

My **name** is Caroline Krause and I oppose CD-1 Amendment for 28 floors at 2538 Birch Street.

My husband and I have lived at [REDACTED] <sup>s.22</sup> [REDACTED] <sub>(1)</sub> since 1985. Our cross streets are Alder and Birch. Over the years, we have witnessed the desecration of Vancouver's beautiful setting that no longer exists because previous mayors and councils have allowed an excess of unattractive high rise towers to be built in the downtown core. The mountains, our most beautiful asset, have virtually disappeared behind a wall of vertical sprawl.

The proposed 28-storey building on the tiny site at Broadway and Birch represents the same kind of vertical sprawl and a radical density increase. If approved, this will be the beginning of the end of our very liveable Fairview neighbourhood where the average height of tall buildings is 11 storeys. Most local residents support the 16-storey proposal. It will still create affordable rental housing and it complies with the "gentle density increase" we were promised.

**Among the many negatives of this proposal, I will focus on three.**

**I. No access to a Neighbourhood School**

For 26 years, I was a proud member of the Vancouver School Board. During the first part of my career, I was a K-12 French Immersion teacher and consultant. During the second half, I was an administrator in 3 inner city schools: Hastings, Lord Selkirk and Grandview/Uuquina'kuh where I worked with the very families I am advocating for today.

I feel strongly that every child should have the right to go to his or her neighbourhood school. The city's very own guidelines on High Density Housing for Families With Children state as the primary objective that, "Families with children should have reasonable and effective access to essential community services," education being among the most essential. The guidelines further state that the distance between the child's residence and the neighbourhood school should be .08 K, about a 10-minute walk.

The closest schools are **L'Ecole Bilingue**, on West 14<sup>th</sup> (900 m) or **Lord Tennyson**, on West 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue (1.4K) but these are district French Immersion Schools. Students are chosen by a draw or lottery system. The demand is so high that getting a spot in either of these schools is unlikely.

**False Creek Elementary** is close at 900m and a 13-minute walk but the children would have to cross Broadway, go down the very steep terrain at Birch or Alder and cross the W. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue speedway. According to a recent VSB report on district planning and facilities, this school is already over capacity so unlikely again.

**Emily Carr** has been identified as the neighbourhood school. Located at Oak and King Edward, it is 2 K away meaning a 30-minute walk. The children would have to cross busy Oak Street, also a violation of the COV High Density Guidelines. Further, Emily Carr is already over capacity by 9% and this will rise to 26% by 2027.

I could mention other schools but there is no point. Let's be clear, there is **no neighbourhood school for these children**.

## **2. No Reasonable Access to Parks or Green Spaces**

As my colleague Jim Pammenter has stated, those living at 2538 Birch will have no proper access to parks or other green spaces. Every child should have reasonable access to a place where they can engage in spontaneous, healthy play. The lack of physical activity can lead to obesity, anti-social behaviour, and a host of other issues.

I was really shocked to learn that this project proposes a playground on the 28th floor, of all places! Would you want your children or grandchildren's play area to be on the 28<sup>th</sup> floor of a high rise, especially in the midst of pandemic, or when it is windy and freezing cold outside? Ideally children should be living no higher up than 6 storeys. Otherwise they lose the ability to develop meaningful connections to their community and the natural environment. They certainly should not be playing on the 28<sup>th</sup> floor of a high rise!

### **3. Lack of Respect for Communities.**

Not only does this rezoning proposal violate the city's own guidelines for high density housing, this whole process violates several, if not all, of the principles set out in the International Association of Public Participation Code of Ethics. I cite in particular:

*7. RESPECT FOR COMMUNITIES. We will avoid strategies that risk polarizing community interests or that appear to "divide and conquer."*

We have money and density on one side and community liveability on the other.

*8. ADVOCACY. We will advocate for the public participation process and will not advocate for interest, party, or project outcome.*

Seems to already be a "fait accompli."

Trying to push this project through while we are still reeling from the Covid-19 pandemic and at our most vulnerable is disrespectful of our community. Many of us wrote letters to beg for an extension until we could have a real, not a "fake consultation," to quote a famous politician.

Out of respect for children, families, our community, and the consultative process, please do the right thing and reject this rezoning application.

Documents cited:

1. City of Vancouver High Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines
2. Vancouver School Board District Planning And Facilities Long Range Facilities Plan Report
3. International Association for Public Participation Code of Ethics.