

From: Jonelle Aspa
To: [Public Hearing](#)
Subject: Rezoning of 835-837 East Hasting
Date: Tuesday, November 5, 2019 9:35:54 AM

Hello, my name is Jonelle Aspa, and I am a director of East Vancouver Raw Wood Studio Society, a non profit, member funded society providing affordable, low barrier art and music rehearsal space in "s. 22(1) Personal and Confidential" since 2003. I am writing in support of rezoning of 837 East Hasting on condition that our art and rehearsal space is rehomed. The space is host to visual artists, designers, printmakers, electronic artists, audio engineers, and musicians. It has been parceled into rooms of varying size, which are rented as studios. Most rooms function as rehearsal studios for musicians but some are also used for visual art such as painting, screen-printing, and textile art. Our studio is a "work-only" space and is not used as a public music venue or gallery, and it does not desire to be used as such. We are a community of hard working and mature artists that have fostered a respectful and dedicated space to practicing art for the last 16 years.

According to a city report Vancouver is losing rehearsal spaces at a tremendous speed. It went from 76,289 to 43,505 sq. ft from 2014 to 2017. The loss of our space would add another 4000sq ft to that figure. Redevelopment of 837 East Hastings would displace 45+ artists and musicians as current market rate is unaffordable for our members who already have a hard time affording to live in Vancouver. Paying market rent would force our space to become a music venue with a reliance on alcohol sales, which would be highly disruptive to our member's artistic practice and would be dangerous for folks in recovery. Red Gate Arts Society was recently forced to relocate to Main Street after being evicted from their space down the block from us at 855 East Hastings. With their new triple net lease, they now are paying \$13000 a month in rent. We currently pay \$3200 a month. This rental increase requires Red Gate to rely heavily upon alcohol sales at their numerous events each week. Even with their reliance on hosting events, the rent that artists pay to rent there is significantly more than our space. Currently Red Gate charges \$2.00 sqft, whereas we charge \$1.41 sqft. For profit studio, Suna Studios, charges \$4.00 sq ft and somehow claims to be "affordable". This is out of reach for our membership.

The city's "Making Space for Arts and Culture" report sets the goal of creating 800,000 new square feet of cultural space in Vancouver in the next three years as well as a "no net loss" policy for music venues. With that in mind, we are asking that if the city allows the redevelopment of our building, then we should be provided with an affordable rehearsal space elsewhere, preferably in an M-2 industrial zoned area, as we are classified as an Artist Studio Class B. Redevelopment without rehoming our space would go against the city's cultural plan. We whole-heartedly support the creation of seniors housing but not at the expense of cultural space in our city.

Thank you for your time!

Jonelle Aspa
East Vancouver Raw Wood Studio Society