



Dear Mayor and Council members

Re: Rezoning proposal for 955 E. Hastings

The Downtown Eastside Women's Centre has considered this rezoning proposal, both as a member of the DTES LAPP committee and as a long-time resident in the downtown eastside, and we recommend that you reject this application during the work of the LAPP.

We strongly support the majority view of the LAPP committee, that approving this project would seriously undermine the work of the committee. The committee has been a massive undertaking for community residents, many of whom have invested heavily in time, energy and emotion to create a community-driven approach balancing the needs and concerns of the neighbourhood. The LAPP process is anticipated to be 18 months; approving a major development a little more than halfway through the process without the benefit of committee input and recommendations promotes cynicism in the work of the committee and undermines the value to the city of a neighbourhood-endorsed community plan.

We specifically support these concerns reflected in comments by the LAPP committee:

- The Local Area Planning Process is well underway with the goal of developing and adopting a comprehensive community plan cumulating with a report with recommendations submitted to Mayor and Council by June 2013. The rezoning proposal at 955 E Hastings is a massive development that will significantly impact this neighbourhood for years to come, in a district without an area plan in place. This project also finds the Social Impact Assessment process in its early stages of development, nearly ready to play a part in evaluating the potential impacts of this major project. We feel that rushing ahead with this rezoning now undermines the basic premise of having a planning process and a social impact assessment and makes the processes moot. The LAPP committee needs time to complete its work prior to a development of such magnitude being considered.
- The Hastings Corridor sub-district, where this project is proposed, does not have a community or specific area plan to guide development. If the area is turned over to condos before the LAPP Committee can develop a plan it will make our comprehensive plan harder to

imagine and implement. We want development in the Hastings Corridor to be carefully planned to improve life for the existing community in the area.

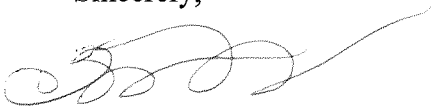
- This project could be precedent setting. Vancouver City planners and others are already referring to the “Alex Gair Model” when they talk about potential future developments. No new model negotiated between developer and staff should be made benchmark ahead of the Downtown Eastside’s first comprehensive community partnered planning process.

Since 2005, we have operated an emergency overnight shelter for women in the Downtown Eastside which accommodates up to 60 women per night. Our priority – articulated often to city and provincial government – is to ensure safe, low barrier shelter and non-band-aid housing solutions for women where they live and work in the DTES. We oppose a development that reduces the opportunity for such a space by increasing land value and by reducing neighbourhood space, and that prioritizes commercialization and development without simultaneously investing in the lives of those who already live in this community.

Our wish is for a full range of safe, affordable and resident-controlled housing that doesn’t promote ghettoization or entrench poverty, that offers hope and mobility, and provides stability and opportunity for current residents.

Because of these concerns, and others expressed by our neighbours in the DTES, we recommend that council defer this rezoning proposal until after a comprehensive area plan is developed through the local area planning process now underway.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to be the name of a representative from the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre.

Downtown Eastside Women’s Centre

Hildebrandt, Tina

From: Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Sent: Thursday, October 18, 2012 2:19 PM
To: Strathcona Residents' Association
Subject: RE: 955 Hastings re-zoning

Thank you for your comments.

All public comments submitted for the public hearing that are received not more than 15 minutes after the close of the speakers list for that public hearing will be distributed to members of Council for their consideration. The public comments must include the name of the writer.

In addition, these public comments will also be posted on the City's website (http://vancouver.ca/cityclerk/councilmeetings/meeting_schedule.cfm).

Please note that your contact information will be removed from the comments, with the exception of the writer's name. Comments received after the start of the public hearing should not exceed 1500 words.

Public comments submitted for the public hearing that are received more than 15 minutes after the close of the speakers list, will not be distributed until after Council has made a decision regarding the public hearing application and the related bylaw is enacted, if applicable.

For more information regarding Public Hearings, please visit vancouver.ca/publichearings.

Thank you.

From: Strathcona Residents' Association [mailto:chair@strathcona-residents.org]
Sent: Thursday, October 18, 2012 2:11 PM
To: Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Cc: Ballem, Penny; McNaney, Kevin
Subject: 955 Hastings re-zoning

hello,

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential



Regarding the application for this development, I'm of the assumption that this is already a "done deal". The Strathcona Residents' Association have not had an opportunity to discuss the specifics of the Wall proposal, however there are some existing community planning documents that would inform our general position (specifically our 2010 Vision document, a collaborative effort between the Residents' Association, the BIA, the RayCam and Strathcona Community Cnetres and memebrs of the Chinese community). Some of the agreed upon principals include:

No Displacement of Existing Residents - at a recent open house, we heard concerns that this development (dubbed by the Carnegie Community Activist Project as "Woodwards East") would exacerbate displacement of

low income SRO residents. We'd like to reaffirm Strathcona's commitment to a no-displacement policy and support of the one-for-one SRO replacement policy.

Revitalize East Hastings, Our Shopping Street - while we appreciate the developers intent to support light industry in their proposal (although, I suspect the sqft rates will preclude most of the existing local manufacturers) the lack of any retail on street level does very little to further the goal of revitalizing Hastings. For a start, the area needs a low-cost grocery store that caters to a local population.

Build on Strathcona's History as a diverse neighbourhood - this community has a critical need for affordable rental housing. It is hoped that any future development will accommodate that need. Further, in the interest of diversity - the premises of segregated social housing as part of this development is not acceptable or desirable.

Nurture Existing non-market housing developments - at the risk of stating the obvious, the area around 955 is RayCam / Strathcona turf, NOT Carnegie. The needs that the Carnegie activists claim to represent are not the same as the needs in our community. A simple scan of the demographic profiles would reveal we have a lot more families and children in need. We have heard how many of the housing units in Stamps Place are sub-standard. It is hoped that any development at 955 will engage the immediate community, and that Ray Cam specifically take an active role in determining the amenities contributions and housing providers as they will be most impacted by any social housing decisions (for instance, if the City decided that low barrier addicted SRO housing would be an appropriate choice for across the street from a community centre and vulnerable children).

Further to non-market housing developments, according to recent city stats - some 37% of the Strathcona Community is considered low-income. In the interest of preserving our diversity - we feel that the formula for 20% non-market is inadequate, and should not be the precedent for future developer contributions.

thanks!

regards

Pete Fry,

Chair - Strathcona Residents' Association

Hildebrandt, Tina

From: Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Sent: Thursday, October 18, 2012 2:18 PM
To: kate murray
Subject: RE: Rezoning application 955 E. Hastings

Thank you for your comments.

All public comments submitted for the public hearing that are received not more than 15 minutes after the close of the speakers list for that public hearing will be distributed to members of Council for their consideration. The public comments must include the name of the writer.

In addition, these public comments will also be posted on the City's website (http://vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/councilmeetings/meeting_schedule.cfm).

Please note that your contact information will be removed from the comments, with the exception of the writer's name. Comments received after the start of the public hearing should not exceed 1500 words.

Public comments submitted for the public hearing that are received more than 15 minutes after the close of the speakers list, will not be distributed until after Council has made a decision regarding the public hearing application and the related bylaw is enacted, if applicable.

For more information regarding Public Hearings, please visit vancouver.ca/publichearings.

Thank you.

From: kate murray s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Thursday, October 18, 2012 12:38 PM
To: Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Subject: Rezoning application 955 E. Hastings

I am a resident of Grandview-Woodland neighbourhood and am writing to express my opposition to the proposed rezoning and development at 955 E. Hastings.

This development includes insufficient community benefit and amenities relative to the impact it will have on neighbouring communities. The plan includes far too few units that will rent at welfare and pension rates. Calling units 'social housing' when they will rent at, or close to, market rents is, in my view, disengenous. Plans for separate entrances and amenities for different classes of tenants is also extremely problematic. (Incidentally, when I tell friends and neighbours that this is the case at Woodward's they are shocked.)

This development flies in the face of the 2005 Housing Plan for the DTES which states that "The pace of development of new market and low-income housing should be similar. If there is a quick upswing in market development, extra efforts may be required on the low-income housing side." (p. 6) and further, "There is concern that market development in and around the [DEOD] area could push up land values even faster, making it more difficult." (p. 30)

It is plain there has been a quick upswing in development within the area, and this very large development does not contain what could be called 'extra efforts' at providing actually-affordable (shelter and pension rate) units. Further, as your report suggests, it is likely to make future development of affordable units even harder.

Finally, the same report "calls for careful monitoring and reporting back on the rate of change in the Downtown Eastside housing stock, and reporting back on mechanisms for managing the rate of

change is a key recommendation in the implementation of the Plan." (p. 3) To my knowledge, the city has not undertaken any monitoring of this sort, yet Council continues to consider approval of extremely large market developments with no apparent plan to secure the proposed one-for-one replacement of SRA units.

Please do not approve this rezoning and development as-is, and without a plan for securing existing affordable units.

Sincerely,
Kate Murray
Vancouver

s.22(1)

Personal

Dear Mayor and Council members

Re: Rezoning proposal for 955 E. Hastings

The Downtown Eastside Local Area Planning Process (LAPP) committee has considered this rezoning proposal and the majority of the members strongly recommend that you defer a decision on this application during the work of the LAPP (the members below are abstaining from this letter).¹ The reasons are as follows:

Undermines the LAPP

- The Local Area Planning Process is well underway with the goal of developing and adopting a comprehensive community plan cumulating with a report with recommendations submitted to Mayor and Council by June 2013. The rezoning proposal at 955 E Hastings is a massive development that will significantly impact this neighbourhood for years to come, in a district without an area plan in place. This project also finds the Social Impact Assessment process in its early stages of development, nearly ready to play a part in evaluating the potential impacts of this major project. We feel that rushing ahead with this rezoning now undermines the basic premise of having a planning process and a social impact assessment and makes the processes moot. The LAPP committee needs time to complete its work prior to a development of such magnitude being considered.
- The Hastings Corridor sub-district, where this project is proposed, does not have a community or specific area plan to guide development. If the area is turned over to condos before the LAPP Committee can develop a plan it will make our comprehensive plan harder to imagine and implement. Development in the Hastings Corridor has to be carefully planned to improve life for the existing community in the area.
- This project could be precedent setting. This development on the Alex Gair site is being mentioned as one model for generating non-market housing in the area. However this model cannot generate the 5,000 units of housing as stipulated in the City's DTES housing report. It is not a benchmark that will meet this goal and gets ahead of the Downtown Eastside's first comprehensive community partnered planning process.

Gentrification threat

- This is a massive development almost on the scale of Woodward's and could easily have a similar gentrifying impact at the east end of the DTES, driving up land prices and making building social housing more expensive. The Hastings Corridor area needs to be preserved for social housing if the city's goal of replacing the SROs is to be met, as set out in the 2005 DTES Housing Plan.
- The rezoning will likely increase property values and rents in privately owned low-income housing at the Astoria, Woodbine, St Clair #5, Vernon, and St Elmo hotels in the area. This could force out low-income residents and could make them homeless. Because the city does not have regulations to protect these existing 154 units of privately owned low-income housing in the hotels nearby, the 24 SRO replacement units promised feel like a net loss rather than a gain.
- The full-block project at 955 E Hastings will physically displace over a dozen existing jobs held by independent contractors in the woodworking studios and other light manufacturing and industrial buildings. The rents in the new project will likely be unaffordable to those tenants and contractors and the City and developer have not provided assurances otherwise.
- Approval of this application will set a major precedent for the form of development in a part of the city that is "ripe" for property speculation and redevelopment. There are major condo proposals

coming and underway immediately to the east of the DTES, this project is the first incursion of this development trend in the DTES itself. And this before the city has a viable plan for the area.

Insufficient community benefits

- The full amenity package is for 70 units of non-market housing, which will be given to the city. These units will be self-funding, with no external subsidy, meaning that the 24 units at welfare shelter rate must be subsidized by the rents of the other city-owned units. For the housing provider to be able to perform this subsidy they will have to make the majority of the rental units near market-rate: NOT for low-income people or families.
- The 70 non-market units will be separate from the rest. It will be segregation, not social mix.
- There is a huge amount of retail and light industrial space built into this proposal and there are no city regulations over them to offer low-income community amenities because the whole amenities package went to the 70 non-market housing units. This could make the retail area of the new development a zone of exclusion for low-income people.

Project Design

- Our focus on this application has not been on the design of the project for we hope Council will see the importance of preventing the bad effect of gentrification on the neighbourhood. However, we are also alarmed at the scale and character of the design proposed. It is too massive, too linear, too out of scale with the needs of a primarily residential environment. The design should reflect its use as a primarily residential building. This is especially so if it is to become a design precedent for the Hastings street corridor.

What we want to see

Through the LAPP committee's work a positive vision is emerging for the kind of housing, retail and light industrial projects that people want to see developed in their community. This project gives us an opportunity to develop these visions and to work together to realize them - if you will defer the proposal as it is so that the LAPP Committee can work with the City and all the parties involved in redeveloping this project.

- Jobs are important, but good jobs suited to the community and not at the expense of existing economies and survival work. We recognize that women and transgendered people currently work by the tracks on Raymur immediately east of this proposed project. Their spaces, as well as the connected jobs and volunteer jobs of women and transgender people doing peer support, nursing and other supports, are threatened by this project. We feel their safety and belonging should be prioritized in the future of the DTES. We do want to see jobs for Aboriginal and low-income people in construction projects but we warn against replacing well considered, secure, appropriate community employment with boom and bust temporary employment schemes on construction sites. Affirmative action programs are required as part of housing management, retail, and light industrial development to ensure community benefits that benefit the residents of this community.
- Shops and services the existing community needs. Families and low-income people in the area around Raycam need more core shops and services like grocery stores and laundromats. But they must be affordable and welcoming to people living in the area. Many LAPP Committee members fear that the retail spaces in this proposed development will be too expensive and exclusive and will not be affordable for the majority of the existing community. We need a new project with incentives and supports for low-income serving grocery and other basic shops that also hire people from the community.
- Family and low-income housing. Much of the housing around Raycam is in bad shape and is currently unhealthy and dangerous. The SRO hotels are obvious and you already know these rooms need to be replaced with self-contained social housing. Less obvious are the awful conditions in the

BC Housing project at Stamps Place just south of Hastings. Our community needs better housing; but housing people can afford and housing with competent and community accountable management.

Because of these concerns the LAPP committee recommends that Council defer this rezoning proposal until after a comprehensive area plan is developed through the local area planning process now underway. We expect to have a final plan and report to council by June 2013, and for the implementation of that plan to be underway in the fall. We urge you to not to rush ahead with such a neighbourhood defining project when only a one year wait may make a great difference for the future of the low-income community. Hastings Corridor is an important part of the community and we strongly believe it should be developed in concert with the rest of the Downtown Eastside.

The LAPP Committee recognizes that this proposal was developed before the City's interim zoning bylaw was put in place to hold off rezoning proposals until the DTES LAPP work has been completed. But given its scale and precedent-setting impact we urge the City and the developer to respect the intent of the interim zoning bylaw; to ensure that developments do not go ahead which could prejudice the outcome of the planning process itself. An agreement to defer this proposal would be an important demonstration of good will for the local area planning in the DTES.

Yours truly,

Herb Varley (DNC)

Michael Clague (BCS)

Co-Chairs, Downtown Eastside Local Area Planning Committee

The following LAPP Committee members did not support this letter: Joji Komigai representing the Strathcona Business Improvement Association; Wes Regan, Hastings Crossing BIA; Jordan Eng, Vancouver Chinatown Business Improvement Association. The following LAPP Committee members abstained from support or opposition to this letter: Scott Clark representing Aboriginal Life in Vancouver Enhancement (ALIVE), Hendrik Hoekema representing Vancouver Urban Core Community Workers Association; Jonathan Oldman of St. James Community Services Society; Henry Tom of the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee