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Information meeting redevelopment of 'Aurora' in Amsterdam – June 22, 2023

The iconic Aurora Building at Stadhouderskade 2 is due for renovation. The project team – including the building owner, developer Being, and KAAAN architects – is working on a renovation plan to renovate and future-proof the building. On Thursday, June 22nd, the parties organized an information meeting to inform direct neighbours, residents, and other interested parties about the plans. From 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM, people were welcome in the reception area of the Aurora Building. In addition to the initiators, the architect and two representatives of the Gemeente Amsterdam were present to answer questions. Approximately 300 invitations were distributed door-to-door in the neighbourhood, and 14 people attended the meeting.

Over het plan

- The Aurora Building will be renovated into a sustainable and modern office location. The plan is to modernize the building, while respecting its history and unique features.
- Part of the plan includes renovating the rooftop and adding green roofs and a vertical conservatory at the back of the building. An additional 836 sqm will be added at the back of the building, which is less than 10% of the total.
- On the street side, the intention is to restore more features of the original design. For example, the white plastic frames will be replaced with slimmer aluminium frames, allowing for more visible glass, as was originally the case during construction. Additionally, the base will be restored to its original state with display boxes as they were originally.

The information meeting

At 5:30 PM, the first visitors arrived in the reception area. People could follow a route along panels explaining the history, current situation, the new plan, and the schedule and communication. At each panel, a team member was present to provide explanations, address concerns, and answer questions. At the end of the route, there was a panel where visitors could leave their reactions using post-it notes. For more detailed feedback, response forms were also available.

Questions and Answers

Question: *According to your plans, the building will be restored to its original state, but to what extent? Will the interior columns become visible again?*

Answer: The building's facade will be restored to its original state so that the columns in the middle of the facade will be visible again.

Comment: *We don't want the building to be filled with multiple businesses.*

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Answer: At the moment, it is not known who will be renting in Aurora. That depends on market interest. The aim is indeed not to have a multi-tenant building, but rather 1 to 4 companies as tenants.

Question: *Pay attention to the office's evening lighting. What about light pollution?*

Answer: We are taking measures to prevent light pollution in the evening. A special lighting plan will be implemented, including motion sensors inside the building. Additionally, the planters on the rear facade will contribute to reducing light pollution.

Question: *What will happen to the Bever store? Will they have a new contract?*

Answer: The intention is to keep Bever open for as long as possible. During the renovation, we might be able to find a temporary pop-up store at another location. In any case, the plan is for Bever to return as a tenant in the new building.

Desires, Tips, and Suggestions

The following desires, tips, and suggestions emerged from conversations with the team and through post-it notes.

Construction Work

Immediate neighbours are concerned about the disruptions they will experience during construction. It is an area where prolonged construction work has occurred before: "Our quality of life truly suffers due to the disturbance." Logistically, an agreement will be made to gather input from neighbours regarding the construction site setup. Also, the neighbours requested to pay attention to prevent any fine dust from being released during the renovation.

Sunlight

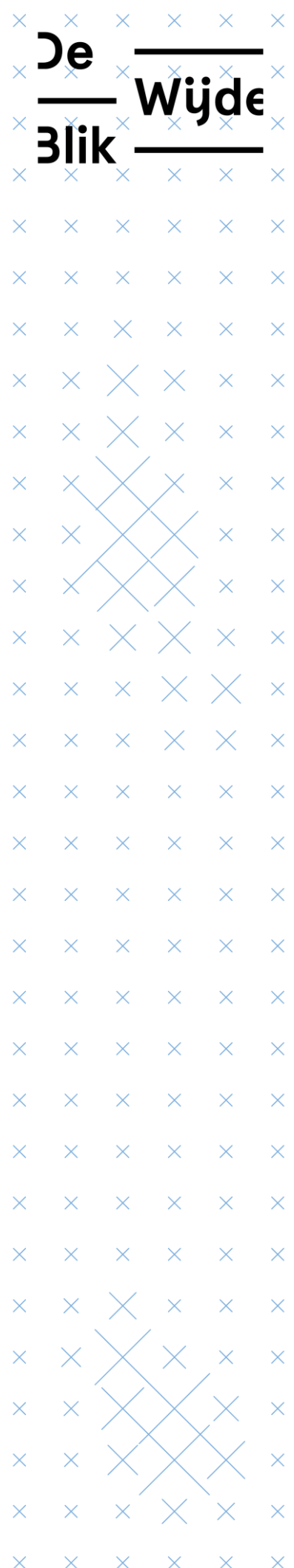
A change in sunlight due to the new conservatory at the rear is a significant concern for immediate neighbours. The team brought a printed version of a sunlight study to showcase. Some neighbours expressed the need for a detailed sunlight study to properly assess the impact on their own outdoor spaces. The architect will work on this.

Safety

The new design raises the question of whether a set-back facade will attract roofless individuals. The surrounding residents would like to share this concern with the team: "Ensure safety by installing lights in the entranceways."

Compliments

Some visitors expressed their happiness about the building undergoing changes: "I find that glass more appealing than the current concrete. I think it's a beautiful plan!"



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More suggestions

- Currently, there are too many bicycles and scooters on the sidewalk. Provide sufficient space in the basement for bicycles, scooters etc.
- New installations sometimes cause noise disturbances. The project team agrees to contact a hotel in the same block where similar issues have been resolved.

Conclusion and Next Steps

This meeting focused on mutual introductions and informing the immediate stakeholders of the Aurora building. Thanks to everyone for their presence and for providing points of attention, concerns, and compliments. This report and the panels from the meeting will be sent to the contact list and can also be found at bouwenaanaurora.nl. It is still possible to ask questions to the project team via the email address info@bouwenaanaurora.nl. Once the contractor becomes more involved in the project, a Construction Logistics and Traffic Management (BLVC) plan will be developed with clear guidelines. There will be another meeting with the immediate stakeholders to discuss this.

