

Swanston, Denise

From: Alexander Wright s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2019 12:28 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: 1535-1557 Grant Street - Public Hearing

Hello,

As a resident of Vancouver, I am writing to register my support for the application at 1535-1557 Grant Street. Vancouver's sub 1% vacancy rates for apartment buildings is unsustainable. Secure purpose built rentals need to be added across the City and in all neighbourhoods --not just on arterial roads. The proposed project at 1535-1557 Grant Street directly addresses one of our City's most pressing needs and would provide 35 new homes. The Community plan supports a six storey form, and --given the housing shortage in our City-- it is disappointing that this application has been reduced from 6 storeys to 5 storeys.

Landscaping features and steps in the building help transition the building to the neighbouring two and three storey family homes. As designed, this building appears to fit comfortably amid its direct neighbours. Of note It would also fit in with the *existing* pattern of the surrounding blocks which are comprised of a mix of low-rise apartment buildings and single family homes. As noted above the building is shorter than the maximum height guidance provided by the Grandview Woodland plan.

To close, I fully support this project and I am hopeful that Council will approve the addition of these 35 rental homes.

Best Regards,
Alexander Wright

Swanston, Denise

From: Dan Scarrow s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2019 1:26 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Rezoning Application for 1535-1557 Grant Street

I am a life long resident of Vancouver and believe this amazing city should be accessible to as many people as possible.

Therefore, I support the development of as many housing options as possible, especially purpose built rental.

While it is disappointing that there has been a reduction of close to 10% of the units in this proposed new development, it should still proceed at this point.

My family and I support this project.

Dan Scarrow

Swanston, Denise

From: Kevin Garvey s.22(1) Personal and
Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2019 1:39 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: 1535-1557 Grant Street

Mayor and Council,

I am writing in support for the rezoning application for 1535-1557 Grant Street. As someone who used to live in this area, I believe this proposal will bring numerous (and much needed) benefits to the community.

Grandview Woodlands and specifically Commercial Drive is a fantastic place to live! It's incredibly walkable, it's close to transit and there are so many great restaurants and businesses along the Drive strip. I think putting more housing here makes a lot of sense for both residents and businesses looking to thrive.

Thank you for allowing me to provide my support for this proposal.

Kevin Garvey

Sent from my iPhone

Swanston, Denise

From: Karen Sawatzky s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2019 2:06 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Support for rezoning application at 1535 and 1557 Grant St - for purpose-built rental

Dear Mayor and Council:

I write to inform you of my strong support for the application to rezone the lots at 1535 and 1557 Grant St. to allow for the construction of a 5-storey purpose-built rental building consisting of 35 new rental homes. I urge you to give this application your prompt approval.

I'm in favour of this proposal because it meets a need for purpose-built rental homes in this neighbourhood, as well as throughout the city. I am a longtime renter in the area and I well remember how difficult it was to find an actual above-ground apartment when I last looked several years ago. Far too much of this area's rental stock is in the form of secondary suites. While that works well for the homeowners who are using the high rents they charge for these often poorly designed, built and lit units to pay off their own mortgages, this type of rental housing, is, as you know, much more precarious and insecure for renters because it is not subject to the city's extra layer of rental protections (in addition to that provided by the *RTA*). While I know critics of this building and of rental incentives will point to it as an example of how new construction, even when it's rental, supposedly gentrifies an area, as a longtime area resident I have seen much gentrification take place over the last two decades while barely any new construction and certainly very little new purpose-built rental has been added. I think that's because while the amount of housing in the area has remained nearly static, the demand for housing in centrally located amenity-rich neighbourhoods such as this one has spiked. As a predictable and direct result of this mismatch between demand and supply, higher income people – both owners and renters – have replaced lower-income people. That's because the higher income people can afford to outbid the lower-income people for the supply of available housing that is desirable by virtue of its location (with little regard the actual condition or quality of that housing). A review of the census information for this area supports that theory – it shows the percentage of the area's households who who rent has been declining over the past couple decades, while the net population has grown very little. And as you know from the city's housing strategy, the city is losing lower-income renters – I believe the lack of new rental housing in my neighbourhood is one of the reasons for that. All this ties back to the application you have before you, which would provide for a net increase of rental units and therefore help to keep this area as one where there is enough rental housing to maintain the current ratio of renters and owners – and where, for now at least, renting households outnumber those of owners.

I realize that this project does involve the demolition of some existing rental units and certainly as a renter, I am always worried and sorry to see that. However, as decision and policy-makers, you also all need to account and take responsibility for the fact that there is so little land on which it is permissible to build purpose-built rental in the city. This land is already zoned for that purpose – if you can't build an apartment building here, where can you? As a council, you've chosen to take an extremely go-slow approach to expanding the areas where purpose-built rental housing can be built (even in the face of acute rental shortages and growing homelessness numbers) by referring that decision to an uncertain, multi-year city planning process. While we have a shortage of rental housing and an extremely limited area where it's possible to build new rental, you can expect to see many more applications like this one before you, from owners of private property who, predictably and understandably want to intensify the use of their land – land where renters already live – in order to meet the acute demand for more rental housing. The thing that would most ease this pressure and that would do so with the least impact on renters is to immediately allow purpose-built rental housing to be built in the areas of the

city where the fewest renters live – i.e. in what UBC housing scholar Nathanael Lauster has deemed Vancouver’s “great house reserve” south of 16th Avenue. But again, instead of fast-tracking this path as you had a choice to do when you were first elected, you have chosen to stretch that process out over years. That is unfortunate and I think the least you can do in the meantime is to allow the supply of rental housing to increase in the limited areas where it is already permitted.

I would also like you to know that as Grandview-Woodland renter, I’m offended by the characterization of this proposed rental building as a “blockbuster” by groups such as GWAC (see Vancouver Courier article of September 9, 2019). GWAC does not speak for me and as far as I know, that group has no mechanism to ensure its board reflects the fact that 65% of the area’s households (as of the 2016 census) were renters. The group’s board has long been dominated by homeowners and I can’t think of an application involving rental housing (either market or social) to which GWAC has ever given its support. Instead, those speaking for GWAC consistently claim to be in favour of “affordable housing” in principle while constantly finding reasons why specific rental housing proposals should be scaled back, slowed down or outright rejected – an easy (though hypocritical) position to take when you benefit from comfort and security of owning a detached character house worth millions of dollars – and in some cases may even rent parts of that house out on a short-term basis to tourists instead of to local residents who need long-term rental housing.

Before the summer break, you were presented with a staff report on rental incentives. It was an excellent report that drew together and updated information about the need for and results of the city’s rental incentive programs. I hope that as a council you will now move beyond constantly calling those incentive programs and the individual projects that rely on them – such as this one - into question.

This project satisfies the requirements of the Grandview-Woodland community plan, and intensifies the use of land that is close to transit and all manner of amenities. It has already been scaled back in response to neighbourhood feedback, resulting in fewer homes that will be available to meet the high demand for rental housing - demand that is increasing in step with the regional economy and various cultural trends. Further, and as you also know, the city is far behind when it comes to meeting the targets for approving purpose-built rental housing, both for 2019 and for the two previous years (of the 2017 Housing Vancouver strategy). Given this backlog and all the applicant has done to submit a proposal that meets the city’s criteria, there is a strong case for approving this project promptly.

Sincerely,

Karen Sawatzky
s.22(1) Personal and
Confidential

September 9, 2019

Dear Mayor and Council,

RE: Avera's project at 1535-1557 Grant Street

I am writing to share my support for Avera's project at 1535-1557 Grant Street. My favourite thing about the Grandview-Woodland community is its diversity and its vibrant feel. I believe that this is a result of the people and businesses who have decided to settle here and make the community their own. Many of these residents have lived here for a long time but are getting pushed out due to housing and rental prices. I hate to see the community erode this way.

I am in support of this proposal because secured rental housing will enable more people to stay in the neighbourhood and provide both social and economic stability to the area.

I also like that it is replacing four single-family homes with 35 secured rental homes, and would ensure that the rental stock in Grandview-Woodland continues to be replenished as buildings age. I'm particularly excited to see the inclusion of 23% three-bedroom homes in the proposal, as there is such a strong demand for three-bedroom rentals at the moment, and will both help to retain and attract families to settle here.

Please approve this proposal at this week's Public Hearing. I believe that this is a good development which aligns with the vision of the community, and accomplishes the goals of the area plan.

Sincerely,

s.22(1) Personal and
Confidential

Tessa Forrest

Swanston, Denise

From: Neil Hamilton s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2019 2:11 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Re: Rezoning application for 1535-57 Grant St.

Dear Vancouver Council,

I am in favour of the proposed rezoning of 1535-57 Grant St. as per the owner's current application.

Thank you,

Neil Hamilton
Vancouver



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Swanston, Denise

From: Eddie Chiu s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2019 3:22 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Re-zoning Application for 1535-1557 Grant

Hello,

I would like to write in support of the rezoning for this property. There continues to be significant demand for rental units and every development of purpose built rental buildings should be highly considered. This community has great amenities and would be an excellent location for future renters.

Regards,

Ed Chiu

Swanston, Denise

From: Morganna Gresham s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2019 10:25 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Rental Housing Proposal- Grandview Woodland Area

Dear Mayor Stewart and Members of Council:

As a resident to the Grandview Woodland Area, and a renter, I am writing to express my support for the proposed development at 1535, 1545, 1549 and 1557 Grant Street.

I believe this proposed project should be approved, and would like to support this application for the following key reasons:

- This project offers secured, purpose built rental housing.
- The proposed development site is located in close proximity to transit, shops and services.
- The building will be developed in accordance with passive house standards, which will help the City to deliver on their sustainability targets.

Please approve this application when it comes before you for a Public Hearing.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Morganna Gresham
s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

s.22(1) Personal and Confidential

Swanston, Denise

From: Matthew MacLean s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2019 8:52 AM
To: Public Hearing
Cc: Matthew MacLean
Subject: Rental housing proposal at 1535 - 1557 Grant Street in Grandview Woodlands

Dear Mayor Stewart and Councillors,

My name is Matthew MacLean. As a property owner in Grandview Woodlands, I strongly support the proposal to build new, purpose built rental housing on Grant Street. I am registered to speak on Thursday night but may have to miss it given my son has a school BBQ. Hopefully I can make it and talk to you directly and in person.

Home ownership is out of reach for the majority of people living and working in Vancouver, which is why I feel that it is important to create access to secure rental housing in close proximity to transit, community services and employment. I own several apartment buildings in Grandview Woodlands area offering 1 bedrooms and studios. Most of my tenants would love the opportunity to have larger, newer units and be able to grow their own families in a rental building. The chief complaint I hear is that there are no options for larger units accommodating families and 2-3 beds.

If approved, this proposal would see the introduction of 35 new, secured rental units on Grant Street, an attractive street located off a major City arterial with good transit service – the majority of which would be large three bedroom units designed for new, young families, or perhaps local empty nesters who no longer want to maintain the yard, but still need a couple spare bedrooms for when their kids return. Furthermore, this project, as I understand it, also entirely conforms to the *Grandview Woodland Community Plan*. I attended all of the meetings leading up to the implementation of this new policy over the last 5 years and feel the current council needs to execute on all the hard work leading up to the new Grandview Plan.

Vancouver is facing some challenging times. Our land and housing costs are high, our vacancy rates are at near zero, roads are becoming increasingly congested, and we are competing daily against the suburbs to retain young, working professionals who support our everyday lives. Here we have an opportunity to build rental homes for young professionals, seniors, or working families – all as requested and encouraged by the City's Housing Vancouver Strategy. In fact, one may argue 5 storeys is under developing this site. I have been tracking recent hearings related to rental (in particular the Shaughnessy debacle) and hope that we see this project move ahead giving the city what it truly needs.

Council's decision at the Public Hearing on September 12th is to either support good policy that will help our City achieve our stated goals around housing affordability and access to secure rental – or – discourage this and promote the development of less affordable market condos. I hope that Council will support hard working people in Vancouver by approving this application on September 12th.

Sincerely,

Matthew MacLean

Swanston, Denise

From: Peter Waldkirch s.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2019 11:46 AM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Comments on 1535-1557 Grant Street

Dear Mayor and Council,

I write to express my support for the rezoning at 1535-1557 Grant Street, which is set down as item 6 for the public hearing on September 12, 2019.

I trust everyone on Council is well aware of the severity of Vancouver's housing crisis. This affects renters most of all. When a city such as Vancouver has a vacancy rate of less than 1%, we are essentially putting a sign up that says "we're full -- go away". That is an intolerable situation -- not only for newcomers (from other parts of Canada or around the world), but for our children and family.

This housing shortage is a system-wide problem and I encourage Council take a system-wide perspective. A building such as this will provide real homes to real people.

Given the severity of Vancouver's rental shortage, I urge council to not give weight to opponents who object to the size of the building. It is not an unduly large building for the neighbourhood -- for any neighbourhood! As someone who grew up in an RS neighbourhood (Kerrisdale), I think this building would fit in anywhere, including off-arterial, detached home-dominated neighbourhoods. We can always quibble over whether a given building should be one floor more or less, a metre taller or shorter, slight redesigns, and so on. But I say debatable nostalgic aesthetic concerns should not weigh heavily against the desperate need for more housing in this city. The lack of housing is strangling the life out of it.

And, by the way, I personally like the look and style of the proposed building!

Please support this project.

Sincerely,

-Peter Waldkirch