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FOR COUNCIL - JULY 8, 2008

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Vancouver Heritage Commission for
CITY OF VANCOUVER

VanRIMS No.: 08-3000-11

July 7, 2008

Mayor and Council
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

Dear Mayor and Council:

RE: Access to Heritage Programs for All Categories of Heritage Buildings
(Regular Council Meeting - July 8, 2008 Affordable Rental Stock in the West End, which makes reference to West End heritage buildings)

The Vancouver Heritage Commission (VHC) is an advisory body appointed by Vancouver City Council. The mandate of the Vancouver Heritage Commission is to advise Council on matters which may be referred to it by Council from time to time, such as: the need for preserving heritage buildings, structures, or lands which collectively represent a cross-section of all periods and styles in the City's historic and cultural evolution; the costs and benefits of the preservations; the compatibility of preservations with other lawful uses of the buildings, structures, or lands; and, in particular, to make recommendations to Council respecting the designation of heritage buildings, structures, and lands and the demolition, preservation, alteration, or renovation of those buildings, structure and lands.

The Vancouver Heritage Commission wishes to comment on the access to existing heritage programs for all categories of heritage buildings. Please note that these comments are the opinion of the Vancouver Heritage Commission. They do not necessarily represent the views of Vancouver City Council or the City of Vancouver.

The Vancouver Heritage Commission was asked to consider the motion being presented to Council at its Regular meeting on July 8, 2008, concerning *Affordable Rental Stock in the West End*, which makes reference to West End heritage buildings, and while the VHC understands the concerns of Council and West End resident groups, it is deeply concerned that Heritage Incentive programs may be denied in order to help preserve rental housing.

The VHC carefully considered item A of the proposed motion: "that all enquiries proposing to develop buildings over 60 feet in height in the West End to compensate for the preservation of a West End heritage building be advised that such projects may only be favourably considered if the heritage building to be preserved would qualify as an "A" on the City's Heritage registry". This motion would exclude "B" and "C"-listed

heritage buildings from currently allowable programs and thus put "B" and "C"-listed heritage buildings at risk. The VHC reminds Council that the Heritage Register Program is long overdue for an update and that category listings have not been updated in more than two decades. Further, the VHC reminds Council that the Heritage Register Upgrade has been postponed in order to assist with assessing the condition of the Heritage Bank and, in-turn, the Heritage Density Transfer Program. Given the current condition of the Heritage Register, the use of the category listings is inappropriate and could inadvertently put significant heritage buildings at risk.

Therefore, at its June 16, 2008 meeting, the VHC approved the following motion:

RESOLVED

THAT the Vice-Chair write a letter on behalf of the Vancouver Heritage Commission to Council indicating support for all categories of heritage buildings be able to access available heritage programs and that a restriction should not be placed on B and C buildings.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

Kim Maust, Vice-Chair
Vancouver Heritage Commission

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Copies to: City Manager
Janice MacKenzie, Deputy City Clerk