

Ludwig, Nicole

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**From:** Catherine Smith  
**Sent:** Monday, June 25, 2018 8:33 PM  
**To:** Public Hearing  
**Subject:** Proposed zoning amendment for 1837-1857 East 11th aVenue & 2631 - 2685 Victoria Drive

Dear city staff and members of city council,

I am a home owner in the [REDACTED] near the site of the proposed rezoning. I write to you to express my strong opposition to the rezoning.

Although I appreciate our city government's concern about the lack of affordable housing in Vancouver, I am not convinced that this proposed development provides a good solution to the problem. Furthermore, the development may well exacerbate other problems that the planning department noted in the Grandview Woodland Community Plan. Specifically:

- the proposed 11-storey building that will replace the existing houses is not at all in keeping with the existing character of the neighborhood. The proposed development would be, in effect, plunking a high-rise building in the middle of a residential neighborhood where the tallest buildings now are 6 stories and most are no more than 4 stories;
- the proposed new building will block the views of all of the houses and apartment buildings surrounding it. Homes that currently have a view of the north shore mountains will lose that view;
- the planning department seeks to increase density along transit corridors. However, this section of Victoria Drive is not a transit corridor; there are no bus routes along this part of the street. Also there is less traffic along this section of Victoria Drive than there is in the section south of Kingsway;
- the proposed new building would greatly increase the amount of traffic in the area. Within a 2-block radius of the proposed building there is a Montessori school and a family housing co-op, which means there are quite a few children in the area. The Immigrant Services Society's Welcome House is less than a block away. It is also home to many children, and to adults who are recently handicapped. The increased traffic would pose a potential danger to these residents of the neighborhood;
- the Grandview Woodland Community Plan expresses a concern with the lack of children and young families in the neighborhood. However, high rise buildings are not a suitable home for children. Many parents do not want to raise their families in high rise buildings because their children would not have enough space to play. The ISS's Welcome House offers an instructive example: the elevators in that building were breaking down frequently because the children who live there were playing in them. This, despite a designated play area for the children on the 2nd floor of the building. The problem improved when the First Reformed Church next to the Welcome House installed basketball hoops in their parking lot, which gave the children a place for active play. Kids need space to run around; a rooftop play area is not likely to be sufficient;
- the new building will include rental units at secured market rates, but secured market rates are not necessarily affordable rates, based on current prevailing wages in Vancouver;
- tearing down existing buildings to construct a new one does not necessarily create more affordable housing. Our city's recent experience has been that, despite a very large amount of new construction, housing costs continue to rise. I suggest that a more affordable, more environmentally friendly option would be to increase density using the existing houses and apartment buildings in the area of proposed rezoning. Those buildings are also in keeping with the character of the existing neighborhood;
- replacing the current houses with an 11-storey tower is highly unpopular in the neighborhood, as are other proposals for tall buildings in the Grandview Woodland area. Indeed, the architect who designed

the proposed new building for this site is actively opposing a 6-storey building that a developer has sought to build near his home. In general, people in our neighborhood do not want high-rises built here.

I support the city's goal of creating more affordable housing in Vancouver. However, I would like to see the city come up with more innovative ways of creating that housing, rather than repeating the same old approach: building more and more towers. Surely we can devise something that will provide affordable housing while keeping the livable, human-scale neighborhoods that once made Vancouver a wonderful city.

Your respectful citizen,  
Catherine Smith

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

A grey rectangular box redacting the signature and contact information of Catherine Smith.