

## Minutes of 'Coffee with the Neighbours' information meeting on 3 March 2015

Location: Special Collections Museum Café

Date: 3 March 2015

Time: 18:30-21:00

Meeting chair Raymond Reesink thanked those present for their attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to give everyone an update on developments relating to the City Centre Campus. The meeting consisted of a plenary part to explain current developments at the City Centre Campus followed by a question and answer session for everyone in attendance. After the plenary component there would be a chance to talk with UvA and City staff individually. Raymond Reesink listed the topics that those attending the meeting wished to discuss. The following topics had been proposed:

- The position of the bicycle entrance/exit at the University Library (UB) at the City Centre Campus. The timeline for the planned activities.
- The emergency exit at the rear of the Zusterhuis residences.
- The planned new bike parking facility and how it will affect the public space.
- Working hours and noise disruptions during the works at the UB and in respect of the start of works at BG1.
- How Binnengasthuis site management will be organised.
- The UvA's provisions for scooter and motorbike parking at the Binnengasthuis site.
- Status of the zoning plan and the integrated environmental permit application for works at the UB.
- Pursuant to the article in *Het Parool*: Are plans for the City Centre Campus still going ahead?
- There were plans for a hanging garden at the new building site, but one attendee had read that permission had been rejected.

Cees van der Wolf responded to one of the questions immediately. After *Het Parool* published an article in which Professor Ewald Engelen described why the UvA's new-build plans for the Binnengasthuis site should be put on hold, there was some confusion about whether plans for the development of the City Centre Campus are still going ahead. Cees van der Wolf explained that the UvA Executive Board still aims to pursue the plans for the City Centre Campus. One of the prerequisites is that the buildings have to be brought up to modern standards.

### Presentation by Martijn de Ruiter

Martijn de Ruiter presented details on the development of the City Centre Campus. The University of Amsterdam is working on developing four open city campuses that will link the city with the University, to get the best of both worlds. In future, related academic disciplines will be clustered at each campus. In the city centre, the Faculty of Humanities and the new University Library will be accommodated at and around the Binnengasthuis premises.

The purpose of the campus development is:

- To increase knowledge exchange and enhance and promote collaboration between students and staff.
- To foster collaboration with business partners, public authorities and knowledge centres.
- Generate recognition and appeal: strengthen the University's competitive edge
- Make efficient use of buildings and facilities.

The former hospital and CREA building on Turfdragsterpad 15-17 (BG2) is currently under renovation. This listed building, which was designed by the architects Godefroy and De Greef, is being restored to its original state. The Vrouwenverband, a women's hospital, was established

here in 1877. Up until the Binnengasthuis hospital relocated to Amsterdam Zuid-Oost and became the Academic Medical Center in 1981, the building housed the paediatrics department. Subsequently, the CREA cultural centre used the premises until 2011. In 2013 and 2014 the building was prepared for renovation: it was stripped, cleaned up and prepped for construction. The renovation started in May 2014 and will be completed in April of this year (2015). From 1 September 2015 the building will house the Faculty of Humanities' Art History and Cultural Studies departments. It will offer 100 workspaces for professors, senior university and other lecturers, doctoral students, support services and the secretariat, alongside 15 study places and three small seminar rooms.

The building has undergone the following renovations:

- Repair of the foundation
- Construction of a new ground floor
- Installation of new ceilings and walls, including insulation
- Replacement of all systems and installations, along with sanitary facilities, lift, etc.
- Renovation/repair and insulation of the roof
- Renovation/restoration of the damaged façade
- Reconfiguration of the interior.

At Turfdraagsterpad 9 (BG1), maintenance work and minor renovations will continue through the end of June 2015. This will include restoration of the building façade adjoining BG2. Other City Centre Campus premises, the Student Information Centre (BG3), the student restaurant (BG5) and Oudemanhuispoort will be renovated in due time. Dates for these works are still to be determined.

### **Presentation by Alex ter Haar on the University Library**

Alex ter Haar explained the current state of affairs surrounding the renovation of the former Binnengasthuis hospital, future home of the University Library (UB).

#### *Main entrance and bicycle entrance*

The UB's main entrance will be at the location of the old hospital's Second Surgery Clinic ambulance entrance. The plans call for the distinctive doorway to be doubled in size, creating a large entryway and a direct view into the atrium from Vendelstraat. This entrance will be accessible during library opening hours, from 08:00 until 24:00 (16 hours). In response to resident concerns, an acoustic survey was conducted of voice levels around the vicinity of the future bicycle entrance on Vendelstraat and the main entrance on Binnengasthuisstraat. A number of adjustments have been made on the basis of these findings, including improvements to the design of the bike entrance, which now calls for denser walls flanking the entrance and a green (sedum) roof that will serve to absorb noise. Interior walls will also be clad with noise-absorbent material. The bicycle entrance itself has furthermore been set back farther to create a larger buffer space to minimise the formation of queues. Outside UB opening hours the gate will be locked to prevent unauthorised persons from loitering here. Procedures for locking the gate will be determined with De Key.

Plans for the new UB will lead to changes in the traffic situation. The City carried out a traffic survey at the Binnengasthuis site for this reason, which concluded that the new traffic situation once the bicycle entrance is in use is acceptable, provided a number of measures are taken. Such measures consist of erecting signs and a physical barrier. During the period immediately following the completion of the UB, bicycle coaches will be on hand to direct bike and scooter parking as part of a campaign at the start of the academic year.

#### *Remarks pertaining to the main entrance and bicycle entrance:*

- *One local resident remarked that the presence of bicycle coaches has had a positive effect and hoped this measure will continue.*

- *With respect to the discussion of the traffic survey, one resident noted that the location of the bicycle entrance had already been determined prior to the traffic survey and that the survey was premised on the current situation. According to the resident, the current situation is therefore not representative. The City stated that this topic will be raised again in the Public Space Task Force.*
- *Another resident pointed out that the emergency exit for residential units in the Zusterhuis is located inside the gated area. If this is turned into a bicycle entrance, there will not be enough space to escape, the resident said. Alex de Haar said he will discuss this with the technical advisers; safety is essential.*
- *Local residents expressed concern that public bike parking spaces will disappear. They would like to continue to have bike facilities at their disposal at the Binnengasthuis site. At the last meeting between the residents' association, the Amsterdam Centre District and the UvA it was indicated that this issue would be considered in the Public Space Task Force; naturally, there will still have to be provisions for residents to park their bikes.*

#### *New construction*

The new section of the UB will be built on the current site of the hotel De L'Europe car park, on the corner of Nieuwe Doelenstraat and Binnengasthuisstraat. On the ground floor it will house facilities including the UB canteen, with study places on the floors above. The façade of the new-build has been designed with a three-dimensional screen featuring figures and symbols referring to the humanities. This element will also act to screen off much of the light radiating from the new-build section towards the houses opposite at night. A task force of Faculty of Humanities staff and students will be formed to propose figures for the façade screen. Local residents will be consulted. The UB canteen is intended for students and staff. No alcoholic drinks will be served. There will be a separate entrance/exit to the canteen, which will only be accessible from inside the building.

#### *Operating room*

In his presentation, Alex ter Haar also showed the arrangement of the operating room in the former Second Surgery Clinic. In the new UB, this space will be used as a classroom that can serve for important functions. The design adapts the original interior to meet current requirements (Working Conditions Act) while preserving the distinctive features of the old operating room. Among other things, the existing seating is very cramped and not suited for people taller than 1.65 metres. In the past the operating room had its own entrance; these original doors will be retained to preserve authenticity.

#### *Study rooms*

The study rooms proposed in the design were used as hospital wards in the past. Due to the high ceilings it will be possible to build galleries with bookshelving along the walls, thus making effective use of the distinctive soaring space.

#### *The atrium*

A new glass roof will be installed over the inner courtyard to create a large atrium. This glass roof will create the impression of a tree leaf folded around the building. Inside the atrium will be lounge and study areas. The balconies where patients used to be nursed outdoors will also be used for this purpose. The lending desk will be located in the basement.

#### *Preparatory work*

According to the provisional schedule, the installation of sheet pile walls for the bicycle basement will begin in September 2015, in tandem with archaeological research. Other preparatory work will include:

- Stripping the building and an asbestos survey
- Rerouting cables/pipes in the courtyard and around the building

- Removing trees from the courtyard.

Construction is slated to begin in April 2016.

#### *BLVC framework*

As was done for the works at BG2, a BLVC framework (covering accessibility, quality of life, safety and communication) will be drawn up for the building work to be carried out at the UB. Local residents will be involved in this process. Those in attendance were invited to take part in discussions on the BLVC framework. Previous experiences with BG2 and participants' wishes will be compiled for this purpose. The overall aim is to minimise disruptions from building activities as much as possible. All those interested were invited to sign up to take part in the discussions, either straight away or by sending an email to Chérie van der Meer: [omgevingsmanager-binnenstad@uva.nl](mailto:omgevingsmanager-binnenstad@uva.nl).

#### *Remarks pertaining to the BLVC framework:*

*One local resident indicated that supply traffic to the student restaurant at 07:00 is causing too much noise. The way that the UvA has handled this has led to serious misgivings among residents. They are under the impression that agreements are not being honoured. Agreements on the opening hours of the student restaurant/café are also not being upheld. Chérie van der Meer stated that she is unaware of these agreements. The sense among residents is that the UvA is taking great care to follow City regulations but not giving any consideration to residents. It will be necessary to work together to find a fitting compromise.*

#### **Applications for an integrated environmental permit and for partial amendment of the zoning plan**

In February 2015 the UvA submitted a physical environment permit application to the Amsterdam Centre District for construction of the new UB. In addition to the physical environment permit, partial revision of the zoning plan is also needed as the plan for the new UB deviates from the current 'Postcode Area 1012' zoning plan in four areas. Full details of these four issues can be found on the website: [www.uva.nl/binnenstad](http://www.uva.nl/binnenstad), under 'Publications'. Ed Swijter (Amsterdam Centre District) explained that on 25 February 2015 the Council of State issued a ruling on an appeal brought against the adoption of the 'Postcode Area 1012' zoning plan. Among the grounds for the appeal was traffic safety around the future bicycle entrance. In its ruling, the Council of State maintained that the City should have established guidelines to govern the position of the bicycle entrance.

Both the integrated environmental permit application and the draft first zoning plan amendment will be available for inspection through 5 March, offering an opportunity to lodge objections to the Binnengasthuis site zoning plan. Appended to the first amended zoning plan is a traffic survey that forms part of the zoning plan.

Local resident Peter Veer pointed out that the Wageningen UR Science Shop did a study on possible ways to address quality of life and layout issues at the Binnengasthuis site. The results were published in a report titled *Wonen, studeren en werken op het Binnengasthuisterrein. Op weg naar een ontwerp op basis van gedeelde belangen* ('Living, studying and working at the Binnengasthuis site. Towards a design founded on shared interests'), which is to be presented to the City on 16 March.

#### **Questions:**

1. Further details were requested about an item in the *Neighbourhood News* which stated that a section of the BG2 building site would remain in use. The principal objection to this is the noise before 08:00 in the mornings. Answer: The building contractor in charge of the BG2 renovation is also performing the work at BG1 arising from the BG2 renovation and will adhere to the agreements

already made under the existing BLVC framework for BG2. All traffic of goods on and off the site are to take place within the time windows (07:00 and 11:00) fixed by the City. At BG2, deliveries and removals are already being conducted later in the mornings, where possible, in consideration of the neighbourhood. Chérie van der Meer will consult with the contractor to ascertain to what extent goods traffic connected with the works at BG1 can be scheduled after 08:00.

2. How will the GB3, BG5 and OMHP buildings be used after the renovations?

Answer: The buildings will accommodate offices, classrooms and/or research facilities.

3. Will there be in any dining establishments in BG3, once completed?

Answer: No, there will be no dining facilities in this building, nor does the building have a permit for this.

4. Is there any information available about how the foundation piles will be put in place beneath the new University Library?

Answer: A foundation will be built underneath the Second Surgery Clinic, probably using a pressing technique. A pressing technique will most likely be used to install the sheet pile walls as well.

5. The Binnengasthuis site is a public, mixed use area. Did the incentive for the construction of a bike basement come from the UvA, the City, or both?

Answer: It was initially put forward by the City and then agreed in a covenant between the UvA and the City. Municipal bike parking policy dictates that permit applications for the renovation of public buildings must include a solution for bicycle parking. The UvA sees this bike facility as catering mainly to UB visitors.

6. Scooters are parked on and around the Binnengasthuis premises in such a way that they form an obstruction. The extent of this problem should not be underestimated, especially in view of the future increase in students here. The alarm is considered to be particularly annoying. Why can't scooters be parked in the bicycle basement?

Answer: It was decided not to create designated parking spaces for scooters because this would entail additional technical facilities. The issue of scooter parking on and around the Binnengasthuis premises will be considered by the Public Space Task Force.

7. A resident had a question about plans for a hanging garden.

Answer: There were indeed plans for a moss sedum cladding on the bicycle entrance façade as an acoustic measure. However, because the building conservation service was against it and because research found that the façade has almost no acoustic value, this plan was dropped.

#### **Present from the UvA**

Cees van der Wolf, Real Estate Development director

Alex ter Haar, City Centre Campus project leader

Martijn de Ruiter, City Centre Campus programme manager

Chérie van der Meer, City Centre Campus area manager

#### **Present from the Amsterdam Centre District**

Ed Swijter, planning and zoning law expert

Leo de Vries, assistant project manager

Chris Seinen, postcode 1012 area manager