/FUL Erection of buildings for residential (flats), use of ground floors as day centre (community facility), retail (Class 1) services (Class 2) business (Class 4) landscaping works. Alterations to steps and of Calton Hill Stairs.

07/00295/FUL 57 George Iv Bridge National Library, new emergency egress door

07/00114/ADV 3 Canongate Signage

**RESULTS**

06/02922/CEC Tron Kirk conversion (as amended) Deemed permission

**8 CALTONGATE**

Mark Cummings from Mountgrange attended this meeting to give an update and answer questions.

He stated the next Caltongate Liaison Group (CLG) meeting would take place on 21 March 2007 at 7pm at The Hub. At this meeting the next set of planning applications will be presented with 2-D and 3-D walk through presentations. In order to reach a wider audience they have decided to do a 'stakeholder' presentation of the same plans. This will take place on the same day 21 March 2007 at 4pm at Mountgranges offices at 10 Tollbooth Wynd. This is intended to allow the other members of stakeholder organisations to see these plans but who are not invited to the CLG meetings.

Bruce wanted Anja to make a couple of points on his behalf – he is “very sorry the Jacob’s Ladder proposal” has been taken out of the plans. John wanted clarification is it really Jacob’s Ladder or Calton Steps, since in previous provisional plans the names of stairs had been wrong.

Mark commented saying the Calton Steps appear in the current affordable housing Planning Application plans however it is hoped both stairs will be improved.

Bruce’s second point was on the closeness of the affordable housing to the railway and the railway tunnel. Will sufficient sound proofing be built into these houses?

Mark stated these houses will be built to recognised government building standards and sound proofing would be a factor that would need to be considered. He stated this would be something the Council Planning Department would ensure was addressed as part of the Planning Application Process.

Mark wanted the Community Council’s views on the planning for the affordable housing and the community facilities.

Julie expressed her disappointment the plans showed a shared facility for the Ark Trust and the community space. She stated the agreement was the Ark Trust would get replacement facilities on a like-for-like basis that is, a stand alone building including the 3 flats above their drop-in centre ground floor space. Also the front of the building should not be shared access.

Julie, Anja, Peter and John (all the community councillors present) agreed having affordable housing above the Ark Facility would cause problems for the tenants and Ark users and make these properties hard to let.

Mark stated the plans for the Ark are included in the next set of planning applications to be submitted next week. He will have further discussions with people from the Ark Trust to ensure they are satisfied with the plans. However, he stated the Ark Trust will get like-for-like facilities since that is what has been agreed.

It is hoped Ark Trust representatives will attend next weeks CLG meeting to view the plans

and give their comments.

Julie talked about the other issues with the planning application – details are about space, building design, lack of sustainability, community space, ground floor use (Class 1,2 & 3). She stated workshop space and residential use would be compatible.

The streetscape is not mentioned in the plans. The area under the railway bridge has not been addressed, a formal agreement needs to be in place before the housing is completed.

Julie will submit a formal objection including the following points:

#### DESIGN

Not in keeping with conservation area / world heritage site or 'approved' Caltongate masterplan -

1. Mono pitch roofs at a very shallow pitch throughout application site finished in zinc.
2. No use of stone or stone cladding in construction or finish for walls.
3. Use of high carbon generating materials (pre-cast concrete, cement render and oil based plastics) in construction and finish.
4. Lack of amenity space, drying greens, play areas and open space - Block B has no private or public space, Blocks A and C have limited private usable space.
5. Internal layout of residential units and mix and distribution of uses within buildings is likely to reduced levels of safety and amenity and give rise to management problems and neighbour disputes.
6. All ground floor community or commercial space should be provided with adequate off street storage facilities and recycling and waste/servicing areas.

#### MIX OF USES

1. The proposal lies within an area identified in the Local Plan as zoned for Mixed Activities - housing is an accepted use and the need for additional provision of affordable housing throughout the City is recognised.
2. The need for additional affordable workshop and start up business/office space is also recognised and the council has committed to securing this through a mix of provision.
3. A mix of Class 4 and 2 use units would be compatible with residential blocks provided residential amenity is protected through adequate conditions controlling the hours of operation and affordability is controlled in perpetuity (e.g. Not discount price to first tenant/buyer only)
4. The Ark Trust should be provided with a stand alone building to replace not only the day centre but the additional residential accommodation (temporarily out of use) within their current premises on New Street in addition to any additional community facilities to be provided.
5. All community units at ground floor level to be provided with areas of open landscaped public space.
6. Additional landscaping, streetscape, traffic calming and street lighting improvements on New Street and under the railway bridge must be included and implemented prior to any of the buildings coming into use.

#### LAND SALE ISSUES

When was the sale of this public land agreed with the council and who else was given an opportunity to bid for it?

If the council are in partnership with the developer to provide affordable housing on the site will the application be referred to Scottish ministers?

If land is public can legal agreement not pass residential units to Housing Association and also retain commercial units (workshops, offices, community space) in public ownership?

#### **9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

Meeting closed at 8.50pm

#### **NEXT MEETING**

**NO MEETING IN APRIL** – possible meeting in April for Office Bearers to discuss issues to tidy up Agenda and meetings and also to discuss the plans for the AGM. Venue to be Anja's flat.

*Peter Sharma agreed to book the City Chambers for the May meeting*

**AA &  
CG**

*Provisional*

*Tuesday 8 May 2007, 7pm*

*Tuesday 12 June 2007 – AGM – election of Office Bearers – VENUE to be confirmed.*