

March 12, 2018

For the Public Hearing of 61 – 95 West Hasting Street
City of Vancouver Council

To Whom It May Concern:

The Strata Council at s.22(1) Personal and Confidential Vancouver, BC writes this letter in support of the residents from s.22(1) Personal and Confidential speaking to Vancouver City Council on March 13th, 2018 regarding the rezoning and proposed development at 95 West Hastings. The Strata Council – who speaks on behalf of residents of s.22(1) Personal and Confidential shares the concerns brought to the attention of City Council. Many particular challenges that this proposed building will have is problems with the alley as well as the giant shadow the new development will create. It's important for all humans to have access to daylight. With the currently proposed building 95 West Hastings, this will impact most of our residents.

Due to the sheer size of the proposed development at 95 West Hastings, the quality of life of residents who live along the alley that runs from Abbott Street to Carrall Street between West Hastings and West Cordova will be significantly and negatively impacted. The alley is already seriously congested throughout the day beginning very early in the morning. A building the size of the proposed development with the number of vehicle and bicycle parking spaces, as well as the traffic from the delivery, service, and resident vehicles that this large building would add to this narrow and very busy alley is beyond the capacity of the alley and area.

Every day as the alley currently exists, our residents continuously must wait for sometimes up to an hour to enter or exit s.22(1) Personal and Confidential loading bay and parking garages due to garbage and delivery vehicles blocking access. s.22(1) Personal and Confidential parking garage has spaces for a maximum of 14 vehicles to park at any time, as well as a small loading bay large enough for a single small moving truck. Even with such a small number of vehicles, the congestion in the alley has steadily increased over the last several years with the addition of the Paris Annex at 53 West Hastings and the growing number of businesses that now use the alley for delivery access. The Strata Council at s.22(1) Personal and Confidential has serious concerns about adding to the alley's density with the proposed development at 95 West Hastings as doing so would exponentially increase the issues with an already extremely challenging area.

Please see photos in Appendix A that show various pictures of the alley and current congestion.

The shadow that will be created by this building if built as proposed will completely block sunlight for most of our residents every afternoon after 2 pm which is a dramatic change in natural lighting, impacting overall well-being and quality of life. The developer's shadow report clearly indicates that the side, back and rooftop deck of our building will be blocked by this shadow. This affects not only most individual units, but indeed even our communal rooftop space which was designed for residents to access fresh air and sunlight.

Please see Appendix B that shows how our building residents will be affected.

Our third point that speaks to the rezoning and the lack of community supports. When you look around the neighbourhood, you will see all the new developments have an aspect of positive community impact that help the existing residents of this low-income neighbourhood. Woodward's, our building, The Stanley redevelopment and Sequel 138 all have subsidized units or social housing. Please consider that this building will not create an opportunity for the people that live in the neighbourhood.

The secured market rental housing that is being proposed does not fit in with the neighbourhood at all. The apartments will be rented out at market rental rates. According to a CBC article on March 5, 2018, "In January, the city updated its guidelines for developers. For-profit affordable rental housing is now defined as between \$1,730 and \$1,903 for a one-bedroom rental and between \$2,505 and \$2,756 for a two-bedroom rental." These "reasonable" rates determined by the City will not support the community where this development is being proposed.

We hope that the City will take all these points into consideration and the negative effect this development will have on the people who live at s 22(1) Personal and Confidential

Sincerely,

Strata Council of s 22(1) Personal and Confidential

On behalf of the Residents of s 22(1) Personal and Confidential

APPENDIX A:

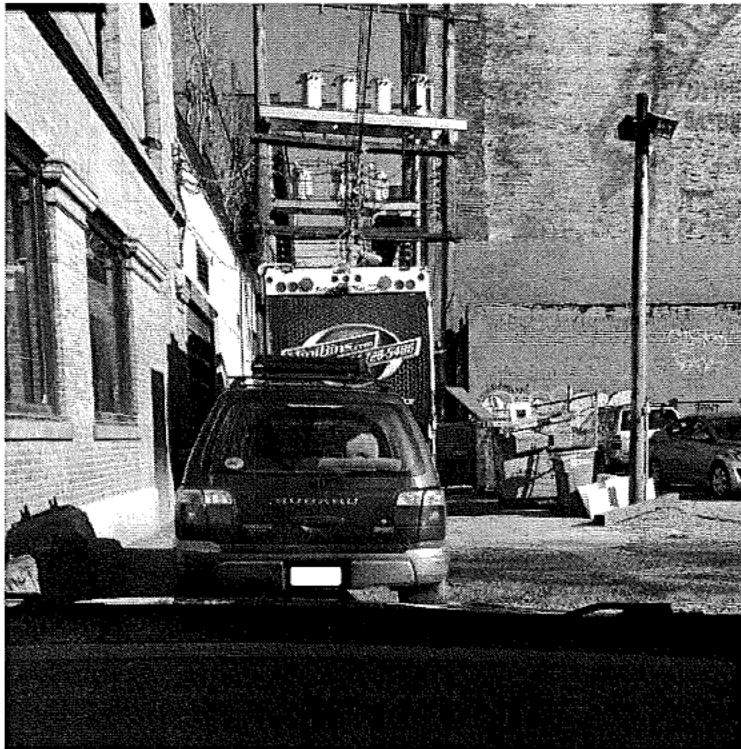
Photos of the alley behind The Metropole and our building — s 22(1) Personal and Confidential demonstrate the current state of affairs of what's going on in this alley. You will see that The Metropole uses the alley to store many trash bins. You can see that they are placed where the proposed building will go. There is no other space for these bins and there are constant deliveries for The Metropole – the drivers use the alley and put on their four-way flashers to make said deliveries.



This photo taken on March 8, 2018 shows the trash bins from The Metropole and a delivery truck parked in the alley. Again, this prevents any traffic moving in either direction.



This is how the alley looks when the garbage trucks come to pick up the garbage from business and residential buildings. The lane is blocked and no traffic can enter or exit.



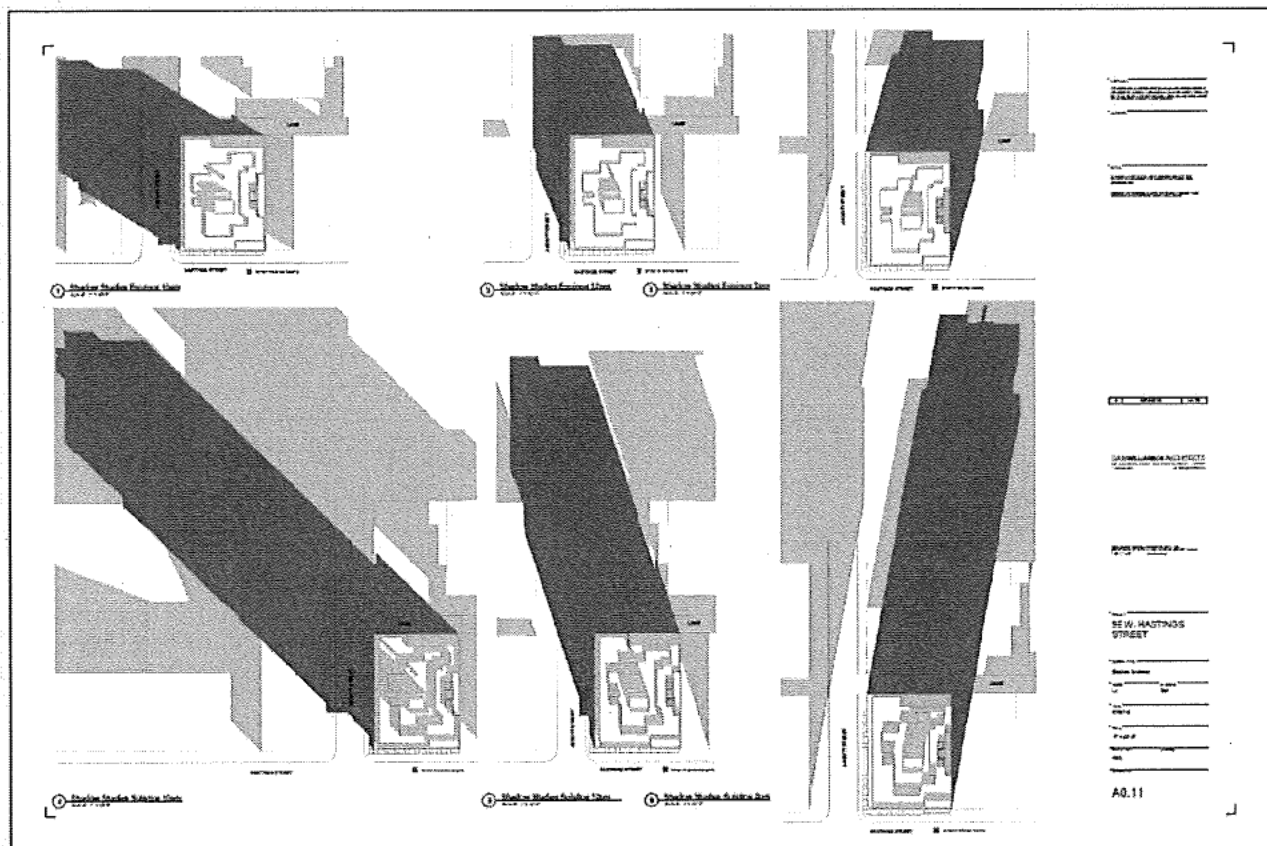
The picture is from a resident of s.22(1) Personal and Confidential waiting in traffic in the alley to get into our parking garage.



This photo shows the same resident, still waiting, but now a delivery truck has parked beside and blocked the parking lot as they are making a delivery.

APPENDIX B:

This picture from the developer shows how our building at s 22(1) Personal and Confidential will be covered in shadow after 2pm every afternoon. This will have a direct impact on the residents of the building. Our building also has a rooftop deck that was built for our residents to enjoy. This will be covered in shade every afternoon and will impact our residents enjoyment of their outdoor space.



March 13 2018
Public Hearing for 61 – 95 West Hastings Street Development
Comments

Sandra Gibbs
Speaker #3

As the City Council is aware, the Strata Council for ^{s.22(1) Personal and Confidential} has sent in a letter and photos for your attention regarding this development.

Our building, ^{s.22(1) Personal and Confidential} is directly north and overlapped for the most part, even though we are slightly to the east.

The alley of which we speak, runs east/west between Hastings and Cordova, and thus between our building and the proposed development.

#1 – Parking

If this development proceeds as proposed, there would be three residential buildings [including Paris Block Annex directly to the east of 61-95] emptying into the alley within 75 feet of the other. This traffic just does not work. It is already untenable with two buildings. I reference the photos taken and submitted with the Strata letter.

Most days the alley is blocked by commercial trucks delivering to Metropole, Bourbon, and Army and Navy Store, further down the alley, plus businesses in the surrounding area.

The current parking lot holds about 40 cars, where the proposed building will hold over double that number, plus commercial parking spots and loading zones – much increased traffic.

#2 – General Traffic in the Alley

The Metropole/Army & Navy HQ/InFocus block [~320 Abbott] [North side of the alley] which includes residential and commercial, use at least 4 large garbage bins which are currently placed right where this development's loading bay would sit. There is absolutely no place for these bins to otherwise be placed, except up against the Metropole, which would significantly block the referenced alley traffic for the three buildings.

We already cannot effectively use our loading bay because of the current placement of these bins.

There is no way to turn around in the alley once you have entered. So, if you are blocked, you are blocked until the traffic clears, the deliveries made, or the garbage bins emptied.

There is a high pedestrian foot traffic using this alley as well, and it becomes, and would be become ever more, dangerous if developed as proposed.

SOLUTION:

If the development proceeds, all parking and loading should be configured off Abbott Street and not the Alley.

#3 - Re-Zoning

The existing zoning of this lot is C2 of the Downtown District [DD] with land use regulated by the Downtown Official Development Plan [DODP].

This zoning at present would allow for 3 residential and 2 Commercial units, with a much more appropriate FSR.

The DDOP is structured in such a way that if a site within its boundaries is rezoned to Comprehensive Development [CD-1] District, the rezoned site is automatically removed from the DD zoning district.

So, we can only conclude that, if the neighbourhood plan calls for less FSR and height, why is it that some compromise is always asked of the city and the neighbourhood?

Developers buy the land with an existing zoning, speculating that if they ask for variance, then somehow it will end up being more than the existing allowed.

What is the value of even having a neighbourhood plan?

This monolith provides no value to the community;

- There is not even a “nod” to social housing, where practically every building that is currently being built has some units available for such use, including 66 West Cordova, where we have 10 of 108 managed by PHS and Habitat for Humanity;
- The developer has asked that they be allowed to build right out to the sidewalks, further restricting pedestrian traffic and alley traffic;
- There is no proposal to “terrace” the building so that light/shadow effects might be taken into consideration for better quality of living, privacy, noise reduction – no – lets just build a square block that will do just that “block” everything;
- “Market rent” units, in a 100% Market Rent Building are not what is needed to this degree of variance.

SOLUTION:

This developer needs to work within the constraints of the existing zoning.

If the city determines that variance is to be allowed, the building should remain in the DD, under the jurisdiction of the DDOP, and the developer needs to take the community into consideration.

If the development is given variance and moved into a CD-1 position, the building should be terraced, provide lower FSR, the parking and loading needs to be redrawn off Abbott Street instead of the east/west alley.

Ludwig, Nicole

From: Kim Duff s 22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Monday, March 12, 2018 3:58 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Against_ 95 East Hastings Rezoning Application

Thank you, council, for this time to address the development at 95 East Hastings. I am in opposition to the current rezoning application.

In 2007, the Victory Square Policy Plan was laid out to ensure that the idea of community, and the built heritage of this community, is maintained and respected. Issues such as size (height and width), density, and design of a building were put forward in this policy document as paramount to the considerations in developing this part of the city. Indeed, the policy plan was not meant to exclude future developments and the need for progress, but was intended to ensure that the essence of the community remains intact.

The current plans for development at 95 East Hastings are asking for concessions to size, density, and design – things that the Victory Square Policy Plan anticipates as part of the future of the neighborhood. However, the developer in the current instance is asking for these concessions without any give back to the community. I have outlined a few of the major issues that exist with their current application:

1) **The current height restrictions are 70'.** However, Gair Williamson (developer) is asking for that to be relaxed to 105' given that the development is intended for market rental housing only. Currently, this proposal does not include any community services, social housing, or local purchasing scheme which suggests that this development is strictly for commercial purposes and not for the betterment of the community. This contravenes some of the specific stated plans in the policy planning for this area:

- A stronger commercial role and identity for the area, with an emphasis on emerging opportunities related to arts, culture and education. **The current application has no mention at all of these concepts.**
- Market residential base compatible with long standing low-income community will be established through new developments and through conversion of existing buildings. Public Benefits will continue to be secured through density and height relaxation to new developments, whenever applicable. **The current application makes no mention of the neighborhood or the public benefit in which it will exist.**
- A neighborhood where medium density and building height are achieved:
 - All sites are zoned with a maximum permitted density of 5.0 FSR and a maximum conditionally permitted building height of 70'
 - Maximum residential density is 3.0 FSR
 - Increases in density above 5.0 FSR (overall) and 3.0 FSR (residential) and in height above 70' are considered for market developments that provide SRA retention, low-income housing or on-site heritage conservation **Current application is for 7.62 FSR and a building height of 105' without any**

consideration of SRA retention, low income housing or on-site heritage conservation

- Residential density up to 5.0 FSR (except where retail continuity is required at grade) and height up to 100' are considered for social housing projects, subject to a built form study **Current application is for 7.62 FSR and a building height of 105' without any consideration of SRA retention, low income housing or on-site heritage conservation**

- 2) **Some of these suites will be “micro” suites of 344 sq feet**, similar in size to current SRAs of around 320 sq feet, has the potential to have a direct and meaningful impact on the value of currently existing SRAs in the area. Those that will be able to afford market rental housing without rent controls in this development, where 344 sq ft micro apartments rent for around \$1100 per month, is well out of range for those currently living in this neighborhood. To be sure, this development is not intended for the current residents of this area.
- 3) **Congestion in the mixed-used alley** behind 95 East Hastings will only become greater given the additional parking in the development. I know others will raise this issue, but it's worth noting that the current waits of sometimes up to an hour to exit the parking lot of the Paris and 66 West Cordova buildings will only become more intense. Further, the ability for emergency vehicles to enter and exit this area will be greatly impacted.
- 4) **The parking is also a concern given the city's stated mandate to be a green city.** How does the addition of 84 parking spots in one of the most transit-dense areas in the city make any sense? This seems to me to be outrageously out of step with the broader ideas of the city's plan.
- 5) **The shade that a building of this size will cast** across what is a very narrow alley onto 66 West Cordova and the units above the Metropole will mean that many will live in darkness for most of the winter, and much of the summer. With that in mind, this development has the potential to diminish the quality of life for many living around it, and since the social benefit is there, the trade off for this diminished quality of life seems limited.

I am not against all development of this site. Certainly, it would be excellent if it became a park and we as a city gave pause to density and the kinds of pressures we tend to put on poorer neighborhoods while the areas in the West Side, for example, continue to luxuriate in their single-family home spaciousness. But I do want council to consider what a development of this nature means not just for this site, but for this entire neighborhood. Granting rezoning applications without an exchange that supports the community, all the while ignoring the actual needs of the area, is what this application represents. Let's be honest about what this development is: it's not housing for people who live in this neighborhood, and it's not housing for people that want to plant roots and foster a sense of community either. While increased access to market rentals is something the city desperately needs to consider, I encourage you also to consider what adding to the transient density of this part of the city means to a community already under pressure. Indeed, developments such as this will twist the tourniquet a bit more and a bit more until what we know to be the Victory Square region is almost unrecognizable both in form and function.

If we want development at all cost, then let's be honest about that desire. Approving this rezoning application sends a direct message to the people in this neighborhood that documents such as the Victory Square Planning Policy are just political lip-service and not an actual plan. An approval of this kind of rezoning

application has a great potential to open the flood gates to future developments that use market rental housing to leverage commercial profit despite the impact on the existing community. To be sure, it represents thoughtless gentrification.

I hope that council will do the right thing and encourage this developer to reduce parking, include an element of social housing, or to abide by existing zoning to make this building fit within the scope of the Victory Square Planning Policy.

Sincerely,
Kim Duff

Ludwig, Nicole

From: Meriem Bel Hassan s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Monday, March 12, 2018 3:47 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Fwd: Rezoning Application for 61-95 West Hastings Street

Hello,

- >
- > 1. This new building is too modern for this historical area of Vancouver.
- >
- > 2. This new building is too high. It will block the view for the residents of the area.
- >
- > 3. This new building increases the gentrification of the neighborhood. It should include a social housing component to benefit the low-income local residents.
- >
- > 4. This new building has too many vehicle parking spaces (84) for a neighborhood scoring as a biker and walker's paradise. This will impact directly traffic and pollution.

>

>

>

>

> Meriem Bel Hassan

> s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

>

>

>

>