

Isfeld, Lori

From: Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Sent: Monday, June 20, 2016 10:24 AM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: FW: Comment on the rezoning application on 2308 E 34th Avenue, Vancouver
Attachments: Revitalization outcome June 18, 2016.docx

From: Fanny Tsang s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Saturday, June 18, 2016 10:35 AM
To: Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Subject: Comment on the rezoning application on 2308 E 34th Avenue, Vancouver

Our Honorable Mayor and Council,

We are seniors over 70. For more than 20 years, we have been living at s.22(1) Personal E 34th Avenue s.22(1) Personal and Confidential to the site with pending application. We are friendly and easy going people. We speak out very little about what happens in our neighborhood. But, the unreasonable figures proposed in this application aroused our strength to stand up and show our objection. In the attachment, we listed out issues about the safety, harmony and parking chaos we can foresee in this application . We do hope that our points will be seriously considered and the proposed application will be reasonably revised. We have no strength so struggle again and again.

Thanks and regards,

Yours truly,

Mo Kwai Chan (74 years old)
Kam Ching Chan (71 years old)
Yun Tim Wong Chan (75 years old)

Our specific concerns about this rezoning proposal at 2308 E 34th Avenue are listed as follows:

1. From the website of City of Vancouver, we can see what Vancouverism is:

"Vancouverism" is an internationally known term that describes a new kind of city living.

Vancouverism combines deep respect for nature with enthusiasm for busy, engaging, active streets and dynamic urban life.

Vancouverism means tall slim towers for density, widely separated by low-rise buildings, for light, air, and views.

Yes, for light, air and views. More than twenty years ago, we bought our home here, not because of the convenience of having a store next by, but because we like the simple neighborhood and enjoy the space between houses. Years ago, when friends showed their discontent on neighboring monster houses, we couldn't understand. But now, we can absolutely feel what they felt. We foresee the outcome after the new buildings are built. Light is blocked, wind is blocked and space between each other becomes minimal. A monster is there, giving us pressure and giving the trees in our backyard pressure. We know for CD1 zoning, there can be a lot of relaxation granted by the City, but the new building still have to be in harmony with the whole neighborhood.

2. Revitalization outcome

From the plan proposed, the new look of this 'heritage building' will be just like an ordinary red gable top house. People can't link this up with the original white grocery store. Then why is it necessary to spend so much money to let the old structure standing there? Residents in the neighborhood will query why such a store can be considered as a historical building. Tourists won't walk a long way to search for this 'heritage store' which is now modernized so much. Don't waste money. There is no need for the City to give away any compensation to the developer so to make up the excess cost to revitalize the building with no characteristic at all.

3. Location of store

We heard comment in the first public hearing meeting "We are going to have a coffee shop next door. How amazing it is!"

Just imagine: if you are the CEO of Starbuck and an applicant comes up to you and proposes to do your franchise business here at this location, will you sign a contract with him? Look, this location is away from the main traffic street, the neighborhood is a purely residential area. Even though a school is close by, lots of parents will drop their kids to school and then hurry to work. Traffic is busy but nobody stays. People are rushing by. No market surveyor will propose this location for good business volume. With all modern equipment set up and the higher rent and property tax for sure, how can the business go on? Then, from the information we got in the Public Hearing, if coffee shop is not a good idea, it may be changed back to a grocery store. At this point, we have to talk about the history of this location.

We have been living next to this store for more than twenty years and all previous tenants there were friends of us. They all tried to build their business there but all resulted in failure. The reason is simple: We have Victoria Drive grocery stores steps away which are famous in selling good quality but cheap meat and vegetables owing to harsh competition. We have Superstore and Save-on-Food and Costco and now Walmart which are leading superstores providing remarkable price one-stop shopping. We never purchase anything but newspaper from this store even we are next to it. To speak the truth, we can get the newspaper from Victoria Drive stores for free if we buy something there. Their business is minimal. Kids from the George Cunningham Elementary School will pass by and buy candies and ice-cream bars there, leaving the wrapping paper along our front fence. We have talked to the last tenant who left more than 5 years ago because the owner wanted to increase the rent. The reason that kept him there was: If his family lived upstairs and he operated his business downstairs at such low rent, he had a place to live and had a chance to struggle. That's it. However, what we found was that, he made his living not from the low volume business, he sold cigarettes. People drove by even late at night to buy cigarettes at low cost. Source of product? No comment. The premise was listed for lease since he left 5 years ago but has been vacant for more than 3 years because people know that this is not a good spot for business, so Landlord listed it for sale in the market in May 2014. Now that marijuana is legalized, will the shop owners sell it if they can't make profit or even break even the property tax, the rent and all expenses? God knows. It's not an over-worrying issue. We have to look back to history. That's our safety concern.

4. Parking:

We remembered the developer Richard said in the public hearing, the property line is 88 ft plus 41.5 ft long for parking, so there should be sufficient parking space for both the residential and commercial use for this new development. However, according to our knowledge, for an intersection with a 4 way stop sign, no car should be parked within 9 meter from the stop sign and away from the intersection. Deducting 2 times 9 meters from the 88ft plus 41.5ft property line, and, with average parking space 18 ft for each car, only 4 cars can be allowed to parked along the curb. Just do a simple calculation, with 4 residential units having an average of 1.5 cars for each unit and then customers from commercial coffee shop, demand of parking should deprive the parking space of the original residents along Nanaimo Street and E 34th Avenue.

We know of a horrible fact: In the public hearing of a project at E22nd Ave and Main Street, neighbors complained about the lack of street parking if this multi storey building was built and the developer said he would rent it to tenants only cycling to work without cars. Who can control that? Just kidding.

5. Conclusion:

Summing up the above three points, we don't think it wise for the City to pass this rezoning development application. The City is just

- a. compensating the developer for their excess cost to revitalize the building with no characteristic at all by permitting them to put up monster complex, which is 50% more in floor area and 40 % more in site coverage than the allowable figure, without reasonable plan to deal with the parking issue.
- b. creating a foreseeable crazy financial deficit situation for the future owner of the commercial unit which may cause the instability to this calm neighborhood with possible illegal trading.

General thoughts about this rezoning proposal:

Forget about the revitalization of the grocery store. Pull everything down then properly build a multi family project according to the allowable figure with reasonable parking facility. We accept that increasing residential density by the City is the main stream, however, please monitor it wisely. Laneway houses have increased the parking burden quite a lot. There is complaint all around. Please adjust wisely the weights on the two pans of the balance and make the City plan work.