

May 25, 2015

Mayor Robertson and Members of
City Council
City of Vancouver

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

Re: Rezoning Application for 468 W. 33rd Ave., 4956 and 4958 Cambie St.

The *Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park** noted that the Park gets only one mention in the Policy Report. Given its popularity and status as one of Vancouver's most important attractions, it is important that the context of the Park be given consideration in Council's deliberations. We urge City Council to consider the following points in their decision.

1. Building Design and Landscaping

Before the Policy Report is accepted, the impacts of the buildings' physical features on the Park need to be carefully assessed. The Policy Report makes no reference as to how the new structures "fit" the adjacent Park environment. We would like to suggest that:

- landscaping features along the boulevard on 33rd Ave. be designed to signal the approach to one of Vancouver's premier parks;
- and that the buildings' external physical features (colour, types of siding, proportion of glass) be carefully assessed in consultation with Park Board staff before proceeding.

At a minimum, the new structures should not detract from the Park's impressive natural features, but should contribute to the beauty of the Park's entrance.

2. Threats to Bird Life Overlooked

Many migratory birds use Queen Elizabeth Park as a stopover on their yearly travels. According to the *Fatal Light Awareness Program* (<http://www.flap.org>), 4-6 storey buildings like the ones in this proposal, pose significant risks to small birds. These birds fly at relatively low elevations; and during the daytime, birds become confused by reflections of trees and landscape in windows. The initial six floors of structures should use specialized window glass that increases birds' ability to see and avoid glass surfaces, as it is at these heights that most collisions occur. According to the Canadian Wildlife Service**, the numbers of many small migratory birds are in steep decline, and these birds need all the help

that we can provide. We think that the City should require that the developers of this proposed site, as well as all new construction around the perimeter of the Park, install low-reflection windows that minimize the possibility of bird-building collisions. Park Board installed this type of window in its main office in Stanley Park, and staff reported that the number of collisions has dropped dramatically.

3. Future Canada Line Station and Its Access Not Addressed

At a public open house for this project in 2014, City Planning staff stated that this project site was being considered as an access point for a future underground Canada Line station (33rd and Cambie). The Policy Report now makes no mention of this possibility. We think that the location decision should be addressed as part of the consideration of this proposed re-zoning.

Because the other two corners are occupied by existing row houses (northwest) and a church (southwest), we are concerned that the station will ultimately be located on park grounds. If a Canada Line station were placed within the Park at Cambie and 33rd, we think that it would detract from the park's appeal and from its adjacent heritage arboretum. A transit station at that location, however practical, will not contribute positively to the initial aesthetic impact of the park.

4. Community Amenity Contributions Not Directed to Park

The Policy Report identifies the community amenity contributions earned from this project. None of those funds, however, are to be directed to capital expenditures for Queen Elizabeth Park. Examples of many capital projects that would benefit the park and its visitors include:

- a children's playground area—there is none in the park now;
- an atrium addition to Bloedel Conservatory on the plaza;
- an inexpensive food service and coffee shop—for day visitors;
- and an indigenous plant garden, which could be a valuable educational asset.

We think that Queen Elizabeth Park is an important public amenity and that it deserves both financial support and protection during this period of significant re-development and change.

Sincerely yours,

5.22(1) Personal and Confidential

Norm Dooley, Chairman
Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park

**Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park is a non-profit organization dedicated to assisting Vancouver Park Board and the City preserve and enhance the park for future generations.*

** Environment Canada—Trends in Migratory Bird Populations