

Ludwig, Nicole

From: Miyo Takeda s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Monday, May 29, 2017 7:56 AM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Comments on Revised Rezoning Application for 105 Keefer Street from Speaker #219

Mayor Robertson and Vancouver City Council,

I am registered as speaker #219, and hoped to deliver my opposition to rezone 105 Keefer Street 29th 544 Columbia Street from HA-1A District to CD-1 District in person, but am unable to attend the reconvened council meeting at 9:30am on Monday May, 2017 due to work.

I am a concerned both as a resident of the neighbourhood, and professionally as a landscape designer who works towards creating good urban form and welcoming public spaces.

When making a soup, it's best to add salt in pinches. This is because you can easily add more later, but it's impossible to take it out. At this critical juncture, I urge you to carefully consider what is being added to Vancouver's historic Chinatown and the subsequent effects these changes will have on the existing community before it's too late.

The architecturally homogeneous condominiums on the northwest and southwest corners of Main and Keefer put eyes on the skyline and mountains, not on the street where they should be. These outward looking units are hugely symbolic of the disconnection between the Chinatown community and the influx of high-income residents. These new developments have brought along with them businesses targeting condo owners: high-end restaurants and shops that not only exclude existing low-income members of the community, but also directly contribute to pushing out affordable groceries and services upon which low-income residents (such as Chinese seniors) depend upon for survival.

Developments, such as the proposed 105 Keefer condos, are directly contributing to housing precarity in Vancouver. I rent an apartment 6 blocks away from 105 Keefer. Rents in the neighbourhood are now up to \$1,700 per month for a bachelor apartment. Even as a young professional, I am terrified by the rapid rise in rents in and around Chinatown, and can't imagine what effects this transition will have on the marginalized people that call Chinatown home.

Formally, the 105 Keefer threatens to erase the architectural multi-culturalism in Vancouver as its massing and form do nothing to reflect the neighbourhood character and have everything to do with maximizing FSR. The handful of taxpayer-subsidized social housing units proposed by Beedie Living in no way are in balance with

the devastating effects another glossy condo will have on housing security, affordability, and access to community resources for 100s of low income residents. The token provision of 25 social housing units, with only 8 of which are guaranteed to be affordable at HILS rate, will in no way mitigate the irreversible damage another condo in the neighbourhood will cause.

It's not too late to save Chinatown, but we are at the edge of creating a sterilized place called Chinatown that does not actually support the Chinese community.

Thank you.

- Miyo Takeda

Ludwig, Nicole

From: Justin Lam
Sent: Monday, May 29, 2017 2:57 AM
To: Public Hearing; Robertson, Gregor; Louie, Raymond; Jang, Kerry; Affleck, George; Ball, Elizabeth; Carr, Adriane; Meggs, Geoff; Reimer, Andrea; Deal, Heather; Stevenson, Tim; De Genova, Melissa; Kelley, Gil; Hoese, Karen; Mayor and Council Correspondence; Zeng, Yan; Cheng, Paul
Subject: RE: Rezoning at 105 Keefer St

Dear Vancouver City Council,

This email is for the 105 Keefer St and 544 Columbia St rezoning proposal.

I am strongly opposed to the proposal for the building because:

- The social housing that will give Beedie their additional height and density is funded by taxpayers like me. They are also paying reduced DCL and no CAC. Beedie has not truly provided any community benefits to warrant the rezoning.
- It will price low-income local out of the neighbourhood.
- The small family businesses that make up Chinatown's character will not be able survive due to increased taxes.
- This is a critical site in a historic area. It should not be used for market condos.
- It is a disgrace to treat the Chinese Veterans Memorial as a private front yard.

I would recommend for the City to convert the site to the following uses instead:

- Significantly more social housing
- An intergeneration space
- A community park

Chinatown does not need a development like this. Please reject the proposal.

Justin Lam

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

Ludwig, Nicole

From: Calvin Chu s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Monday, May 29, 2017 1:04 AM
To: Public Hearing; Robertson, Gregor; Louie, Raymond; Jang, Kerry; Affleck, George; Ball, Elizabeth; Carr, Adriane; Meggs, Geoff; Reimer, Andrea; Deal, Heather; Stevenson, Tim; De Genova, Melissa; Kelley, Gil; Hoese, Karen; Mayor and Council Correspondence; Zeng, Yan; Cheng, Paul
Subject: RE: 105 Keefer St rezoning application

Dear city council

I'm writing because I don't support the Rezoning application at 105 Keefer. I care a lot about the neighbourhood. I visit there often and enjoy the area, as it reflects my Asian heritage.

I strongly recommend that Council and staff do not pass the proposed rezoning because of the reasons below.

- The social housing that will give Beedie their additional height and density is funded by taxpayers like me. They are also paying reduced DCL and no CAC. Beedie has not truly provided any community benefits to warrant the rezoning.
- Low-income residents, especially seniors, will be priced out of Chinatown.
- Recent developments like the one proposed at 105 Keefer will result in increased property taxes that small businesses cannot afford.
- Putting a building with million dollar homes on that site right next to the memorial plaza is not appropriate in Chinatown.
- The mass of this building is too large and unfit for the area.
- The current proposal was voted non-support by the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee.
- Approving this project will set a precedent for future projects.
- The memorial statue is meant to honour the sacrifices of the Chinese-Canadians who helped build this city and country. Building luxury condos next to it is inappropriate.

The following uses of the site are more appropriate:

- More social housing
- More community park space

In conclusion, this proposal is not good for the neighbourhood. Council should not approve it.

With regards,
Calvin Chu

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

Ludwig, Nicole

From: Priya Hothi s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Sunday, May 28, 2017 11:32 PM
To: Public Hearing; Robertson, Gregor; Louie, Raymond; Jang, Kerry; Affleck, George; Ball, Elizabeth; Carr, Adriane; Meggs, Geoff; Reimer, Andrea; Deal, Heather; Stevenson, Tim; De Genova, Melissa; Kelley, Gil; Hoese, Karen; Mayor and Council Correspondence; Zeng, Yan; Cheng, Paul
Subject: 105 Keefer St. rezoning application

To city council:

I am writing this email because I do not support the Rezoning application at 105 Keefer and 544 Columbia St. As a child, Chinatown was a big part of my life. I care a lot about the neighbourhood. While growing up, I spent a lot of time in Chinatown.

I am concerned about the development proposed for these reasons:

- The social housing that will give Beedie their additional height and density is funded by taxpayers like me. They are also paying reduced DCL and no CAC. Beedie has not truly provided any community benefits to warrant the rezoning.
- Like the retail businesses in recent developments, the retail units in this project will be unaffordable to seniors.
- The small family businesses that make up Chinatown's character will not be able survive due to increased taxes.
- Putting a building with million dollar homes on that site right next to the memorial plaza is not appropriate in Chinatown.
- The proposed project does not meet "a significantly higher standard of architectural and urban design excellence" required to warrant the additional height.
- The building proposed is out of scale with immediate surroundings.
- It was rejected by the City of Vancouver Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee.
- The number of seniors housing units being offered is dismal.
- Approval of this project despite community opposition will mean the City does not value Chinatown as a historic neighbourhood.
- It is inappropriate to build luxury condos next to the memorial statue.
- Chinatown needs more family units for real families, not million dollar condos and bachelor suites for singles.

I would recommend for the City to convert the site to the following uses instead:

- An intergeneration space
- More community park space

The 105 Keefer rezoning application is not suitable for Chinatown. Staff should not recommend City Council to approve it.

With regards,
priya hothi

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

Ludwig, Nicole

From: Elizabeth Cheong s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Sunday, May 28, 2017 11:18 PM
To: Public Hearing; Mayor and Council Correspondence
Subject: Additional Comments - Speaker #147 re: 105 Keefer Rezoning Application

Dear Mayor and Council,

I was speaker #147 on Friday, May 26 and Councillor Carr asked me a question about my thoughts on the cost of the below market commercial space versus the extra three, unobstructed floors in 105 Keefer's rezoning application.

I said that in a student project I once worked on, where we suggested the developer to rezone a [politically] sensitive site, we still recommended it because the tremendous upside of upzoning an additional 15 feet far outweighed the costs, in a real estate market that was not as "hot" as Vancouver. Moreover, whatever price the developer originally paid for the site should never be factored into the equation.

I want to add that in that project proposal, the 15 feet additional height was only added to the lower part of the site as it was on a moderate to steep slope. In contrast, the three additional floors in 105 Keefer's rezoning application are almost the size of the entire overall floor plate of the project. I am skeptical of the truthfulness of the statement that "there is no increase in land value" with the additional three floors because of one (out of eight) CRU that's roughly 1000 square feet rented at "below market" rates - which is still undefined. This should be investigated.

When a developer submits a rezoning application, they are supposed to be taking a chance. There are no guarantees. But looking at the process of the multiple rezoning application for this project in particular, it seems as though it can be guaranteed. I am truly disappointed in the way the process has played out.

You've heard from so many genuine speakers from a broad cross section of Vancouver opposing this rezoning application. Please do not make a decision that goes against public sentiment.

Kind regards,

Elizabeth

Ludwig, Nicole

From: Kevin Lim s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Sunday, May 28, 2017 11:17 PM
To: Public Hearing; Robertson, Gregor; Louie, Raymond; Jang, Kerry; Affleck, George; Ball, Elizabeth; Carr, Adriane; Meggs, Geoff; Reimer, Andrea; Deal, Heather; Stevenson, Tim; De Genova, Melissa; Kelley, Gil; Hoese, Karen; Mayor and Council Correspondence; Zeng, Yan; Cheng, Paul
Subject: RE: Rezoning at 105 Keefer St (Opposed)

To Mayor and Council:

I have concerns about the 105 Keefer proposal. I grew up in Vancouver going to Chinatown as a child. I care a lot about the neighbourhood. Chinatown is a place that represents my heritage and I hope my newborn son will be able to see it to learn about the history and struggles of Chinese in Canada.

I am very concerned about the proposal for the building for reasons as stated below:

- Taxpayers should not be funding Beedie's profit. We are funding the social housing that they are using to justify the increase in height and density. They are not paying any CAC and got a discounted DCL. This is not right.
- It will displace low income residents economically.
- This project will contribute to increased property taxes that independent family businesses cannot afford.
- This is a critical site in a historic area. It should not be used for market condos.
- The height of this building is too tall relative to the surrounding historic buildings .
- Its mass is out of scale with the neighbourhood.
- It was rejected by the City of Vancouver Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee.
- The seniors housing proposed is woefully inadequate.
- Approval of this project will result in developments like this becoming the norm in Chinatown, ignoring the fact that it is a historic neighbourhood.
- It is inappropriate to build luxury condos next to the memorial statue.

The following uses of the site are more appropriate:

- Significantly more social housing
- Community centre
- A community plaza
- An intergeneration space
- More park space
- Smaller buildings that make more sense in the fabric of Chinatown

This rezoning application should not be approved because of the reasons I have listed above.

I believe that Chinatown is a national treasure and can be one of the top tourist attractions in Vancouver. Similar to Gastown and Granville Island, I believe Chinatown should be protected and all levels of government should contribute funding to improve the infrastructure, restore the buildings, put incentives in place to bring back Chinese culture (arts, entertainment) and Chinese merchants.

With regards,
Kevin Lim

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

Ludwig, Nicole

From: kathy tycholis s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Sunday, May 28, 2017 11:06 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Zoning application for 105 Keefer

Hello my name is Kathy Tycholis, a life long resident of Vancouver. I am calling on City Council to say no to the rezoning application for 105 Keefer. Please work to preserve, protect, and reinvigorate Chinatown by not approving this rezoning.

Thank you,

Kathy Tycholis

Sent from my iPhone

Ludwig, Nicole

From: Milton Leung s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Sunday, May 28, 2017 10:58 PM
To: Public Hearing; Robertson, Gregor; Louie, Raymond; Jang, Kerry; Affleck, George; Ball, Elizabeth; Carr, Adriane; Meggs, Geoff; Reimer, Andrea; Deal, Heather; Stevenson, Tim; De Genova, Melissa; Kelley, Gil; Hoese, Karen; Mayor and Council Correspondence; Zeng, Yan; Cheng, Paul
Subject: Comments for 105 Keefer rezoning

To Mayor and Council:

This letter is regarding my opposition to the Rezoning application at 105 Keefer. As a child, Chinatown was a big part of my life. Chinatown is a special part of my Vancouver. It is a place of culture and heritage and a constant reminder that we shouldn't take our freedom and our rights for granted.

I am strongly opposed to the proposal because:

- It is not right that taxpayers are paying for the social housing so that Beedie can profit from the rezoning's height and density increases. They are also paying reduced DCL and no CACs. This is not fair.
- Small businesses in the area will be priced out due to increased taxes from developments like this.
- Putting a building with million dollar homes on that site right next to the memorial plaza is not appropriate in Chinatown.
- The density proposed in this project is not reflective of Chinatown.
- There is no guarantee that the seniors housing units being proposed will be affordable.
- Approval of this project despite community opposition will mean the City does not value Chinatown as a historic neighbourhood.
- The memorial statue is meant to honour the sacrifices of the Chinese-Canadians who helped build this city and country. Building luxury condos next to it is inappropriate.

I would recommend for the City to convert the site to the following uses instead:

- Significantly more social housing
- Community centre
- A plaza
- A place for everyone from all ages and groups
- Green space

I do not believe that this rezoning proposal is appropriate for the neighbourhood. Therefore, I urge council and staff to reject this application.

With regards,
Milton Leung

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

Ludwig, Nicole

From: SP Yoon s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Saturday, May 27, 2017 11:45 AM
To: Public Hearing; Robertson, Gregor; Louie, Raymond; Jang, Kerry; Affleck, George; Ball, Elizabeth; Carr, Adriane; Meggs, Geoff; Reimer, Andrea; Deal, Heather; Stevenson, Tim; De Genova, Melissa; Kelley, Gil; Hoese, Karen; Mayor and Council Correspondence; Zeng, Yan; Cheng, Paul
Subject: Letter for 105 Keefer

Dear Mayor and Council,

This is my non-support letter for the 105 Keefer St rezoning proposal. I currently work nearby the proposed development. I care about the historic area. I have worked in a non-profit organization located in Chinatown for 5 years. I have seen the neighbourhood change rapidly into something that did not seem to be sustaining its own economy and instead making more available to business owners that essentially have no connection to the neighbourhood other than taking advantage of the real estate market prices which seem to be drawing even more people disconnected with the history of Chinatown and further alienating the seniors that have lived here for 40+ years. I hope that this rezoning is reconsidered so that Chinatown can maintain its identity through locally produced economies.

I am concerned about the proposed rezoning because:

- The social housing that will give Beedie their additional height and density is funded by taxpayers like me. They are also paying reduced DCL and no CAC. Beedie has not truly provided any community benefits to warrant the rezoning.
- Like the retail businesses in recent developments, the retail units in this project will be unaffordable to seniors.
- Small businesses in the area will be priced out due to increased taxes from developments like this.
- There is insufficient seniors housing.

I would recommend for the City to convert the site to the following uses instead:

- More social housing
- A neighbourhood community centre
- An intergeneration space
- More community park space

This is an unacceptable application and council should not approve it.

Sungpil Yoon

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

Ludwig, Nicole

From: Janice Lee s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Friday, May 26, 2017 11:44 PM
To: Public Hearing; Robertson, Gregor; Louie, Raymond; Jang, Kerry; Affleck, George; Ball, Elizabeth; Carr, Adriane; Meggs, Geoff; Reimer, Andrea; Deal, Heather; Stevenson, Tim; De Genova, Melissa; Kelley, Gil; Hoese, Karen; Mayor and Council Correspondence; Zeng, Yan; Cheng, Paul
Subject: Comments for 105 Keefer rezoning

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to you regarding my non-support for the 105 Keefer proposal. I currently work nearby the proposed development. Living in Vancouver with a Chinatown is a great part of my experience. I started my relationship to Chinatown at a young age. My grandparents went there often during Chinese festivals and I started attending the community Centre as a little girl. For the past 20 years, a lot has changed in the area and I can see why. The area itself is not in the best shape as it hasn't been properly looked after by the government. However that doesn't mean deciding to look after the area now gives you the right to kick out the current residents. Those who have been there and lived their lives in the area should be given priority. Making money shouldn't be your only goal. Chinatown is much smaller now than 20 years ago even though the Chinese population is growing. Take care of the people abs the people will take care of the area.

I'm opposed to the building proposed for these reasons:

- It is not right that taxpayers are paying for the social housing so that Beedie can profit from the rezoning's height and density increases. They are also paying reduced DCL and no CACs. This is not fair.
- It will displace low income residents economically.
- This project will result in increased property taxes that mom and pop stores cannot afford.
- It is inappropriate to use a culturally important site for development that does not respect Chinatown.
- It is completely out of proportion. The average building around the area is two to three storeys tall and this one is twelve.
- The building proposed is out of scale with immediate surroundings.
- The Chinatown Historic Area Plann Committee did not support this application.
- The seniors housing proposed is woefully inadequate.
- Approval of this project signals that the City does not value our historic neighbourhood.
- The number of units suitable for families is dismal.

Instead of market condos, I would like suggest the following alternatives for the site:

- More social housing
- A plaza for the community

In summary, this is a poor proposal and I urge council to reject it.

Janice Lee

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

May 26, 2017

Mayor Gregor Robertson,
Vancouver City Councillors
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

RE: Rezoning of 105 Keefer Street and 544 Columbia Street

Dear Mayor Robertson and Members of City Council,

I am writing to oppose the rezoning application for 105 Keefer and 544 Columbia Street in Vancouver's Historic Chinatown.

This is the first time I have felt compelled to write to my government, as I believe the magnitude of your decisions here will starkly determine and shape the future of our city. It will define how much we value our past in a city where residents frequently lament and regret how scarcely we preserve our history, heritage, and unique cultures amidst rapidly-erected, oversized concrete and glass structures. It will also shed a bright light on how much we care about our most vulnerable citizens, many of whom are low income citizens, and our alarming inability to walk-the-talk as we sing our praises in celebrating inclusive multiculturalism.

We are still a young city. How will one of our most historical areas of the city be seen and experienced by locals and visitors alike? Remarkably, we have the fortunate opportunity to pause here and consider how we want to shape this pivotal corner of Keefer and Columbia.

You can call me a true Vancouverite. My great grandfather came to Vancouver as an early pioneer railway worker and now rests at Mountain View Cemetery. My grandmothers both lived in Chinatown. My parents and I visited Chinatown weekly to visit my grandmothers and connect with the dynamic, moving and breathing community. We knew which village in China everyone was from, which clan to we belonged, and where all of our close and distant relatives and friends worked and lived. Chinatown was a training ground for me to become socially conscious, supportive, responsible, respectful, and an honourable member of society and my community. I am still humbled by these intergenerational experiences.

But Chinatown is not just a memory, though. I continue to spend an extremely disproportionate amount of time in Chinatown despite not living there. It is the only place in my own hometown where I feel a sense of belonging and inclusion. Shopkeepers know who I am, wave me into their shops, check on my wellbeing, and spend time connecting on a real, human level. These are the connections that Chinatown is at risk of losing at the rate developments are rising that don't fit the human scale and how we interact with our built environment.

I have reviewed the proposed site plan for 105 Keefer and I do not see how this community will benefit from this development and how the developer (Beedie) has made changes that contribute positively.

- The Chinatown Memorial Plaza as the doorstep to the current 105 Keefer proposal does not fit in terms of scale and the story it tells of the community. In the Chinatown Vision adopted by Council in 2002, it describes Chinatown as ***"a place that tells the history with its physical environment, a place that serves the needs of residents, youth and visitors, and a hub of commercial, social and cultural activities."***
- The height increase will **overshadow and shadow** the adjacent memorial mentioned above, as well as the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden and Chinese Cultural Centre.
- Increasing the height by an additional 28 ft. (or 3 floors) to accommodate one floor of social housing allows the developer to extract more profits from the now higher, most valuable penthouse floors. By utilizing a nominal offer of 25 units of social housing, the **benefits to the developer grossly outweigh the benefits to the community**. This argument is compounded by the condition that BC Housing has posed to purchase these 25 units.

In terms of community benefit required to gain approval for this development, this current proposal relies on the community to absorb the consequences of this building while the developer continues to net gains. The marginal costs and consequences to the community simply exceeds the marginal benefits gained and this proposal should not proceed.

Please do not confuse who is in need of your thoughtful discretion and representation. You are here to listen to the public, the Chinatown community, and the citizens. Without the support of City Council, you will allow developers to build unchecked. Help us find a solution that

Mayor Robertson and Councillors, I have spent the last three nights with you as well, witnessing the voices of hundreds of others from the community and those passionate about this cornerstone piece of land. We are here to ask you to take **Step 1:** Reject this rezoning application. **Step 2:** Now that you've bought some time, we have a chance to fully exercise creativity and innovation to find better solutions. A chance to address the multitude of concerns from a community waiting to be treated equitably. This decision demands unprecedented vision and leadership on your part. The eyes and ears that belong to all those who submitted the hundreds of letters, the citizens who showed up to speak at City Hall, and the thousands of signatures collected – we are all waiting for you to respond.

I deeply hope that you consider a decision that fills you not with regret but with hope and pride in the legacy we have put in place. Trailblazers of the past have led us here today to determine tomorrow's heritage.

Sincerely,

Tania Leon

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

May 28, 2017

Vancouver City Councillors
Vancouver City Hall
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Y1V4

To Whom It May Concern,

Re: The Beedie Group's 105 Keefer Street Rezoning Proposal

I am writing as an MA Candidate at York University, an ESL Teacher with the Toronto Catholic District School Board, and a member of the Chinese-Canadian community. I am writing to express my opinion on the proposed rezoning application for 105 Keefer Street the Vancouver Chinatown. As a member of the academic community, I am concerned about the fact that public officials are considering allowing the desecration and gentrification of a historically significant neighbourhood, rather than preserving the site for its historical significance. As an educator who is also the first point of contact for many of the newcomers, it would embarrass me to have to say that not every culture is given the same respect, not every history is worth preserving in the eyes of the government. As a Chinese-Canadian I feel that the proposal to rezone and commercialize the area is not only an insult to us as Chinese-Canadians, but also to Canadian values as a whole.

The site is located in the heart of Chinatown, but is also located at the heart of the Chinese-Canadian history, since it is surrounded by history and culture. It is a site which represents a history worth preserving and studying, and a symbol of hope for Canadians and future Canadians. A decision in favour of rezoning the site at the behest of the Beedie Group is dismissive of values of Canadian multiculturalism and would come across as an afterthought.

As both a Chinese-Canadian and a member of the academic community, the history worth preserving and commemorating in the neighbourhood around 105 Keefer Street would be overshadowed by a gentrified Chinatown should the Beedie Group proposal be approved. To me, this is the least Canadian decision that could be made.

On behalf of the Chinese-Canadian community, I implore you to reject the Beedie Group's proposal for rezone 105 Keefer Street.

Sincerely,

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

Kevin Wang, OCELT, MA Candidate



加拿大余風采總堂

YEE FUNG TOY SOCIETY OF CANADA

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

Dear Mayor Robertson and council,

This letter opposing the 105 Keefer / 544 Columbia rezoning proposal is from the Yee Fung Toy Society of Canada, a family association founded in 1904 in Victoria, BC and owner of a Chinatown property since 1948. We are a founding member of the Chinatown Heritage Buildings Association (CSHBA).

Directors of our organization had discussed this matter in a board meeting on May 21 and had resolved that the following position be taken and voiced to City Council for consideration.

- Putting a building with million dollar homes on that site right next to the memorial plaza is not appropriate in Chinatown. Our veterans did not fight wars for Canada to have their memorial treated as a private yard for condo owners.
- It is completely out of proportion. The average building around the area is two to three storeys tall and this one is twelve.
- The mass of this building is too large and unfit for the area.
- Approving this project will set an inappropriate precedent for future projects.
- There is no Community Amenity Contribution for rehabilitation of heritage buildings from this project.

Instead of condos, smaller buildings that make more sense in the fabric of Chinatown could be built on the 105 Keefer site.

This is an unacceptable application and council should not approve it.

Regards,
Jim Yee
Vice Chairman of the Board,
Yee Fung Toy Society of Canada

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential



V6A 1Z7

Todd Smith

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential



May 28, 2017

Yan Zeng, Rezoning Planner
City of Vancouver, City Clerk's Office
453 West 12th Avenue, Third Floor
Vancouver, BC, V5Y 1V4

RE: Revised Rezoning Application - 105 Keefer Street and 544 Columbia St

To whom it may concern,

Chinatown needs our attention. It need not arrive in platitudes and ceremony, but in actions that demonstrate we have listened to what folks in the neighbourhood have been saying for over 100 years. How many times does this community need to say "no" before their voices are heard?

Today, this is why I write and wish to speak at city hall in opposition of rezoning 105 Keefer St. The city of Vancouver and developers needs to do much more in relation to social housing, limiting height and bulk of the proposed development, and respecting historical context.

In regards to seniors' social housing it appears that neither the city, nor developer, have listened or responded to concerns raised by the community. We are actively pushing seniors out of this neighbourhood by restricting the number of units in this development to 25. This building cannot correct the mistakes made in nearby developments in recent years, but must effectively address the displacement of vulnerable, fixed-income residents. This is a real problem and I believe that additional units for local seniors should be made available. These units should come with stricter (lower) pricing and guidelines to ensure that residents actually occupy the finished spaces.

The height and bulk of the proposed development at 105 Keefer St. diminishes adjacent historical landmarks. The site sits within the boundaries of historical Chinatown, and as such, attention should be paid to create spaces that benefit and respect the context of the neighbourhood, past and present. The revised development proposal does not yet achieve this balance.

Chinatown is still here; the folks who have made it a national heritage site are still living and breathing. My fear is that the City of Vancouver is repeating past mistakes; anti-Asian sentiments expressed in early-Vancouver, misuse and appropriation of land, and suppression of voices in under-represented communities. By ignoring concerns the community has raised, we are effectively saying these individuals do not matter. That is simply not true. This city, and this province, owe a tremendous debt to folks in Chinatown for their tenacity and strength through 130+ years of neglect and mistreatment.

As a city, we need to be much better. We need to consider developments more closely and advocate for the best interests of the community in Chinatown. We need to listen. And lastly, we must set a precedent for consultation and support by having transparent dialogue about what should and should not be built within this important historical neighbourhood.

Sincerely,

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

A large grey rectangular box redacting the signature of Todd Smith.

Todd Smith

Ludwig, Nicole

From: pmocal . s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Sunday, May 28, 2017 10:49 PM
To: Mayor and Council Correspondence; Public Hearing
Subject: Reconciling a Flawed Policy: Policy Analysis of 105 Keefer Rezoning
Attachments: chinatown-development-policy-changes-progress-update-english.pdf

Hi there,

I am a urban studies/public policy student, and a Chinese-Canadian with long-time connections to Vancouver's Chinatown. I would like to share my analysis of the project given my public policy background, which has led me to believe that the rezoning should not be approved.

Is the underlying rezoning policy flawed?

In the Council report and presentation, planners have emphasized that the proposal meets the policy for Chinatown South, which emphasizes social housing as a public benefit in exchange for additional density in the historic area. What this trade-off from the Historic Area Height Review would actually look and feel like on the street was unclear in 2011, but we know the results now.

I think it is clear to all now that the current policies brought in after the HAHR are inappropriate for Chinatown. We have evidence from the buildings on Main and Keefer, which are highly out of scale, and have not brought in residents that are supporting the traditional Chinese businesses. Instead, we see the unfortunate effects of gentrification as upscale coffeeshops move into the area. We also have evidence from the planning process that Chinatown planners undertook over the last 8 months, the results of which are summarized in the attached handout that is on the Chinatown planning webpage. The public consultation revealed that larger buildings like 105 Keefer are out of scale, out of character, and the public benefits are not worth it. Mayor Gregor Robertson has said at a panel with Mike Harcourt that the buildings in Chinatown should not be wide and high.

I think there is agreement between planning staff, many community members, and other planning experts that the underlying rezoning policy is flawed. Even if public benefits are achieved, the benefits are outweighed by the negative consequences to Chinatown's historic character. Because Chinatown is so small geographically, this is a particularly significant harm. It has become clear that the rezoning policy does not actually meet its original policy intent.

The principle of consistency

Even if Council agrees with the Planning Staff's recommendation that higher buildings are not appropriate for Chinatown and the rezoning policy should be rescinded, it may be reasonable to allow 105 Keefer to proceed because it is an "in-stream application". The current policy should be applied, for consistency's sake.

However, I believe this principle of consistency (ie applying the policy that was in place when the rezoning application originally came in) must fall in this case, because of the unique, significant harms posed by this project to Chinatown's character.

The review of Chinatown's development policies was sparked due to community opposition to this project, because it is located on such a key site in the community. This is not just any other site in the City or even in Chinatown, where one last higher building should be allowed before changing the policy. This site is uniquely important because:

- Of the adjacencies to cultural sites such as the Keefer triangle, Chinese Cultural Centre, and Pender Street
- It's adjacency to one of the only community/public open spaces in Chinatown
- The location's role as a Gateway to Chinatown once the viaducts are removed (see NEFC summary)
- It is the last empty large lot site in Chinatown, on which the development of community space and social housing is possible.

To lose this site to an inappropriate development would represent a massive opportunity cost, a huge missed opportunity for the community. Therefore, I believe that in this case, Council must reject the proposal even though the recommendation to rescind the rezoning policy has not been enacted yet.

If you reject this proposal, the primary harm is to Beedie, who have invested time and money into this process. (BC Housing can easily spend their \$7.6 M with some other project nearby in the DTES to achieve social housing.) However, we must note that a rezoning is never guaranteed, but is always conditional. In this case, the benefits just are not good enough to offset the harms to the community. We need Council's leadership to make this tough decision.

An Achievable Alternative

Besides the harm to Chinatown's character, the main harm from this project is the opportunity cost for the community. 25 seniors units only sounds like an amazing public benefit if you believe the only alternative is an empty lot or a Development Permit application. However, I believe that the idea of a social housing and community building is actually an achievable alternative. Why is that?

In Staff's answers to Council questions on Thursday, May 25, the planner said that Staff "**have not considered the possibility of buying the site**". Surely that must be explored? I am hopeful this will yield fruitful results because Vancouver has always led the way with innovative solutions, from land swaps for social housing in Yaletown, to deals with Concord Pacific, to 58 West Hastings. At the very least, we cannot say that an alternative is completely off the table if council has not even directed staff to explore the possibility!

Secondly, we have a new Federal government that has committed funding for social infrastructure. And we have a new Provincial government with a progressive party holding the balance of power. We have active and committed MLAs and MPs for Chinatown in both these governments. We even know that BC Housing is willing to spend \$7.6 M on social housing at this site. This site is a prime candidate for an announcement of social infrastructure funding from the Province and Feds.

Finally, we have the important resource of community action that will make an alternative, community-focused development possible. The Chinatown Foundation has made millions in investments in Chinatown - this is a key site they would be able to contribute to. We have active youth and societies that are highly engaged in this process - can't we harness this energy for a community facility, instead of forcing these community members to battle City Hall?

Deferring the Decision

At the very least, Council can defer this decision until after Staff have had a chance to explore purchasing the site! I believe Council would not be practicing due diligence if we did not explore all the options on this site before approving the rezoning. Maybe staff will be able to find a land swap, or convince higher levels of government and private actors to provide funding. If there is any site where we should pull out all the stops, this should be it. We cannot approve this rezoning until all the options are fully explored. This has not happened, so I recommend that if you do not reject the application, you at least wait to vote on the application. In the meantime, let staff and the community see if an alternative is possible (which I believe it is!).

If we can make a special arrangement happen, then we all win. The community will be happy with Council, Council will have listened to everybody, and Beedie will have a fair settlement for this important piece of land and be seen as making a real contribution to Chinatown.

Thank you for your attention. I appreciate our willingness to listen, and support you in making the tough decision you must make.

Adrian

“CHINATOWN IS SPECIAL TO ME”

The City wants to see the kind of development that makes Chinatown so special and unique to many of us. This includes smaller buildings with small storefronts, spaces for businesses and culture and housing for families.

WHAT YOU HAVE TOLD US

We gathered the community’s feedback about their concerns and ideas for new development in Chinatown, especially the character and impacts of new buildings allowed under development policies adopted in 2011. The main themes of what we heard were:

- New developments are out of scale and lack character.
- Trading character for public benefits is “not worth it”.
- The pace of development puts pressure on existing businesses and Chinese seniors.
- Chinatown’s intangible heritage (people, businesses and culture) should be the cornerstone of Chinatown’s revitalization and future.

UPDATED RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff are preparing recommendations to Council for their decision. These recommendations could help temper land speculation and adjust pace of development. These recommended changes envision development to proceed gradually, with a mix of newer and older buildings that respect Chinatown’s character:

- ☐ **Tall and wide buildings will no longer be considered.**
 - Cancel the Rezoning Policy for Chinatown South. Over-height buildings will no longer be considered.
 - Instead, allow buildings to proceed under the base zoning height of up to 75 ft on Pender Street and up to 90 ft in Chinatown South.
- ☐ **New buildings should be smaller, built on narrow lots with smaller storefronts.**
 - Improve the base zoning by introducing more tools for greater character fit.
 - Remove parking and reduce loading required to help smaller developments.
- ☐ **Involve the community more in the review of new developments**
 - Review the role of the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR A VIBRANT CHINATOWN

Chinatown holds an important place in the hearts of many people in the Chinese-Canadian community and beyond. The City recognizes Chinatown as an invaluable part of Vancouver's culture and heritage.

You have told us that buildings are only part of Chinatown's character. During the consultation process, you suggested many ideas on how to make sure Chinatown's intangible character can continue to thrive. We want to listen to your priorities and ideas on further steps we can take together to keep Chinatown special and prosperous.

We will continue to work on these actions and would like your involvement and support:

- Study San Francisco's Legacy Business Program and look at how to support similar businesses in Vancouver's Chinatown.
- Provide grants to non-profit groups working on important projects in the neighbourhood.
- Work with Chinese Societies to complete business planning and fundraising towards the rehabilitation of twelve priority heritage buildings.

LET'S DISCUSS MORE

Contact the area planner, share your ideas and views.

Helen Ma, Planner, Downtown Eastside Group
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For more information:

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vancouver.ca/chinatown



RETAIL CONTINUITY IN THE DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE: AN ANALYSIS OF PRESENT AND FUTURE POLICIES

Prepared by:
Daniel Iwama, Edmund Ma, and Jeremy Stone
for the City of Vancouver: Oct 16, 2013



Executive Summary

A three part study was conducted of businesses in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Analyses looked at the City of Vancouver's retail continuity policies, retail affordability relative to three DTES focus areas, and challenges facing a number of small businesses in those same neighbourhoods. Commercial land use inventories were conducted along Powell Street in the Downtown Eastside Oppenheimer District (DEOD), along the Hastings Corridor between Richards Street and Hawks Avenue, and along Pender Street in Chinatown. Pricing was conducted of commonly consumed food goods in the three study areas and compiled for comparative analysis. Informal interviews were held with several business owners/operators who shared nuances of their experiences as DTES retailers. Findings include:

- Retail continuity provisions are mostly ineffective. Hastings and Powell streets performed poorly on exclusively retail land use provisions, but showed higher rates of policy conformity under relaxations of the retail requirements.
- Chinatown was shown to be a zone of relatively high retail continuity despite not being bound by any formal retail continuity policies.
- Food and clothing from for-profit retail establishments were found to be mostly unaffordable for low-income residents.
- Safety and security and low local purchasing power were prominent among multiple obstacles impacting retention of small businesses in the DTES.

In light of these findings, the following recommendations are made:

- Replace the retail continuity policy with a strategy to enhance the attraction or retention of low-income-serving businesses.
- Commission a study to assess the viability of a "low-income serving" zoning district in the DTES.
- Improve DTES low-income housing stock to relieve street pressures on local businesses
- Lobby senior government for higher social assistance rates.
- Permit greater office uses within the DTES.
- Decrease the costs for doing business in the DTES.
- Increase technical assistance to small businesses.

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Study Overview

Transitions in demographics and land use are occurring in the Downtown Eastside (DTES). The DTES consists of seven sub areas; Victory Square, Downtown Eastside Oppenheimer-District (DEOD), Thornton Park, Railtown/Industrial Area, Strathcona/Kiwassa, Chinatown, and Gastown. Retail activity has changed drastically over the past half-century in the focus areas of this study. Amidst these changes, local DTES businesses are facing a multitude of challenges. This research investigates the viability of retail continuity provisions contained in by-laws 5532, and 8698 as they pertain to the DTES. The bylaws in question prescribe retail or similar land uses along significant DTES streets, with specific design guidelines for active frontages and window displays.

Focus Areas

This report investigates three pedestrian oriented retail streets in the DTES (image 1). The focus area located within the DEOD is along Powell Street between Columbia Street to the west and Heatley Avenue to the east. The area, once referred to by historical Japantown residents as "Poweru-Gai", was chosen based on its significance to the DEOD community as a neighbourhood heart. Historically, this community welcomed people of all ethnicities but became the dominant business centre of Japanese-Canadians in the late 19th century. The DEOD holds a significant place in history, as the Second World War saw this thriving part of Vancouver become vacant with the forced removal of all Japanese-Canadians by order of the federal government. When Japanese-Canadians returned to Vancouver, much of their possessions had been auctioned off including many properties in the DEOD. The storied history of the DEOD is influenced by Aboriginal, Japanese, and contemporary Canadian art and culture.

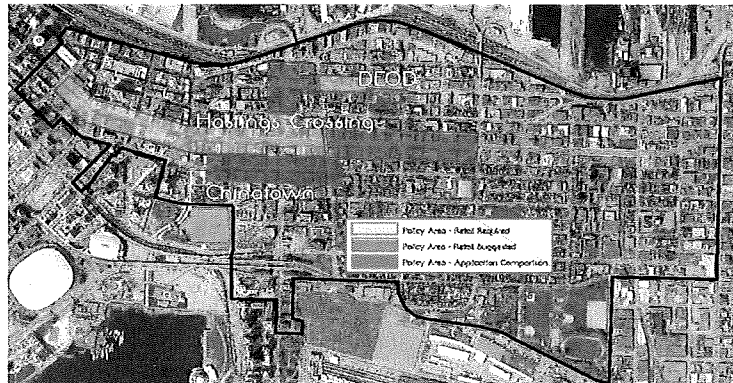


Image 1: Three areas of analysis within the DTES

The Hastings Street focus area is bound by Richards Street to the west and Hawks Avenue to the east. This corridor has a variety of commercial land uses serving mixed clientele. Hastings Street has direct access to the waterfront and is considered one of the most important historic retail high streets in the DTES. Streetcar lines along Hastings Street once connected people from other neighbourhoods of Vancouver to the central business district. Today, the common built form along Hastings Street is multi-story mixed use, with housing atop retail at grade. The closure of retail cornerstones such as Woodward's and Woolworth's in the 1980s ignited a contentious transition period for Hastings Street. Retail disinvestment was followed in the 1990s by the rise of numerous health issues associated with drug and alcohol dependency. Over the past decade however, harm reduction measures such as safe injection sites have improved the health of the community. Though heavily debated, the reopening of Woodward's as a mixed use development is thought to have had various benefits for the Hastings Street community.

Chinatown was named a National Historic Site of Canada in 2011 and remains the largest Chinatown in the country. The history of Chinese immigrants in Vancouver, most of whom initially settled in Chinatown, is full of struggles and triumphs. The first wave of Chinese immigrants came to help build the Canadian Pacific Railway. Despite facing racism and the

imposition of head taxes to immigrate, Chinese-Canadians served proudly in the Second World War. In 1967, Chinese-Canadian activists prevented the construction of a freeway plan slated to tear through the Strathcona neighbourhood which was home to many Chinese-Canadian families.

Historically, much of retail in Chinatown came in the form of herbs, fresh vegetables, and butchers that sold food products unavailable elsewhere in Vancouver. Though Chinatown was the business and cultural centre for Chinese-Canadians for nearly a century, smaller Chinese retail nodes would sprawl throughout the 1990s and develop in neighbourhoods across the Lower Mainland, making products and services formerly only accessible in Chinatown widely available. Today, Chinatown remains the cultural centre of the Cantonese community, representing the first wave of Chinese-Canadians.

A Short History of Retail in the DTES

Located on unceded First Nations territory, the “East End” of Vancouver was established in the late 1800’s as a separate node of commerce from the more affluent “West End”. What came to be known as the Downtown Eastside was centered on the Port and mills that processed fish and timber, and was home to a vibrant blue collar workforce (Plant, 2008). As a lower-income district, it was also home to itinerant workers, retirees, and the infirmed, and became the landing point for Chinese and Japanese immigrants who established their own enclaves (Ley, 2008). Consequently, the neighborhood’s retail areas became a richly textured environment of department stores, restaurants, speakeasies, red light establishments, and more.

During and after World War II however, the local economy of the DTES began a slow decline that has continued until very recently. The internment of the Japanese-Canadian population wiped out an entire sector of the local retail fabric centered around Oppenheimer Park that would never return (Lewis, 1988). Transportation changes (including the shuttering of the BC Electric streetcar in 1958, and the closing of the North Shore Ferry in 1959) reduced foot traffic in the neighborhood significantly (Plant, 2008; Newnham, 2005). Through the 1950s and ‘60s, the City developed a downtown core outside of the DTES, which involved shifting corporate offices, moving the central library, and developing a new retail shopping district (Barnes & Hutton, 2009). Similarly, a slate of “urban renewal” projects demolished dozens of blocks in the DTES, including the small African-American neighborhood and the Hogan’s Alley food and entertainment area (Plant, 2008).

Eventually retail businesses in the DTES fell victim to competition and core shifts in the regional economy. The development of both urban and suburban malls (e.g. Park Royal in 1950, Oakridge Centre in 1959, Pacific Centre in 1971, Metrotown Centre in 1985, etc.) shifted the City’s retail focus away from the DTES to other areas. Moreover, the decline of the ‘staples economy’ (e.g. fishing, forestry, and mining industries) hollowed out the City’s working class base that supported retail density (Barnes et al., 2011). This was compounded by the clearing of defunct industrial lands in False Creek South in the 1980s and ‘90s for new residential towers (whose residents focused more on the Yaletown and Downtown areas for new commerce), and the increase of immigration into East Vancouver (whose new entrants favored retail opportunities on Commercial Drive, Main Street, and new “box store” districts) (Barnes, 2011).

Indicators of the retail decline in the DTES became quite palpable in just a short time. At the end of the 1970’s the core of the Hastings Street retail corridor had a vacancy rate of only 3.9%. Anchor businesses like Woodward’s, Woolworths, Fields, Fedco, and Army Navy were still active, and were complemented by office buildings and a broad range of theatres and nightlife (Carnegie Community Action Project, 2001). However, closures of anchor tenants, major banks, and other smaller stores resulted in a vacancy rate of 13% by 1986, and a catastrophic rate of 36% by 1996 (Carnegie Community Action Project, 2001). Although not responsible for these closures, the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill in the 1980s, increasing poverty, and the heroin and crack epidemics, created a buffer zone in the DTES which partially prevented revitalization of commercial corridors (Carnegie Community Action Project, 2001; Ley & Dobson, 2008).

In recent years, there has been a shift in the economic fundamentals of the DTES such that “new economy” firms and “creative economy” professionals have begun to relocate into Victory Square, Gastown, and surrounding areas (Barnes, et al., 2011). With them are coming new restaurants, stores, and other retail opportunities that are infusing commercial corridors with new life. However, these new entrants rely on a much different labour force and customer base than most residents of the DTES, which is resulting in exclusionary and displacing pressures that are displacing low-income residents (i.e. gentrification) (Barnes et al., 2009).

Recent Research and Action on DTES Economic Development

Over the past decade there have been a number of policies, studies, and planning processes that have targeted various aspects of retail health and security of tenure for local populations in the DTES. The Vancouver Agreement (a multi-government policy signed in 2000 and concluding in 2010) focused on engendering “revitalization without displacement” and included a series of strategic directions that addressed housing, health, and economic issues of low-income DTES residents. Although the impacts of the Vancouver Agreement are hard to quantify, there were numerous actions taken to improve entrepreneurship, workforce training, and retail space (including the development of the new Woodward’s complex) (City of Vancouver, 2008; Western Economic Diversification Canada, 2010).

In 2005 a “Retail Capacity Study” prepared by the Hudema Consulting Group found that the DTES does not have, nor is projected to have, the population or incomes necessary to support its deep inventory of retail/commercial space (i.e. the retail demand as of 2005 could only support 625,000 square feet of a total 2.0 million square feet available) (Hudema Consulting Group Limited, 2005). The report recommended consolidating retail nodes in the neighborhood, and increasing safety and security measures to support current businesses.

A 2011 revitalization plan for Chinatown prepared by AECOM Economics made several important findings as well, including:

- The retail areas of Chinatown are suffering from shifting immigration patterns. Historically Cantonese immigrants are giving way to a pan-Asian community that is looking for different retail opportunities. Also, the destination for Asian-Canadian immigration is focusing increasingly on the suburbs and broader region.
- Perceptions of safety and security, and a lack of a vibrant nightlife, are contributing to low numbers of destination shoppers.
- 64% of Chinatown businesses report declining revenues, and 30% report stagnation. Only 6% have experienced moderately increasing revenues, and these are either new businesses or ones that cater to tourists (AECOM Economics, 2011)

Most recently, the City of Vancouver’s Local Area Planning (LAP) process for the Downtown Eastside has been synthesizing feedback from a wide variety of constituent groups in the DTES. A broad based local-serving economy is envisioned that caters to a range of income groups while retaining a low-income shops, services, and opportunities (City of Vancouver, 2013). Given the increasing rate of development in the DTES, there is an immediate need for a better understanding of the retail landscape, so that local serving assets and deficiencies can be clearly identified. The LAP will utilize the findings of this study and others to continue to improve retail viability in the DTES.

Policy Context: Retail Continuity

The Official Development Plan for The Downtown (City of Vancouver, 1975) is the first instance of a "retail use continuity" provision in Vancouver zoning. The plan was adopted in 1975 under Mayor Art Philips and the then head planner Ray Spaxman who used the retail stipulation to leverage the purchasing power of increasing downtown residential populations. "Retail Continuity" was defined in the development plan (adopted as Bylaw 4912) as "the provision and permanent maintenance of continuous pedestrian oriented retail store type display windows or other equal and suitable display as may be approved by the Development Permit Board". In its first iteration, retail continuity was applied along significant portions of Granville and Smith streets, and broadly along the streets that intervene between Coal Harbour and Gas-town towards the Eastern Core of the downtown peninsula (image 2).

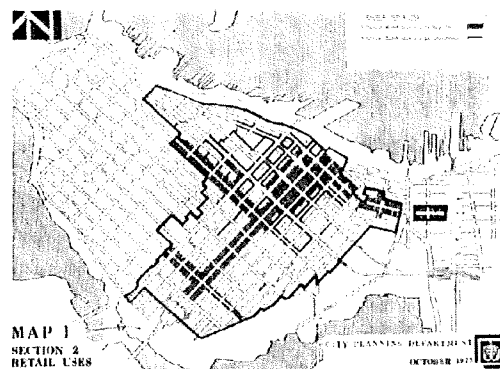


Image 2: Areas targeted in the Official Development Plan for the Downtown for "retail use continuity" (City of Vancouver, 1975)

Initially, retail continuity was meant to ensure the continued commercial viability of street level storefronts in the policy area. It was believed that retail activity was the key to street beautification, "eyes on the street" (Jacobs, 1961), weather-smart design in a rain soaked city, and a sense of place for community members in Vancouver's downtown neighbourhoods.

In the 1980s, there was a significant expansion of the areas bound by Bylaw 4912. The 1982 Downtown Eastside/Oppenheimer Official Development Plan and accompanying design guidelines called for retail continuity to be applied along the Hastings corridor between Cambie Street and Heatley Street, along Powell Street between Main Street and Jackson Street, and on Main Street between Hastings Street and Cordova Street (image 3) (City of Vancouver, 1982). In its concern for the DTES and specifically the relatively low-income DEOD, the area expansion signaled a movement of retail continuity goals from street-scale design solutions to neighbourhood-wide economic revitalization.

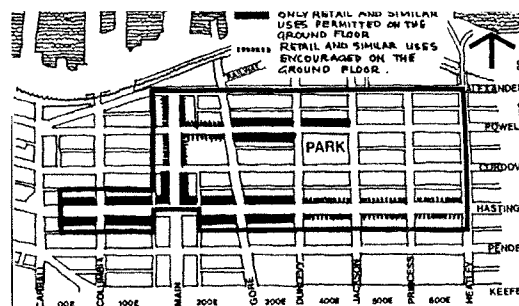


Image 3: Retail continuity area expansions contained in by-law 5532

The Downtown Eastside/Oppenheimer Official Development Plan was adopted as Bylaw 5532, and its updated retail continuity provision espoused the following goals:

- Improving the retail function of Hastings Street
- Improving the retail function of Powell Street while “emphasizing its Japanese character”
- Supporting the future extension of retail activity north along Main Street towards the waterfront.

Compared with the original goal of the retail continuity requirements to facilitate an engaging street-level retail fabric in areas of the city that were already amenable to such uses, this new direction was an incongruous extension. By the mid-1980s, much of the DTES economic fabric had evolved to serve blue-collar transient workers and a largely low-income customer base. Bylaw 5532 signaled an attempt to actively change the local economy, but ultimately would not succeed in reinvigorating the now antiquated economy of the historic “heart of the city”. Today, segments of Hastings and Powell Streets display substantial need for inclusionary land use, especially in the way of light industrial uses for low-threshold job creation and housing to reduce negative street level impacts on local businesses. Retail continuity provisions nonetheless discourage land uses not motivated primarily by local economic development.

In 2003 the retail continuity stipulation was amended yet again. Bylaw 5532 was changed to allow for relaxation of the retail continuity provision allowing “social service centres, general offices, or health care offices”, at the discretion of the Development Permit Board or Director of Planning. Applied to the Hastings Corridor east of Cambie Street, the amendments (Bylaws 8698 and 8699) addressed the need in these areas for social support services in addition to a substantial retail base. The discretion that the amendments allowed for however had already been in practice elsewhere in the policy areas, notably along Powell Street, where offices were already beginning to situate.

Now, with the DTES Local Area Plan nearing completion, retail continuity is again an important topic in DTES policy planning. Some directions of the LAP are directly served by retail continuity provisions, while others are less so. For example, the LAP’s focus on social enterprise and commercial mix at grade is highly compatible with retail continuity provisions as is, while the its support for specifically low-income serving business begs a higher level of regulation than offered by the retail requirements. As retail continuity has been grandfathered in decade after decade, its original intentions have become muddled, emphasizing the need to clarify its objectives for relevance to the current planning context.

Methods

This research was initiated by the City of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside planning team, to contribute to the DTES Local Area Planning Process. One aspect of the LAPP addresses retail affordability and access, and this study was commissioned to support the development of recommendations for those issues. A group of two interns and an independent Chinatown researcher were selected to complete the research.

The three focus areas – Hastings Street, Powell Street, and Chinatown – were identified by the city as target areas due to their unique retail characteristics and focus in several of the LAPP's Emerging Directions . According to specific skill sets, experience, and personal interest, each of the researchers was allotted one study area to focus on. Findings and progress made in each of the study areas were reported back to the group in periodic team meetings.

The central research questions asked:

- ***What land uses exist along the selected DTES streets?***
- ***What is the state of low-income serving retail along the selected DTES streets?***
- ***What (if any) difference have policies of retail continuity made in the retail fabric?***

These questions were explored through three primary research areas:

1. Land Use Inventory – Street level sites along three significant DTES high streets and neighbourhoods were surveyed. Types of businesses, conformity to Bylaws 5532 and 8698, vacancies, and the presence or absence of housing were catalogued along Powell Street in the DEOD, along the Hastings corridor (from Richards to Hawks), and on Pender Street from Carrall to Gore. Although the bylaws in question are binding on portions of these corridors, there is a limited awareness of the actual land uses present, which presents obstacles to assessing their effectiveness. This aspect of the research built on earlier work done by past interns who also sought to catalogue specific land uses and analyze retail affordability throughout the DTES.

2. Retail Affordability Analysis - A list of basic food items was derived from conversation amongst the researchers and from feedback gathered from DTES community members through community engagement sessions associated with the LAP. Bread, instant pasta, raw protein (either chicken or pork), milk, and juice were determined to be essential food items that were commonly shopped for among low-income community members. All stores in the study areas that carried some or all of the food items were visited by the researchers. Prices for available items were recorded either from price tags or by asking cashiers and finally compiled for comparative analysis. To widen the scope of the affordability analysis, clothing-related retail businesses in the study areas were also visited to price goods and services. Free food and clothing services in the DTES were not factored into the analyses, though they do provide a form of competition for existing shops and services.

3. Small Business Interviews - Informal interviews were conducted between the researchers and approximately 20 business representatives in the study areas. Researchers introduced themselves to business owners and operators as workers for a municipal study that was intended to contribute to final LAPP deliverables. Questions focused on pricing and affordability, perceptions of neighbourhood change, perceptions of safety and security, customers, costs of ownership, relationships with landlords, and business competition in the area.

The project connected the interns with community and professional groups closest to the Downtown Eastside and issues facing it. Working relationships were formed with the following groups to facilitate mutual learning:

- **Downtown Eastside Local Area Planning Committee** – Short introductions of the project were delivered to the LAPP community at a monthly committee meeting in order to share ongoing work, and to identify the interns as resources to the committee.

- **Downtown Eastside business owners and operators** - Business representatives were approached and interviewed independently by researchers.
- **City of Vancouver DTES Planning Group** - The interns met weekly at the City of Vancouver to conduct work and to consult with experienced DTES planners.
- **Vancouver Economic Commission** - Facilitated by supervisory City of Vancouver staff member, the interns met with the VEC to establish a knowledge sharing relationship.
- **Former planners/BIA reps/Non-Profit staff** – Additionally, various other stakeholders were interviewed to better understand history and context.

In the months following the completion of this report a presentation will be made by the researchers to the DTES planning team and other interested staff who will then work towards integrating the work into the finalized Local Area Plan for the DTES.

Findings: Retail Continuity

During the study period 463 businesses were analyzed for land use and conformity to the relevant policies. Although Hastings and Powell Streets are intended to be primarily retail corridors, the actual presence of retail businesses is lower than expected. Approximately 53% of businesses in the Hastings study area are retail use, while only 22% of Powell Street businesses are retail. On Pender and Union Streets in Chinatown, retail uses account for 75% of total businesses.

Uses by Analysis Area						
	Hastings St.		Powell St.		Pender/Union St.	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Retail	144	53%	20	22%	78	75%
Office/Medical/Services	42	16%	22	25%	5	5%
Other Uses	24	9%	15	17%	4	4%
Housing Lobbies	10	4%	14	16%	0	0%
Vacant	50	19%	18	20%	17	16%
Total	270	100%	89	100%	104	100%

Table 1: Land use distribution in the analysis areas are lower than expected.

In terms of conforming to the retail continuity policy, conformity was measured in terms of the two relevant bylaws. For Bylaw 5532, only retail businesses were counted for policy conformity. For Bylaw 8698, retail businesses and office/medical/service organizations were counted (for a full typology of businesses in each class, please see Appendix B). Along each corridor, vacancies were noted and removed from the data to avoid skewed findings (since vacancies cannot conform to a policy).

For businesses on Hastings Street from Richards to Hawks, 65% of all businesses conform to the original "retail only" policy (Bylaw 5532), while 85% of all businesses conform to the more recent "retail + medical/office/services policy (Bylaw 8698). In terms of true retail continuity, the policy has only reached 2/3 of its original goal, although with an expanded set of uses the policy's new goals are mostly achieved. It appears that specifically requiring businesses to conform to the policy is more effective than simply encouraging conformity. This is especially evident in the fact that there is a higher percentage of retail businesses in the area not covered by the policy (61%) than in the "encouraged" zone itself (51%).

Businesses Conforming to Retail Continuity Policies (w/o vacancies)					
Hastings St.					
	Total	Conforming to Bylaw 5532 Policy Goals		Conforming to Bylaw 8698 Policy Goals	
	#	#	%	#	%
Required	103	80	78%	91	88%
Encouraged	73	37	51%	59	81%
Not covered by policy	44	27	61%	36	82%
Total	220	144	65%	186	85%

Table 2: Hastings Street conformity to bylaws 5532 & 8698

For businesses on Powell Street, the results were quite different. Only 28% of the businesses conform to the "retail only" policy goals of Bylaw 5532. Although Bylaw 8698 is not applicable to Powell Street, a comparison to those policy goals shows only 49% conformity. The retail continuity policy has not been very effective on Powell Street. This is especially evident in that only 32% of businesses in the "required zone" conform to Bylaw 5532. Even when including the 20% of non-vacancy businesses that are housing lobbies, approximately half of all permitted uses are still being approved contrary to the policy.

Businesses Conforming to Retail Continuity Policies (w/o vacancies) Powell St.					
	Total	Conforming to Bylaw 5532 Policy Goals		Conforming to Bylaw 8698 Policy Goals	
	#	#	%	#	%
Required	38	12	32%	15	39%
Encouraged	9	5	56%	5	56%
Not covered by policy	24	3	13%	15	63%
Total	71	20	28%	35	49%

Table 3: Powell Street conformity to bylaws 5532 &

Chinatown does not have a retail continuity policy, but existing uses were compared to the policy goals of the two bylaws in order to see how they might perform if in a "required" zone. Interestingly, 90% of all businesses in the study area of Pender Street (excluding vacancies) conformed to Bylaw 5532, while 95% of conformed to Bylaw 8698. It was surprising that the one corridor without a retail continuity policy had the highest percentage of retail and similar uses. However, the culture and built form of Chinatown is different from the other corridors, and may promote retail uses to a higher degree.

Businesses Conforming to Retail Continuity Policies (w/o vacancies) Pender St.					
	Total	Conforming to Bylaw 5532 Policy Goals		Conforming to Bylaw 8698 Policy Goals	
	#	#	%	#	%
Required	87	78	90%	83	95%
Total	87	78	90%	83	95%

Table 4: Conforming land uses along Pender Street

A final analysis was performed on vacancy rates. As shown above in the use analysis, vacancies are relatively high in the study area with an approximately 20% vacancy rate on both Hastings and Powell Streets, and approximately 16% on Pender and Union Streets. On Hastings Street 48% of the vacancies are within the "required" policy area, while on Powell Street only 44% of the vacancies are in the "required" policy area. Since no businesses are in a policy area on Pender Street, no vacancies are within a policy area.

Vacancy Analysis by Policy Area				
	Vacancies	Vacancy Rate	Vacancies in "Required" Policy Area	% Vacancies in "Required" Policy Area
Hastings St.	50	20%	24	48%
Powell St.	18	19%	8	44%
Pender and Union Sts.	17	16%	N/A	N/A

Table 5: Vacancies by analysis area

No firm conclusions can be drawn from the data, but it is interesting to consider whether the policies are having an effect on filling vacancies. It is hard to assume that there is a strong impact because the vacancy rates are approximately half within and half outside the "required" policy areas. However, because vacancies are slightly higher on Hastings and Powell Streets than Pender Street, further analysis should be made to determine if the policies are curtailing access to commercial space.

One final point worth discussing is that a number of interviewees mentioned the issue of "dead zones" in the Hastings retail district. Although the revision of the policy through Bylaw 8698 encouraged needed services to locate in the DTES, it also allowed pockets of non-retail to appear in the corridor. These spaces, along with the proliferation of housing lobbies, has been described as creating "dead zones" that disrupt the retail continuity of the neighborhood. Similarly, it is

important to note that the north side of Hastings Street between Abbott and Cambie Streets (the Woodward block) is not covered under the retail continuity policy. There were several interviewees (including former planners and local stakeholders) who were concerned about the dead zone created by facing retail inward on a long stretch of the block. While there are additional issues at play here (primarily the exposure to shoplifting that is created by having two entrances on either side of a store), it is worth considering how the retail continuity policy, if enforced, could have preserved the street-level experience of the corridor. Although our findings do not entirely support the role of the continuity policy in preserving retail, there is evidence that if fully applied it may have met its original goal of preserving the continuity of the shopping district.

Findings: Affordability Analysis

In addition to analyzing the presence or absence of retail businesses in the selected commercial corridors, the affordability of selected goods was also analyzed. The purpose of this exercise was to understand the extent to which current retail serves low income populations. Although the retail continuity policy may be working to maintain retail establishments, those establishments may or may not be providing product mixes or price points suited to local incomes.

In the DTES, the median annual income is approximately \$13,691, which is less than 30% of the city-wide median of \$47,300. The relative purchasing power for residents is therefore heavily constrained compared to the rest of the population. For single residents on social assistance the current support rate is \$282/month (after paying for shelter), or approximately \$9.40 per day for food, clothing, and other necessities beyond shelter.

Throughout the course of this study over a hundred businesses were visited to examine product mix and price for basic food items and clothing. A few general findings are as follows:

- Due to the dominance of convenience stores in the DTES, finding basic raw foods like eggs, vegetables, and meat is difficult. There are only a few for-profit and non-profit grocery stores, as well as specialty establishments such as butchers. The majority of retail food establishments offer only processed foods, which are generally more expensive by volume.
- When comparing the lowest price for a particular good in the DTES to the highest price for that good, there is a great deal of fluctuation (table 6). For basic food items, the price differentiation is between 90% and 250%; this gap increases significantly when looking at meats and fish. Shopping locations therefore play a great difference in cost of goods.

Difference in Lowest Priced and Highest Priced Items for Selected Goods in the Downtown Eastside							
	Milk (2L)	Sandwich (9 to 12 in)	Kraft Dinner	Juice (1L)	Bread (loaf)	Chicken (lb)	Fish (lb)
Lowest Price Sampled	\$ 2.50	\$ 2.50	\$ 0.89	\$ 1.25	\$ 1.00	\$ 4.50	\$ 4.50
Highest Price Sampled	\$ 4.79	\$ 4.99	\$ 2.29	\$ 3.75	\$ 3.49	\$ 19.78	\$ 74.80
Percentage Difference	92%	100%	157%	200%	249%	340%	1562%

Table 6: Lowest and Highest priced items in the DTES study areas.

- Large grocery stores like Nesters or Army Navy are generally equal to or cheaper than the average price for various food items, while the non-profit groceries are usually much cheaper than market prices (table 7).

Price Comparison: Grocery Stores to Average							
Sample	Milk (2L)	Chips (200g)	Juice (1L)	Kraft Dinner	Cereal (4- 500g)	Hot Dogs	Tomatoes (lb)
Average	\$ 3.69	\$ 2.59	\$ 2.34	\$ 1.60	\$ 4.92	\$ 4.97	\$ 1.07
Grocery Store 1	\$ 3.69	\$ 3.69	\$ 1.25	\$ 1.29	\$ 4.99		
Grocery Store 2	\$ 3.49	\$ 2.00	\$ 1.50	\$ 1.39	\$ 3.98	\$ 4.99	\$ 1.69
Non-Profit Grocery	\$ 2.75	\$ 1.50			\$ 2.00	\$ 3.75	\$ 0.45

Table 7: Average prices for DTES food items and price at grocery stores. Red = most expensive; Green = least expensive; Grey box = product not available

- Going from west to east on Hastings, there is little consistency in the pricing of basic food items, however going east there are some slight downward trends for items like milk, bread, and cereal. Interestingly, Kraft Dinner tends to get more expensive as one travels east.

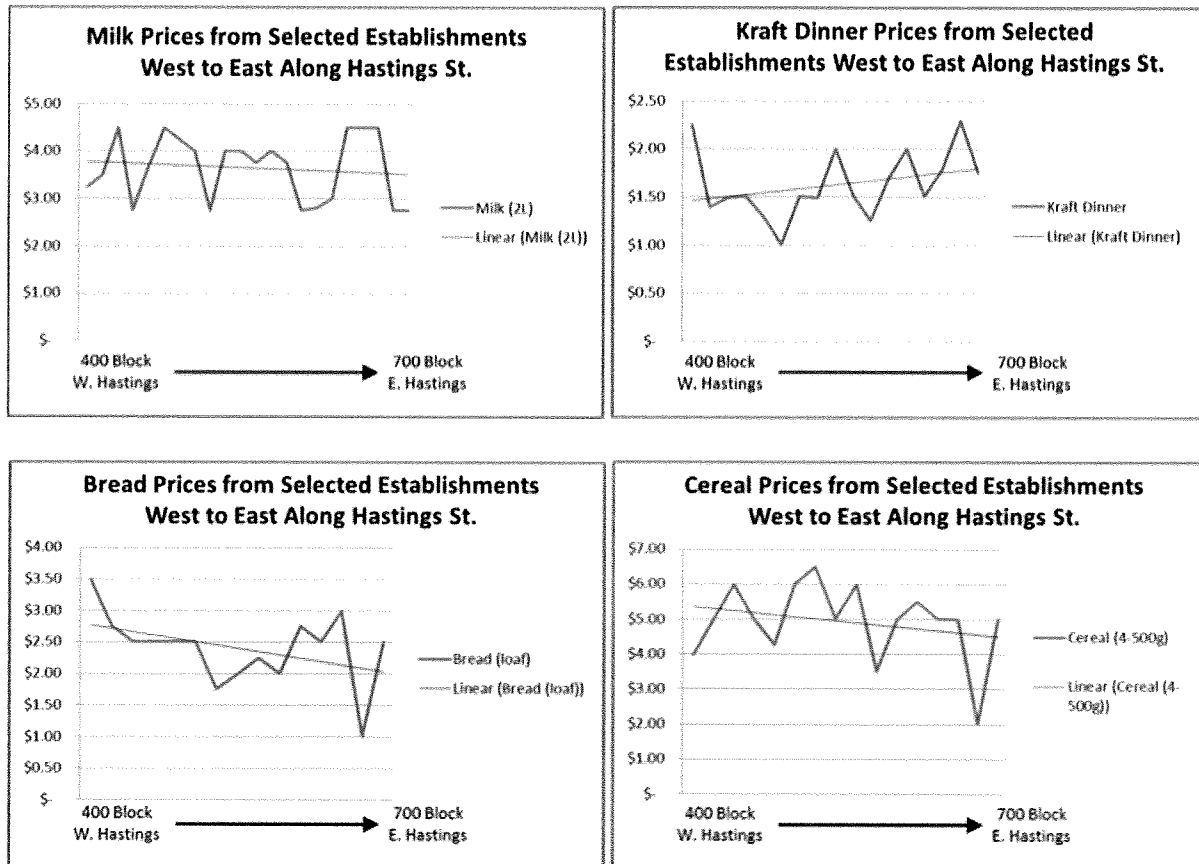


Figure 1: Eastward pricing trends along Hastings Street

There are two potential reasons for the downward trends. One is that due to increased gentrification on the west end of the DTES, there may be increased prices due to comparatively high rents, the market, or other factors. Another reason is that due to higher levels of drug activity and petty crime west of Gore, there may be additional costs to doing business, which may drive prices up. A deeper analysis is required to gain a thorough understanding of the differences in pricing throughout the Downtown Eastside.

- When comparing the average prices of food items to incomes in the DTES, affordability is a central issue. For example, a purchase of two or three days' worth of food including 2 liters of milk, a box of cereal, a sandwich, a pound of pork, a loaf of bread, 3 pounds of tomatoes, and a bag of chips would cost on average \$26.99. Three days of social assistance is \$28.20, leaving \$1.21 for the purchase of any other necessities over that same three day period. On average, it is unlikely that retail food stores in the DTES are providing affordable food options for local residents.
- Chinatown presented some difficulty in providing food comparisons due to the fact that the products for sale are so different from the rest of the DTES. However, a variety of fresh produce markets, butchers, and bakeries offer product lines that suit every level of income. The competitive nature of similar businesses and the shopping habits of Chinese-Canadian communities dictates a low profit margin and savings for customers. A similar sample of three days' worth of

food from a selection of businesses on Keefer Street would see the previous sample approximately cost \$21.80. This basket of goods consist of 2 liters of milk, a dozen eggs, 2 BBQ Pork buns, a pound of ground pork, a loaf of bread and 3 pounds of tomatoes. These lower prices could be a result of economies of scale with fresh produce and butcher shops versus convenience stores for food.

- Restaurant prices in the DTES follow a similar pattern of affordability as the grocery food prices. Eating breakfast, lunch (sandwich), and dinner (main entrée) at local restaurants for a day would cost an average of \$24.64, or 2.6 times the daily social assistance rate. It is not surprising then, that respondents involved in the City of Vancouver's Affordable Food Mapping Workshop reported that eating at restaurants was "rarely" affordable, or only "cheque week affordable" (meaning they are only affordable when residents get a lump sum of cash from social assistance programs). Interesting, many restaurants had lower priced food items, such as a small breakfast sandwich for \$1.75, or two grilled cheese sandwiches and a pickle for \$3.50. However, these items are generally smaller and less nutritious than more expensive food options, and for some they may be less filling.

Interestingly, restaurants on Hastings Street cluster on the west end of the DTES. Almost 70% of the restaurants on Hastings are located between Richards and Carrall on West Hastings, with the rest scattered along the 0 to 700 blocks of East Hastings. Again, this may be a sign of gentrification or other processes that make it more possible to successfully operate restaurants in areas where higher average prices for food can be charged.

Average Prices for Selected Food Items in the DTES		
Milk (2 liters)	\$	3.69
Sandwich (9 or 12 in)	\$	4.27
Chips (200g)	\$	2.59
Juice (1L)	\$	2.34
Kraft Dinner	\$	1.60
Cereal (4-500g)	\$	4.92
Bread (loaf)	\$	2.50
Eggs (Dozen)	\$	2.90
Hot Dogs (package)	\$	4.97
Microwave Dinner	\$	4.50
Ground Beef (lb)	\$	4.40
Tomatoes (lb)	\$	1.07
Chicken (lb)	\$	10.00
Pork (lb)	\$	5.81

Table 8: Average prices for selected food items in the DTES

Price Comparison for Clothing Options in the Downtown Eastside				
Item	Average	Median	Lower Priced	Higher Priced
Jeans	\$ 53.14	\$ 49.99	\$ 5.00	\$ 135.00
Pants	\$ 84.53	\$ 85.00	\$ 3.75	\$ 175.00
T-Shirt	\$ 23.00	\$ 19.99	\$ 2.00	\$ 75.00
Skirt/ Dress	\$ 53.85	\$ 14.99	\$ 4.00	\$ 149.00
Blouse	\$ 26.51	\$ 10.99	\$ 2.55	\$ 95.00
Dress Shirt	\$ 47.43	\$ 20.00	\$ 3.00	\$ 155.00
Shoes	\$ 69.85	\$ 15.00	\$ 2.00	\$ 329.00

Table 9: Price comparisons for clothing in the DTES. "Lower Priced" and "Higher Priced" reflect average prices in each establishment for that category, not the lowest priced or highest priced items in the store.

for free, so it is not clear whether providing affordable clothing in the DTES is viable in the market economy.

- Clothing affordability is polarized in the DTES. Many clothing outlets are more expensive than what residents on social assistance could afford. For example, the median price for one outfit consisting of jeans, a dress shirt, and shoes is approximately \$84.99, or 30% of a resident's social assistance funding for the month. However, there are a handful of thrift stores that provide inexpensive work and casual clothes. An outfit consisting of a pair of jeans, a dress shirt, and shoes from one of these stores would cost \$10 on average. They may not be of the same quality, or have the same useful life as other clothes, but they are possible to acquire within the given constraints of income. These thrift stores are generally operated by local churches and charities which may be subsidizing costs, and many residents also get access to clothes for free, so it is not clear whether providing affordable clothing in the DTES is viable in the market economy.

Findings: Small Business Challenges in the Downtown Eastside

Interviews were conducted with owners and operators of small businesses throughout the DTES. In order to achieve a better understanding of retailer's experiences, questions focused on retail continuity, impressions of neighbourhood change, and relationships with customers and building owners. Interviewees varied greatly by demographic, location, type of business operated, length of ownership, and outlook for the future. Interviewees were generally unaware of the retail continuity stipulations of both Bylaws 5532 and 8698. The following sections are summaries of the most common responses.

Perceptions of Safety and Security

Safety and security was repeatedly mentioned as the one of the primary barriers to the economic health in the Downtown Eastside. Although some business owners were more apathetic regarding drug use and petty crime in the area, others found that there were direct impacts on core business issues.

Attracting Customers

Two phenomena seem to be happening simultaneously. On the one hand, multiple owners noted that in recent years a shift has occurred bringing in more young and middle-aged adult customers, whereas in past years seniors, couples, and children were more common. It is becoming harder to attract families and higher-wage earners to the neighborhood. On the other hand, other DTES businesses like those in Gastown or Victory Square are frequented by tourist groups who inject large amounts of money into the local economy episodically throughout the year. Some owners feel as though the localized drug activity in certain areas prevents diverse customers and tourism-related retail activity from being shared throughout the DTES.

Business Hours

Multiple businesses reported reducing or changing business hours in order to be closed in the evening when safety fears are heightened for both patrons and staff. This is having a direct impact on sales since they can no longer capture night-time business.

- One business had changed closing time from 12:00am to 8:00pm.
- Another owner noted that in wintertime when days become shorter, business hours are also shortened due to high levels of drunkenness and street-level crime after dark.

Staffing Issues

The majority of stores visited had small groups of staff that consisted largely of family members. The most common reason cited for this was that perceived dangers in the area made it hard to attract employees. Moreover, some female store owners kept male relatives on site (rather than at other income generating jobs) because they needed the extra security presence in case of shoplifting or other crime.

- Some owners mentioned that it is especially difficult finding female employees who feel safe in certain DTES neighbourhoods, particularly during nighttime.
- For other owners, minimizing the number of staff was also a matter of controlling costs, rather than a consequence of perceived neighbourhood dangers.

Impact of Housing

In speaking with other advocates in the neighbourhood, a common theme was the role that housing and related amenities played in the safety and security issue. Because of the limited floor plans of SROs and other social housing units, residents of the Downtown Eastside often use the street as their "living room". Interestingly, anecdotal evidence from the Dr. Peter Centre in the West End suggested that the development of accessible day use centers for people around the neighbourhood helped to reduce the amount of people on the local streets. Stores like the Shoppers Drug Mart at Davie and Thurlow have found that Street activity has decreased with the presence of the center in the neighbourhood.

Purchasing Power

Purchasing power was also routinely cited as one of the primary barriers to economic health in the DTES. Many DTES residents are dependent on social assistance or pensions for their income. However, due to the high cost of living and the relatively low rate of increases in social support, regular customers have been slowly disappearing. Many businesses report high spikes of income on welfare cheque day and on pension day, but during the rest of the month they struggle for customers and revenue. This lack of consistent revenue impacts business operations and attitudes in various ways.

Pricing Difficulties

Due to the lack of increases in social assistance, the ability of businesses to increase prices has been severely curtailed. One business has only implemented one price hike in 12 years - a \$0.50 increase on main entrees. Business owners who buy inventory from other grocers such as Walmart and Cosco are pressured to raise their prices as these quasi-wholesalers raise their prices, but competition for the very few dollars in the DTES does not allow for increased prices to cover overhead.

To cope with this, some businesses employ a form of discretionary pricing, whereby standardized prices are not used and the cost of goods is adjusted based on the appearance of individual customers. The most visibly poor customers pay the lowest price for goods, while more wealthy appearing customers are charged higher prices for the same merchandise. This creates a virtual subsidy for low income residents, and allows owners to cover more costs. However, one owner remarked that while he would like to implement discretionary pricing, doing so would have little impact as he rarely sees customers with that kind of purchasing power in his store.

Costs of Inputs and Overhead

Without the ability to raise prices, increasing tax assessments and quickly escalating rents are challenging the ability of some businesses to remain profitable or even solvent. Other businesses are finding utility costs to be rising at a much faster rate, posing a more significant challenge than rents. One business owner was upset that while some new commercial developments in the neighbourhood like Woodward's benefit from property tax abatements, long-time businesses struggling to stay in the neighbourhood get no rent control or tax relief. One respondent suggested that zoning be changed to allow for multiple uses on one site. The deep floor plans for many businesses are creating an unnecessary burden of paying for excessive square footage. Multiple uses could allow compatible light industrial to occur in the back of the store, and retail in the front.

Inability to Manage Inventory

For businesses with perishable goods, it is difficult to manage inventory if there is only cash flow once or twice a month. One owner suggested that this was why large number of convenience store on the east side of Hastings can't fill the meat and vegetables gap in the neighbourhood; they can only keep pre-packaged foods on their shelves with long expiry dates.

Another issue that was articulated was that some businesses can't adjust business models and inventory to suit the demands of higher-earning customers in the neighbourhood because they don't have enough cash flow or savings. This lack of agility was weakening the ability of businesses to grow or change.

Attitudes Towards Neighbourhood Change

Because of the economic state of the neighbourhood, a generally positive attitude towards gentrification and demographic change was shared among business owners. Owners who had already experienced changes to their customer base due to gentrification were satisfied by those changes, while some who had not were hoping for new groups of customers with higher purchasing power. Interestingly, the opening of office spaces on Hastings had been associated with increased patronage of retail establishments, thus increasing their sustainability. However, despite new entrants to the neighbourhood, some businesses are working to protect the interest of their low income customers by refusing to make changes that would raise prices or make them feel uncomfortable.

Market Competition

Besides the general competition between businesses for DTES residents, there is also extra-market competition that affects business viability. Two examples of this are as follows:

Informal Wholesaling

Some business owners described the effects of informal (black market) wholesaling in the neighbourhood. On the one hand, black market wholesalers are extremely aggressive and threaten some business owners to buy their products. On the other hand, those who are buying the goods can sell them more cheaply, and thus undercut above-board businesses. The presence of these wholesalers is not only a safety and security issue, but they also distort the market by unfairly disadvantaging businesses who pay full cost for their products.

Street Sales / Pigeon Market

Some businesses were concerned about street-sales and the Pigeon Park Market as potential competition. When these vendors sell objects that are similar to those offered in local stores, they are able to sell them at prices that are devoid of the overhead and operating costs that businesses bear. Moreover, one owner felt that shoplifters were selling her own items on the street at a lower price, thus undercutting her business. Although these vendors are generally operating "survival" businesses, it's possible that they are challenging the survival of retail stores in the area.

Other Issues

In addition to those listed above, these were other issues important to interviewees.

Security of Tenure

Only one interviewed retailer was owner of both business and building; all others paid rent to landlords to secure space. Relationships with landlords were generally positive, and length of tenancy ranged from 8 months to over 50 years. One owner whose business had lasted through 4 generations of landlords mentioned that their current landlord, BC Housing, has been the best they have ever had. However, other owners discussed the "renovictions" happening recently in the neighbourhood, and the level of displacement. The lack of long-term leases and the prominence of verbal leases were suggested as critical problems for some business owners.

Declining Business Value and Lack of Exit

Some business owners simply want to sell their businesses and leave the neighbourhood. However, the economic hardships in the neighbourhood have reduced the value of businesses to the point that they have little to no resale value. The owner of one restaurant had bought her business for \$60,000 eight years ago, but can't find a buyer today who would take it even at that price, much less with appreciation. She would like to move on and give someone else a try, but feels trapped by the loss of the asset since no one will buy the store. Other owners in one area remarked that they are simply holding out until new customers provide an opportunity to sell their businesses with less risk of loss.

Summary of Major Findings

The following is a summary of findings from the study.

1) The retail continuity policy is not particularly effective in reaching its goals.

Although there are moderately high rates of retail concentration in a few of the study areas, these did not seem to be related to the retail continuity policy. The highest concentration of retail (Pender Street) was not in a zone regulated by the policy, and one of the lowest concentrations of retail (32%) was in a zone “requiring” retail only (Powell Street). With expanded definitions of policy coverage (including medical, office, and service organizations) the policy is more effective, but in that sense it is no longer a “retail” policy, but rather a broader zoning regulation. The one area that the policy could have most effectiveness is in maintaining the quality of the shopping experience in retail corridors, but it has been eroded by bylaw changes and selective enforcement.

2) The retail continuity policy is not protecting or encouraging affordable, locally-serving retail businesses.

With such low incomes in the DTES, it would be expected that a policy protecting or encouraging retail uses would retain establishments that cater to local residents. However, few food or clothing options in the DTES are truly affordable for fixed income individuals, and the majority of affordable options are only provided by subsidized or non-market entities like non-profit grocery stores and thrift stores. Food prices increase from east to west on both Hastings and Powell, suggesting that new retail development is surpassing what is attainable by local, low income residents. Although the retail continuity policy may be successfully retaining retail in some areas, the content of the retail may not be appropriate for low income residents or the community at-large.

3) Safety and security is a primary challenge for retail viability in the DTES.

The perception of street-level drug use and petty crime is keeping paying customers (especially those with higher incomes like middle-class families, tourists, etc.) away from many DTES businesses. Moreover, actual street-level problems are impacting operations by forcing businesses to operate at reduced hours, hire family members instead of trained staff, and spend more on security measures. This was linked directly to housing issues that force more people onto streets and consequently in front of, or into, local stores.

4) Purchasing power of the local economy is another key challenge for retail viability.

Low incomes in the DTES mean low revenues for local businesses. This creates a broad range of impacts for businesses in terms of pricing, paying expenses, managing inventory, and reinvesting into the business. This also makes local business highly susceptible to competition or market changes because there are low rates of capital accumulation, and little agility (i.e. little ability to adapt business models to new market demands). Ultimately, many businesses in the DTES have little to no market value, and are thus stranded assets for some business owners. Although some businesses welcome gentrification, others feel that the benefit of increased disposable income will not be shared by their businesses.

Case Studies: Municipal Strategies to Preserve or Incentivize Local Retail

In evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the current retail policy in the DTES, it is important to consider how other cities approach retail preservation. Generally American and Canadian cities show concern about the impact that large, chain stores have on local jobs and the character of commercial districts. As such, many programs and policies are focused on limiting site square footage or street frontage in order to reduce the ability for "box" retailers to locate in traditional commercial corridors. However, there are a variety of interventions by local governments that are both consonant with Vancouver's retail continuity policy, and in some cases go beyond our policy provisions. The following are a few examples of these policies and their applicability to Vancouver.

New York, New York: "Special Enhanced Commercial Districts"

In the Upper West Side of Manhattan, community members and local officials approached the city planning office with a number of issues concerning the retail character of Broadway, Amsterdam Avenue, and other core commercial corridors in the neighbourhood. They were primarily concerned with the amount of retail frontage being consumed by banks and building lobbies which was creating dead zones of commercial activity, eroding the vibrant character of local retail. The planning office and City Council responded by establishing "Special Enhanced Commercial Districts" along specific commercial corridors that used frontage regulations to manage land use. Specific regulations included the following:

- **Minimum percentage of commercial uses:** On certain corridors, at least 50% of all frontages have to conform to commercial uses exclusive of banks, loan offices, etc.
- **Minimum number of establishments:** On certain corridors, for every 50' of frontage, there must be at least two (2) non-residential establishments.
- In addition to these requirements, banks and building lobbies are restricted to 25' of frontage, while other retail spaces may occupy up to 40' of frontage. This does not impact the size or use of space behind street-walls.

This is similar in many ways to Vancouver's policy except that it more tightly regulates the volume of retail spaces in a commercial district, and specifically targets housing lobbies. This approach reduces the size and number of dead zones while acknowledging that alternate uses must have a presence.

Arcata, California: Formula Restaurant Cap

The small town of Arcata in Northern California was concerned with the incursion of chain restaurants within its city limits, primarily due to the perceived health effects that mass produced food has on its local residents. The city therefore passed an ordinance limiting the number of formula restaurants in the city to nine (9) at any given time (i.e. if one chain restaurant closes, another may open in its place, but there can never be more than nine). A formula restaurant was officially defined as a restaurant that offers "standardized menus, ingredients, food preparation, decor, uniforms, architecture, signs or similar standardized features and which causes it to be substantially identical to more than eleven (11) other restaurants regardless of ownership or location."

There was some concern that this approach would be illegal, especially under the Federal Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution which generally prohibits state interference in commerce. However, legal review of the ordinance found that 1) because the ordinance applied equally to all restaurants, and was not crafted to affect competition, it was not in violation of the clause; 2) because it was crafted to promote the general welfare of citizens (which has been protected in applicable case law) it could not be considered "discriminatory"; and 3) because it was a cap and not an outright exclusion, the burden imposed on formula restaurants is not "clearly excessive". It is unclear how the Canadian legal framework would evaluate this type of situation, but it provides a method for regulating certain types of uses in commercial areas.

San Francisco, California: Formula Business Restrictions

San Francisco took a broader approach to chain stores by regulating all formula retail uses in the city, including prohibiting them in two specific neighbourhoods, and restricting them as a conditional use in the rest of the "Neighbourhood Commercial Districts". Although the city's Board of Supervisors had already moved city policy in this direction, it was cemented through a city-wide ballot initiative that specified the conditional use designation. As a conditional use, any formula business must apply to the city planning commission for special approval, and must go through a public hearing including neighbourhood residents.

Interestingly, the planning code inverts the "anti-competition" issue by stating that the formula stores are the entities that are eroding competition:

"Formula retail businesses can have a competitive advantage over independent operators because they are typically better capitalized and can absorb larger startup costs, pay more for lease space, and commit to longer lease contracts. This can put pressure on existing businesses and potentially price out new startup independent businesses. – Section 703.3(a)(6)"

Moreover, the discretionary guidelines for approval include a provision to examine the "existing mix of Citywide-serving retail uses and neighbourhood-serving retail uses within the Neighbourhood Commercial District". This is justified because retailers that are focused on citywide-serving uses (generally chain stores) tend to decrease "the diversity of merchandise available to residents and visitors". Therefore, there must be a balance that ensures a minimum number of businesses that serve the local neighbourhood in addition to businesses that serve the broader city and region.

Palm Beach, Florida – "Town-Serving Zone"

Palm Beach, Florida applied the neighbourhood serving concept to the Worth Avenue Commercial District by converting it into a "Town-Serving Zone". Businesses locating within this zone are constrained to 2000 square feet, and they must demonstrate that they do not rely primarily on the patronage of people from outside of the town. One method of verifying this is by auditing receipts by zip code to determine the number of patrons who live outside of the community. The policy was upheld in a 1991 court case which determined that it served legitimate public interests.

Minneapolis, Minnesota – Longfellow Community Council's Community Benefit Agreement

Community Benefit Agreements (CBAs) are not new. They are regularly used by community groups who have the power to block development, and who use that power to require developers to meet various community needs in exchange for project support. The Longfellow Community Council in Minneapolis signed a comprehensive CBA with a developer looking to redevelop a former mill site in their neighbourhood. Among other provisions, the neighbourhood established a set-aside requiring 30% of the commercial space be leased to local small businesses, and that those businesses must conform to particular categories that the neighbourhood has established, with tenancy being subject to community review. Although the development eventually folded due to the 2008 recession, the CBA itself was a landmark example of community/developer collaboration on retail mix.

It is interesting to consider this model in terms of "density for benefits agreements" that the City of Vancouver and other cities regularly enter into with developers. Although these are usually focused on housing and amenities, there are increasing precedents for communities to use these exchanges to support the development of locally-serving retail or other commercial opportunities.

Burlington, Vermont – Champlain Housing Trust

Community Land Trusts are usually non-profit or public-private entities that buy land in order to develop it in socially-oriented ways, or to protect it from gentrification or other displacement activities. Although generally focused on housing, community land trusts (and now "commercial land trusts") are increasingly being focused on additional uses including small business, transit, etc.

The Champlain Housing Trust was initially financed and developed by the City of Burlington in order to develop affordable housing. In time the organization began acquiring and developing commercial spaces, and now manages over 116,000

square feet of commercial space in 17 buildings. The trust targets commercial space in “Neighbourhood Revitalization Areas” and leases space directly to neighbourhood-serving tenants. Tenants pay below-market rates and are given long leases to ensure business continuity.

The Portland Hotel Society uses this model on a vertical basis – in other words, it buys and develops entire properties from the ground floor retail to the upper-floors of housing. It would be interesting to consider the development of a commercial land trust that might operate on a horizontal basis by simply acquiring ground floor commercial units for the purpose of developing them for locally-serving businesses.

Bronx, New York – NYCEDC’s LIFT Entrepreneurship Program

On the opposite end of the spectrum from policy interventions that “protect” neighbourhoods for or from specific uses are direct interventions that incentivize or support new and existing low income businesses. The New York City Economic Development Corporation’s (NYCEDC) Low Income Fast Track (LIFT) Entrepreneurship Program is a new program aimed at incubating and sustaining low income businesses in revitalizing neighbourhoods. Like a traditional incubator the LIFT office provides space for burgeoning entrepreneurs (up to one year), as well as access to technical and financial assistance. Additionally, the program links entrepreneurs to anchor businesses in the area that can purchase their goods and services. The office is located directly in the Bronx neighbourhood that it serves, thus connecting new businesses directly to the neighbourhood.

An interesting application to the DTES would be taking the idea one step further to orient the incubator to the street, creating a row of pop-up stores run by local entrepreneurs. They could begin developing their business ideas in the back of the facility, and then move into a storefront position for a year when they have strengthened their business concept. If at the end of the year they have proven their business model, they could apply for their own space elsewhere in the neighbourhood. This would act as an engine for local economic growth, while providing a destination for shoppers looking for new retail in the area.

Elmwood Shopping District, Berkley, CA – Commercial Rent Control

In the 1970s, the retail district of Elmwood in Berkley, California experienced a period of rapid change marked by increasing residential development pressures, and the socio-economic polarization of the surrounding populations. During this period, the nature of Elmwood’s retail fabric shifted significantly from being local to regionally serving. Concerns among residents and business organizations mounted regarding the out-migration of local-serving/affordable shops and services in response to rapidly escalating rents. When strategic zoning controls failed to protect the neighbourhood-serving retail fabric and retain existing small businesses, the Elmwood Commercial Rent Stabilization and Eviction Protection Ordinance (otherwise known as “Measure 1”) was adopted in order to quell predatory rent increases.

The regulatory tools that the City of Berkley employed to rein in the financial impositions of Elmwood landlords on their tenants varied. Base rent dates were established beyond which it was guaranteed to tenants that lease terms would remain fixed. Additionally, a discrete set of conditions was determined that constituted the only justifications for commercial rent increases. A landlord would be permitted to raise rents given proportional increases in any of the following: maintenance and operating expenses; property taxes; fees; or improvements (amortized over their useful life (Keating, 1985). To incentivize current land owners to agree to the Measure 1 conditions and to attract future business, landlords would be guaranteed a “reasonable return”; an automatic rent adjustment derived by adding increases in the regional consumer price index to a standardized net operating income per square foot of Elmwood commercial space.

The retail composition of Elmwood bears resemblance to DTES retail areas, both in the types of shops present and in the rate of change. Furthermore, the rezoning of Elmwood as a restricted neighbourhood commercial district served similar ends as Vancouver’s retail continuity stipulations evaluated here. The most transferrable finding from the Elmwood precedent however is the impact that grassroots initiatives had on the regulatory checks controlling the rate of change in that neighbourhood. Measure 1 was adopted primarily due to the advocacy of the community led Save our Shops Campaign and the mobilization of the residential and business communities impacted the most by gentrification in their neighbourhood.

Recommendations

In consideration of the study's findings and approaches taken by other cities, the following recommendations are offered.

1. Replace the retail continuity policy with a strategy to enhance the attraction or retention of low-income-serving businesses.

The local business landscape has evolved in the 30 years since the inception of the retail continuity policy. The policy is not particularly effective in meeting its goals, nor is it effective in meeting new challenges in the community. From our research the pressing issue for residents is access to affordable retail options, and the challenge for businesses is surviving in a low income environment. Consequently, the policy need is no longer one that simply protects retail businesses, but one that protects certain types of retail that serve local populations.

2. Commission a study for developing a commercial zoning district in the DTES specifying "low-income-serving retail" as a class of uses .

A common warning in our discussions with policy makers was that it is impossible to regulate the private market beyond broad designations of use. In other words, you can specify the types of businesses in a commercial corridor, but you cannot regulate who they serve or how they do it. However, as the case study research shows, numerous cities have taken innovative approaches to regulating and preserving locally-serving retail while managing the legal ramifications of deep intervention. The problem is in many ways a problem of design, not of possibility.

It is therefore recommended that the City initiate a study of approaches used in other contexts to determine their legal and practical fit for Vancouver and the DTES. The result would be a commercial zoning district specifically tailored to the needs of the DTES, similar to the C5 and C6 commercial districts in the West End. Specifically, the City should review:

- Methods for defining "low income-serving" that can be added to planning guidelines as a class of retail uses (or an outright use) and legally defended;
- The needs of the current (and projected) low-income population to estimate the amount of space required to provide a package of retail, health and social service amenities. This would allow a better understanding of what mix of businesses is necessary to meet the needs of both low-income and middle/high-income residents;
- Setting block-by-block or neighbourhood-level thresholds/caps for maintaining certain numbers of low income-serving businesses in certain geographies. Uses beyond these thresholds would be deemed conditional. This could allow for new entrants into the neighbourhood, while preserving local retail assets for the low-income community;
- Strategies for working with market developers to exchange density for retail benefits, such as low commercial lease rates and community input on tenant selection;
- The cost of acquiring properties to create "retail affordability zones" that would consist of a concentration of City or non-profit-owned commercial properties available for rent to low income-serving businesses. This could include the development of incubator spaces or other small-footprint spaces that enable local retail while reducing the cost of overhead; and
- Changing of servicing from lanes to the street, or remove requirements to have direct internal access to lanes, to create new opportunities for use of commercial space.

3. Treat housing as an economic development issue.

It was clear from our research that there was a direct link between housing policy and street-level impacts on businesses. The provision of larger housing units, day-use facilities like the Dr. Peter Centre, and increased social programming for DTES residents would go a long way toward reducing the safety and security issues for businesses in the DTES, and ending the stigma of the neighborhood as a place inhospitable to commerce.

4. Lobby senior government for higher social assistance rates.

Similar to housing, social assistance rates are an economic development issue as well. Low rates of income harm low income residents, but they also devastate local economies that rely on high concentrations of low income residents. The DTES situation will likely not improve as long as low income residents, who are locked into place through housing and social service arrangements, are not provided with the funds necessary to afford market rate food, clothing, and basic amenities. Increasing rates would serve local businesses as much as it would serve local residents.

5. Permit greater office uses within the DTES.

There is a natural tension between current residents and new residential construction in the DTES because of a perceived displacement by new entrants. However, office buildings offer a middle ground, as their inhabitants are only temporary visitors, while spending dollars for coffee, food, and other items throughout the day. Greater presence of offices could meet the economic needs of small businesses while not threatening the tenure of long-term residents.

6. Decrease the costs for doing business in the DTES.

Without increased numbers of customers or disposable income of area residents, the other approach is to reduce costs for local businesses. This would primarily involve confronting the rent issue by either introducing commercial rent control policies, or reducing property tax assessments. Another approach would be rezoning larger-footprint commercial spaces to allow mixed uses (light industrial, retail, etc.) so that businesses do not have to pay for as much space to operate. An example was suggested that a niche furniture manufacturer could build tables and chairs in the back of a commercial space while displaying those goods in a café at the front of the space. Two businesses could then benefit from one space, while reducing costs.

Another issue in terms of costs is procurement. Many businesses are buying from retail box stores, and some are engaging in the black market economy. There is a real need for affordable commercial wholesaling in DTES neighbourhoods which could reduce the cost of inputs and help inventory management issues.

7. Increase technical assistance to small businesses and social enterprise.

One of the core problems for small businesses in the DTES is the lack of technical assistance. The fact that some business owners are operating without leases or feel that they cannot exit the market on their own suggests that business planning resources and greater business knowledge is necessary. A concerted effort to educate and support DTES businesses could increase their viability or successful turnover.

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Appendix A: Researcher biographies

Daniel Iwama is a second year Master's student at the UBC School of Community and Regional Planning. Daniel specializes in Indigenous Community Planning and is interested in community led planning processes, gentrification, industrial change, and transportation equity issues. Daniel has participated in numerous community development projects throughout his home province of British Columbia, and is actively involved in Asian Canadian arts communities in Vancouver. Daniel holds a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy from the University of British Columbia.

Edmund Ma is a Chinatown community researcher who recently completed an Applied Urban and Rural Planning Diploma at Langara College. He previously graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Economics focused on social economics. He is passionate about revitalizing Historic Chinatown and works with the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee and Coordinator with the Night Market. As a young leader in the Chinatown community, he organizes events for children, runs a kung fu studio, and holds the title of director of the Mah's Athletic Association.

Jeremy Stone is a doctoral candidate at UBC's School of Community and Regional Planning, and is also founder and director of Recovery and Relief Services, a niche consultancy providing economic development and disaster recovery services. Jeremy has over 12 years of economic development experience in North American cities, rural communities of British Columbia, and developing countries. He has also spent the past 8 years working on the economic recoveries following Hurricane Katrina and the BP oil spill, and previously worked on the economic recovery in Lower Manhattan following 9/11. Jeremy is a former Peace Corps volunteer (Mongolia), and holds an MPA in International Economic Development from New York University, and a BA in Anthropology from Reed College.

Appendix B: Typology of land use designations by bylaw

Business Categories	Type
Adult Store	Retail and Similar Uses Under Bylaw 5532
Art Gallery	
Auto Services	
Bar/Liquor	
Clothing	
Conv Store/Hot Food	
Convenience Store	
Department Store	
Fitness	
Grocery and Food	
Grocery/Retail	
House and Home	
Laundry/Dry Cleaners	
Misc Retail	
Optical Retail and Service	
Pawn Shop	
Personal Care	
Pharmacy	
Pharmacy (Dispensary)	
Pharmacy/Retail	
Printing Services	
Restaurant/Café/Coffee	
Thrift/Resale Shop	
Medical Services	Additional Uses Under Bylaw 8698
Office/Services	
Church/Temple	Other Uses
Education	
Farm	
Financial Services	
Food Production	
Industrial and Wholesale	
Housing Lobby	N/A
Vacant	

Ludwig, Nicole

From: Jaileen Yang s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Monday, May 29, 2017 8:33 AM
To: Public Hearing; Robertson, Gregor; Louie, Raymond; Jang, Kerry; Affleck, George; Ball, Elizabeth; Carr, Adriane; Meggs, Geoff; Reimer, Andrea; Deal, Heather; Stevenson, Tim; De Genova, Melissa; Kelley, Gil; Hoese, Karen; Mayor and Council Correspondence; Zeng, Yan; Cheng, Paul
Subject: RE: 105 Keefer St rezoning application

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing this email because I do not support the Rezoning application at 105 Keefer. I live near Chinatown. As a child, Chinatown was a big part of my life. Chinatown is a special part of Vancouver. As a Chinese Canadian, I frequently visited Chinatown as a child with my parents. A typical Sunday would consist of grocery shopping and walking around the neighborhood. As a child growing up in Vancouver, I was exposed and surrounded by Canadian culture everyday in school and with friends. Chinatown served and still serves as a reminder of my Chinese culture and I believe it is important to maintain Chinatown as it is for young adults like me as well as Chinese Canadians of all ages.

You should not approve the application because:

- It is not right that taxpayers are paying for the social housing so that Beedie can profit from the rezoning's height and density increases. They are also paying reduced DCL and no CACs. This is not fair.
- The ground floor retail businesses will unlikely be affordable to seniors.
- The small family businesses that make up Chinatown's character will not be able survive due to increased taxes.
- The Keefer Triangle is a culturally significant site that should not be used for condos.
- It is 3.5 times more dense than the surrounding buildings making it out of scale for the neighbourhood.
- The City's Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee did not support this project.
- Approval of this project despite community opposition will mean the City does not value Chinatown as a historic neighbourhood.
- Our veterans did not fight wars to have their memorial treated as a private yard for condo owners.

I would recommend for the City to convert the site to the following uses instead:

- A plaza for the public
- More green space

Chinatown does not need a development like this. Please reject the proposal.

Sincerely,
Jaileen Yang

Ludwig, Nicole

From: john murphy s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Sunday, May 28, 2017 10:30 AM
To: Public Hearing; Robertson, Gregor; Louie, Raymond; Jang, Kerry; Affleck, George; Ball, Elizabeth; Carr, Adriane; Meggs, Geoff; Reimer, Andrea; Deal, Heather; Stevenson, Tim; De Genova, Melissa; Kelley, Gil; Hoese, Karen; Mayor and Council Correspondence; Zeng, Yan; Cheng, Paul
Subject: 105 Keefer

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing this email to express my concerns about the 105 Keefer St. application. I have lived in Vancouver for approximately 50 years and living in Vancouver with a Chinatown is a great part of my experience. I believe it is important that the City maintain important heritage and cultural locations like Chinatown.

I am very concerned about the rezoning application for the reasons listed below:

- Luxury condos are not an appropriate use of this culturally sensitive site.
- It is too tall at least four times the average building height of surrounding buildings.
- Its mass is out of scale with the neighbourhood.
- It was rejected by a City committee, Chinatown Historic Area Plann Committee.
- The seniors housing units being proposed in this project are not guaranteed.
- This will set a bad precedent for the all rezonings in Chinatown.

I do not believe that this rezoning proposal is appropriate for the neighbourhood. Therefore, I urge council and staff to reject this application.

Regards,
John Murphy

6641 Adera St.
V6P 5B9

Listening to all, I find that both sides are saying the same thing, using slightly different psychological language. While young people are adamant in their demand for a culturally adequate, intergenerational facility that is 100% affordable social housing, the other side is succumbed, it seems, in either frustration or in victim mentality, which dictates that there won't be any better offer, so we must not lose even this and have to accelerate the process! And they are strikingly right. Beedie Group doesn't come with any sort of flexibility. Not to include the residents in the first place in the planning, blatantly shows its intention and bully attitude.

Nonetheless, in this fear, we have let Chinatown degenerate to the current state, in the past and right now. We cannot give in to this fear. We have to rather quietly stand behind and watch over our young people working it out and follow through.

So far, gentrification hasn't done any good to the society. It just has created more housing problems, evictions, which is (along with the status of our Indigenous people and public education, and other miseries, displacement of people, becoming poorer, more homeless, death in the street, addiction, gambling, hunger, corruption, violence, division ... and so on) one of the most despicable culture in this proud country, called Canada, my opposition starts from these facts.

My name is Sylvia Gung.

I am also from Korean-Canadian community, and come over to add one more head. We live in a multicultural society, and when one community suffers, we bring efforts together to work it out. And the history doesn't belong to just one culture, regardless the contents. A different way to put it, we can say that the same thing has happened in China, in Japan, in Korea, in Canada, America, and so on. So, it is every individual's responsibility, to protect and learn from it and live right.

If the Chinatown side loses, it is because the Chinese people are ignorant and weak. If the government side with its vested interest wins, as it has been other cases, it is because our elected officials are ignorant and end in bullying the trusting citizens, without adequate provision that is necessary to live on; thus, it is almost a criminal offence. And, there is the weight of history added in this case.

So, if the gentrification continues, it blatantly spells out that we all are ignorant bunch, after having such the high education, earning many degrees, after 13+ years of the so-called public education.

The main reason for the existence of government is to keep the order in society, by serving the Poor and weak, by listening to them and providing a good education. Instead, it just functions as a public trough to deliver more to the wealthy.

All the problems we have created are extremely complicated, fostering corruption, crisis, destruction, but the solution is rather simple for the government.

Three steps:

1. Returning the cash or bribe for access, to people to whom it originally belongs
2. Getting down to the earth to listen to people
3. Delivering a well-balanced education

Vancouver highly holds multiculturalism and green ways of living. I can hardly think that gentrification is the way to live green.

Please, take a great care to revitalize the Chinatown, working with these sincere, loving and caring people who need to live where they belong. And make the Chinatown the historic Pride of Vancouver.

It is the time for the government and developers not to more deny affordable housing. We don't need more luxury condo, anywhere in Canada. Offering 25 units is immoral projection.

Most of all, please, don't waste these diligent, passionate young people's will. Breaking their hearts and spirit is not the way to encourage green ways of living, either. I am immensely grateful and proud of these young people, the way they are and the work they do.

Thank you Mayor and Council for letting me participate in this important matter.