

From: [Public Hearing](#)
To: [CityHallWatch \(MetroVanWatch\)](#)
Subject: RE: Public Hearing 21-Feb-2013: CityHallWatch OPPOSES 611 Main Street rezoning
Date: Thursday, February 21, 2013 7:50:11 PM

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.

City Clerk's Office

City of Vancouver

Phone: 604-829-4238

Email: publichearing@vancouver.ca

Website: vancouver.ca/publichearings

From: CityHallWatch (MetroVanWatch) s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2013 7:46 PM
To: Public Hearing; Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Subject: Public Hearing 21-Feb-2013: CityHallWatch OPPOSES 611 Main Street rezoning

Mayor and Council:

We are writing to oppose the rezoning at 611 Main Street, the subject of a Public Hearing today.

This is an example of the oppose of density done well. It is too great an increase in density for this neighbourhood and will set a precedent that will dramatically alter the character of the area, promoting gentrification and enriching the wealthy few. The underlying policies enabling this application are fundamentally flawed.

We have written an article on this application, the text of which is copied below.

A 17-storey tower for Chinatown? Very high density proposed – Public hearing tonight for 611 Main Street

<http://cityhallwatch.wordpress.com/2013/02/21/17-storey-tower-chinatown-public-hearing-611-main/>

Sincerely,
Randy Helten
Coordinator, CityHallWatch

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CityHallWatch.ca. Tools for engagement in Vancouver City decisions. Creating our future.

MetroVanWatch.ca. Our dream: A socially, environmentally, agriculturally sustainable Metro Vancouver region.

A 17-storey tower for Chinatown? Very high density proposed – Public hearing tonight for 611 Main Street

<http://cityhallwatch.wordpress.com/2013/02/21/17-storey-tower-chinatown-public-hearing-611-main/>

While much can be said about the sheer height for the proposed **17-storey tower** at [611 Main Street](#) in the heart of Vancouver's Chinatown, along with the concerns about the gentrification of the neighbourhood, another topic has gone largely under the radar in the discussions. It's density. Or simply put: more density, more units, more profits. This article concludes with an appeal for campaign finance reform in Vancouver.

A direct quote from the [staff report](#) states “*There is no FSR limit in HA-1A*” (last page). This is not a typo. The proposed **Floor Space Ratio is 8.26**. The [Historic Area Heights Review](#) (HAHR) passed by a vote of 8-2 in Council back on [April 15th, 2011](#) did not include any absolute upper limit on FSR. The main constraint on density is the height limit, which was set to 150 feet for this site and a number of other sites along Main Street. This might explain why a low floor to floor height of 8'7" (2.62 m) was chosen, as this enables the developer to squeeze in as many floors as possible into a 150-foot envelope.

Mixed commercial residential zoning in other parts of the city have far lower densities. **C-2 zoning** has a **FSR limit of 2.5** (Commercial Drive, Upper Main Street, West 4th Avenue). The **C-3A** zoning along much of Central Broadway allows a maximum density between **3.0 and 3.3 FSR**. Is it appropriate to have no stated limit for density in the [HA-H1 Chinatown District Schedule](#)? For comparative purposes, even the [Yaletown Historic Area HA-3](#) zoning has a density limit is **5.0 FSR**. For reference, the full set of zoning schedules are available [here](#). The debate for this site and the neighbouring 633 Main Street is not just about height and the impact of a historic area, it's also about density. Is HAHR a flawed policy that should be revised?

The [public hearing](#) for 611 Main Street begins at 6pm on February 21st. Further

information on how to sign up to speak is on the city's [website](#).

Carnegie Community Action Project (CCAP) has carefully analyzed and criticized what amounts to gentrification of the surrounding area, reviewing several projects including this proposal at 611 Main. See this article by Jean Swanson, with images:

[City ignoring displacement of low-income residents in Chinatown](#)

Excerpt: Chinatown is on the verge of getting more condos than Woodward's while the city does nothing to stop displacement of low-income residents. On February 21 a rezoning proposal for 145 market condos in a 17-storey tower at 611 Main is going to Council. On Feb. 27 another rezoning proposal for another tower with 188 market condos is going to another public hearing.

Neighbourhoods of Vancouver need to support each other. *CityHallWatch* encourages people from all parts of the city to review this topic and express your views to City Council in writing or in person. While some of our elected officials work to score publicity points for fighting street homelessness and affordability, look what they are doing to this neighbourhood. This is an issue for everyone.

At the bottom of this all, this project and the current development plans in Chinatown underscore the need for strict controls on campaign financing in Vancouver, the city with the most biggest election budgets (per voter) in Canada, with the largest amount coming from developers. Westbank sponsored an industry fundraiser for Vision Vancouver just before the last election, after ejecting media from the room. The majority Council, re-elected in 2011 in a campaign funded by developer money, has no public accountability and is doing considerable damage to Vancouver while transferring public wealth to their political supporters through rezonings and development. No politicians or officials from other levels of government are stepping up to protect the public from this unfairness