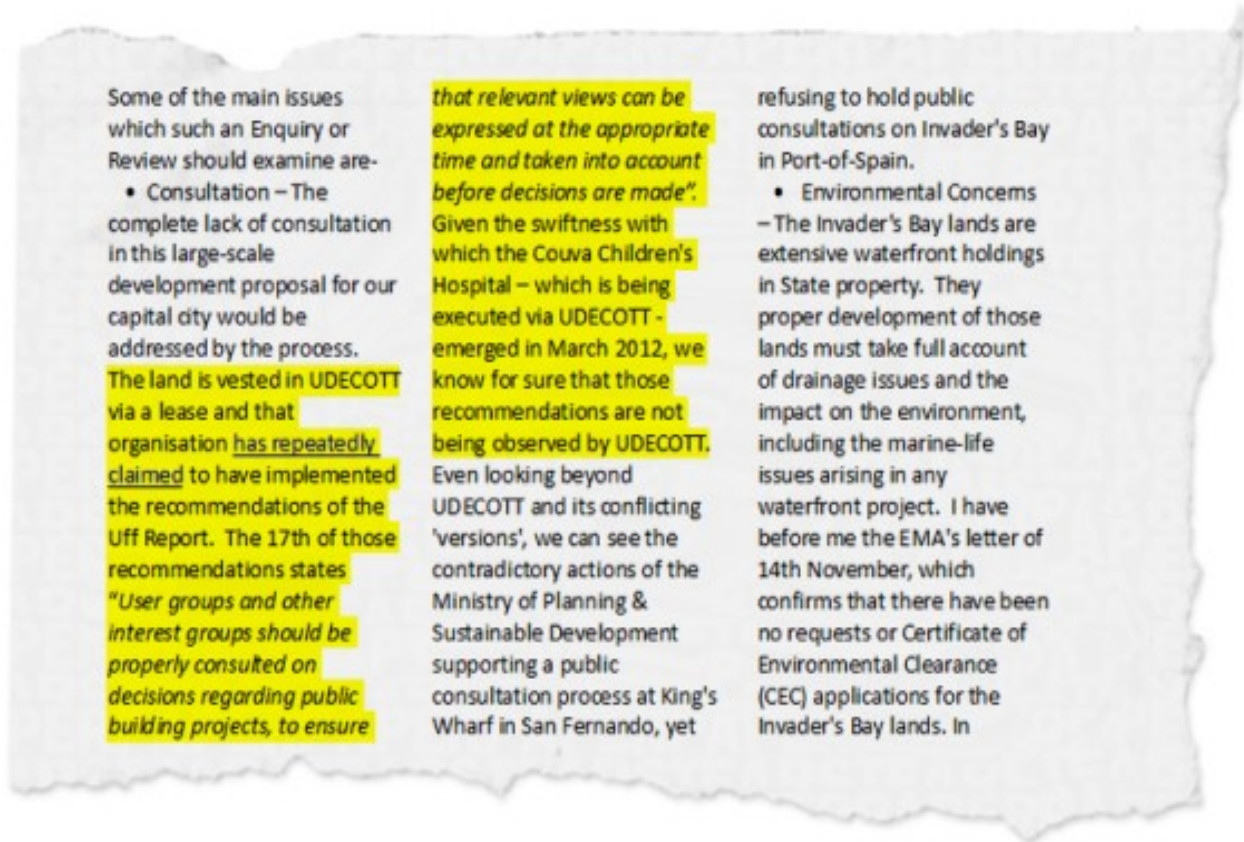


23rd December 2013

Letter to the Editor – UDECOTT’s failure to consult response



Some of the main issues which such an Enquiry or Review should examine are-

- Consultation – The complete lack of consultation in this large-scale development proposal for our capital city would be addressed by the process.

The land is vested in UDECOTT via a lease and that organisation has repeatedly claimed to have implemented the recommendations of the Uff Report. The 17th of those recommendations states "User groups and other interest groups should be properly consulted on decisions regarding public building projects, to ensure

that relevant views can be expressed at the appropriate time and taken into account before decisions are made".

Given the swiftness with which the Couva Children's Hospital – which is being executed via UDECOTT - emerged in March 2012, we know for sure that those recommendations are not being observed by UDECOTT. Even looking beyond UDECOTT and its conflicting 'versions', we can see the contradictory actions of the Ministry of Planning & Sustainable Development supporting a public consultation process at King's Wharf in San Fernando, yet

refusing to hold public consultations on Invader's Bay in Port-of-Spain.

- Environmental Concerns – The Invader's Bay lands are extensive waterfront holdings in State property. Their proper development of those lands must take full account of drainage issues and the impact on the environment, including the marine-life issues arising in any waterfront project. I have before me the EMA's letter of 14th November, which confirms that there have been no requests or Certificate of Environmental Clearance (CEC) applications for the Invader's Bay lands. In

In response to a full page UDECOTT advert (embedded below) in response to my article "[Invader's Bay Review](#)" (excerpted above), also published in the Business Express.

From: Afra Raymond <afrraymond@gmail.com>

Date: Sat, Dec 14, 2013 at 9:30 AM

Subject: Letter to the Editor – UDECOTT’s failure to consult

To: Editors of daily newspapers. Email addresses withheld

The 17th recommendation of the Uff Report is -

"User groups and other interest groups should be properly consulted on decisions regarding public building projects, to ensure that relevant views can

be expressed at the appropriate time and taken into account before decisions are made.”

The decisive part is ‘before decisions are made.’

The Peoples Partnership has not implemented the Uff Report’s 90 recommendations as promised and there has never been an explanation of that failure or refusal to carry out those critical measures. The sod was turned for the Couva Children’s Hospital on 2nd March 2012, at which time the project type, location, size, budget and procurement arrangements were all announced for the first time. Plainly, no consultation took place before those decisions were made, which was the point made in my 11th December article ‘Invader’s Bay Review’.

UDECOTT has now issued full-page newspaper advertisements to attempt to label my irrefutable observation as ‘reckless and damaging’ and so on. Yet another waste of public money, given that UDECOTT provided no examples of consultation before the key decisions were made on this huge project.

That pattern of secret development is inimical to our country’s progress. We must be properly consulted before decisions are made. We strongly criticised the last administration for that pattern of development and we will continue to make the same point. We must become a learning society.

Afra Raymond

POS



udecott

Urban Development Corporation
of Trinidad and Tobago Limited

An Agency of the Ministry of
Housing, and Urban Development

STATEMENT

“UDeCOTT has Complied with All Consultation Requirements for the Couva Children’s Hospital”

The Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (UDeCOTT) emphatically denies allegations that it did not ensure Consultations were held with Stakeholder Groups regarding the Couva Children’s Hospital.

UDeCOTT views as reckless and damaging to its reputation, these allegations which appeared in a column that was published in a local newspaper’s Business Section on Wednesday 11th December 2013

UDeCOTT has complied with all consultation requirements in respect of this project. The details of these stakeholder consultations with all user and stakeholder groups are stated below.

Public Consultations as required by the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) which were attended by Officials of the EMA, Officials of the Ministry of Health, Officials of the SWRHA, other Stakeholder Groups and Residents were hosted by UDeCOTT on:

- 3rd May, 2012 at the Preysal Community Centre
- 8th May, 2012 at the Preysal High School

The Certificate of Environmental Clearance (CEC) was received on June 15th, 2012.

Major additional Stakeholder Consultations were held with groups from Ministry of Health (MOH), South West Regional Health Authority (SWRHA) and the University of the West Indies (UWI) as follows:

- 11th June 2012 – Conceptual Design Presentation
- 27th August 2012 – Schematic Design Presentation
- 28th and 29th November 2012 -Design Development Presentation
- 6th and 7th February 2013 – Medical Equipment Consultation
- 14th November 2013 – Medical Equipment Consultation

Additionally, UDeCOTT addressed concerns raised by The UWI Seismic Research Unit by holding, Seismicity Consultation meetings on:

- August 16th, 2013 – Consultation Meeting was held at Ministry of Housing with representative attendees including: Minister of Health – Dr. the Honourable Fuad Khan, Minister of Housing – Dr. the Honourable Roodal Moonilal and Minister for UDeCOTT, UDeCOTT Executives, Executives of the Shanghai Construction Group (SCG); Earth Investigations Systems Limited (EISL) which conducted a comprehensive Geotechnical Study of the Couva Children’s Hospital project site and the UWI Seismic Research Unit.
- September 25th, 2013 - Association of Professional Engineers of Trinidad and Tobago (APETT) hosted UDeCOTT – Presentations were made by UDeCOTT Consultants EISL, Arun Buch Associates Limited and world-renowned HKS Architects who designed the Hospital.

Further, meetings have been held with Statutory Agencies and Utility Companies and are ongoing including: EMA, Town & Country Planning Division (TCPD), Ministry of Works and Infrastructure (MOWI), Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC), Water and Sewage Authority (WASA), National Gas Company (NGC) and Fire Services.

The table provides the status of the requisite approval in respect of the Couva Children’s Hospital project:

| Regulatory Body | Date Submitted | Reference Number | Details | Status | |
|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|--|----------------|---------------|
| | | | | Approved (Y/N) | Approval Date |
| EMA | 23-Mar-12 | 14442012 | Certificate of Environmental Clearance | Y | 15-Jun-12 |
| | 29-Mar-12 | 125112 | Outline Approval | Y | 24-May-12 |
| TCPD | 29-Mar-12 | 125112 | Sub-division Approval | Y | 24-May-12 |
| | 28-Mar-13 | 285113 | Final Approval | Y | 22-May-13 |
| | 14-Nov-12 | 146112 | Conditional Approval | Y | 04-Dec-12 |
| WASA | 6-Jun-12 | 23711111 | Outline Approval (Water & Wastewater) | Y | 13-Dec-12 |
| MOWI Highway Division | 11-Jan-13 | | Final Approval (Two Lane Access Road) | Y | 18-Jan-13 |
| | 25-Jul-12 | | Outline Approval (Highway Access) | Y | 07-Sep-12 |
| | 05-Aug-12 | | Final Approval (Highway Access) | Y | 07-Sep-12 |

*Note – there are other approvals not indicated in the table that are being sought from the relevant Authorities and UDeCOTT is awaiting those final approvals.