



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: September 9, 2009
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: October 6, 2009

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: Director of Planning
SUBJECT: 488 Carrall Street - Facade Grant

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. THAT Council approve a façade grant of up to \$50,000 for the rehabilitation of the principal façade at 488 Carrall Street as contemplated by Development Application Number DE412922. The source of funding is the 2008 Capital Budget for the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program.
- B. THAT Council authorize the City to enter into an agreement with the owner of 488 Carrall Street to be registered in the Land Title Office as a section 219 covenant, which agreement shall require the rehabilitation to be overseen by a qualified Heritage Consultant and will require the owner to maintain the 488 Carrall Street façade in good appearance and good repair for a minimum of fifteen years.
- C. THAT the agreement described above shall be prepared, registered and given priority to the satisfaction of the Director of Legal Services in consultation with the Director of Planning.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing.

COUNCIL POLICY

Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program (HFRP) Policies and Procedures for Gastown, Chinatown, Hastings Street Corridor and Victory Square.

The Vancouver Charter requires a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of all Council members for recommendation "A".

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval for a façade grant for the Vancouver Heritage Register "C" listed and municipally designated building at 488 Carrall Street.

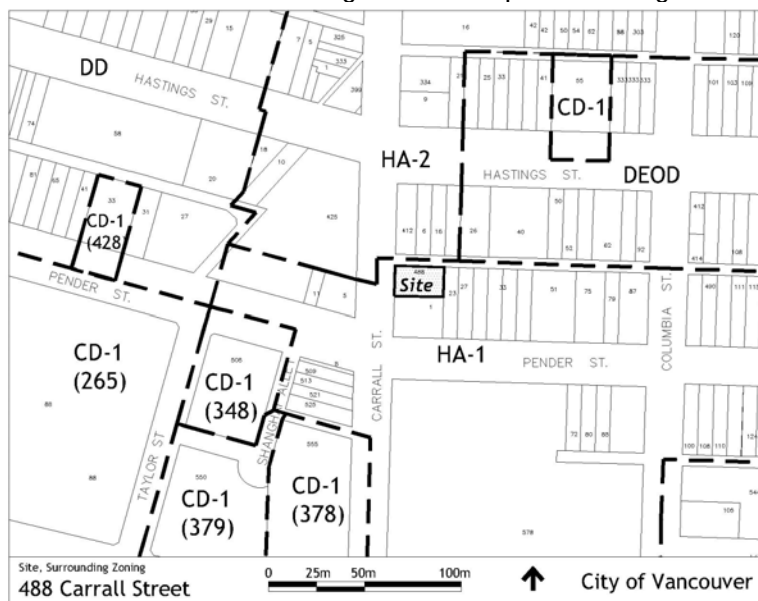
BACKGROUND

In July 2003, City Council approved both the Heritage Building Rehabilitation Program and the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program to facilitate the conservation and rehabilitation of heritage buildings in Gastown, Chinatown, Hastings Street Corridor and Victory Square. Both programs were initially established for a five year period (2003-2008) to stimulate economic activity in these important historic areas through work on individual heritage buildings. In July 2009, City Council approved continuation of the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program for a period of 3 years (2009-2011). This program is available to assist owners and tenants with 50% of the cost of rehabilitating heritage building facades up to a maximum of \$50,000 per principal façade.

DISCUSSION

Heritage Value

The West Hotel is an eight-storey commercial building located at 488 Carrall Street in historic Chinatown. The building has retained its original hotel use, currently offering SRO accommodation and a neighbourhood pub on the ground floor.



Site Plan

The West Hotel is a fine example of an early 20th century brick hotel in Vancouver. Its central location across the street from the main depot of the former BC Electric Railway explains its size as a much higher structure compared with other hotels in the area. The building features architectural elements such as the window assemblies, fire escapes and internal light wells typical of hotels built at this time, reflecting housing forms that required these features.

In addition to its architectural value, this site is also recognized for its associative value related to the original owner, Yip Sang. Yip Sang, whose real name was Yip Chun Tien, was an important figure in the development of Vancouver's Chinatown community.

Conservation Plan

The current proposal involves rehabilitation of the ground floor storefronts. The conservation strategy for the West Hotel is the restoration and preservation of surviving original storefront elements (such as the granite and cast iron columns) and the construction of a new storefront reflecting the original configuration and proportions. The design of the doors, transoms, mullions and baseplates are based on the original documentation. Although not in its original condition, this building used to have an extensive metal canopy. The proposal is to re-instate the canopy function, introducing three canopies, with the central one designed differently. The storefront cornice and the intermediate stringcourse will be re-introduced. Two sets of windows facing the lane will be restored in their original location.

Estimates for Proposed Rehabilitation Work

Quotes from three contractors were received, stipulating the cost for the relevant conservation work at \$140,000 or higher.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council approved a total of \$2.5 million for funding façade grants through the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program for the period 2003-2008.

Staff recommend an allocation of up to \$50,000 from the 2008 Capital Budget for the rehabilitation of the principal façade at 488 Carrall Street. The grant funds will be available to the applicant in accordance with the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program Policies and Procedures.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee (CHAPC) reviewed this application on July 14, 2009 and supported it, recognizing the applicant's efforts to improve Market Alley too. CHAPC did not support the inclusion of banners. The applicant subsequently revised the application to accommodate CHAPC comments and recommendations.

CONCLUSION

488 Carrall Street is a "C" listed building on the Vancouver Heritage Register, municipally-designated, as well as an SRO designated building, located in Chinatown. The proposed lower façade rehabilitation will further contribute to DTES revitalization efforts and the Carrall Street Greenway Initiative. The Director of Planning recommends approval of up to \$50,000 for the rehabilitation of the principal façade of 488 Carrall Street.

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