

Ludwig, Nicole

From: Katie King s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Friday, July 20, 2018 3:15 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: 1800-1898 Main Street rezoning

Good afternoon,

While I agree generally with the development and re-zoning changes as described in the Notice of Public Hearing, my concern is with the proposed commercial units at grade.

My concern is that Vancouver is currently overbuilt in terms of ground-level retail and commercial space, and that adding more such units does nothing to improve the life of the neighbourhood. The residential units in these combined commercial-residential developments sell out quickly, while the shopfronts remain empty. I would like to see more housing units in these buildings, as more housing, and particularly affordable housing, is what Vancouver needs right now..

Has the city of Vancouver taken inventory of the excess/empty retail units that already exist in the city? Are there projections of the number of retail and commercial spaces that we will need in the future. so that future developments can be adjusted accordingly?

I'm aware that the idea of providing retail-commercial space at ground/grade level is to make more walkable/livable neighbourhoods with plenty of opportunity for local retail, this does not actually happen in Vancouver generally, and in False Creek in particular. One only has to look at the number of current vacancies on Robson Street - once our shopping "high street" - even at the height of tourist season.

What I have noticed over the past decade is the increase in vacant commercial-retail spaces on ever major artery of the city, partly due to the loss of entire retail categories (video stores for example) and the reduction in the number of bricks-and-mortar outlets, primarily due to online shopping, as well as the mergers of large vendors (example Best Buy/Future Shop).

In addition, the cost of retail shopfronts is high enough to discourage small businesses from even attempting to occupy retail spaces, especially in zones such as False Creek and the West End. Why build more?

I look forward to your response,

Thank you

Katie King