



REPORT

Report Date: April 20, 2021
Contact: Celine Mauboules
Contact No.: 604.673.8287
RTS No.: 14446
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: May 18, 2021
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager, Arts, Culture, and Community Services

SUBJECT: Single Room Accommodation Permit for The American Hotel (928 Main Street)

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve a Single Room Accommodation (SRA) Conversion Permit in accordance with the Single Room Accommodation By-Law for the American Hotel, located at 928 Main Street [*Parcel Identifier: 015-598-501 Lot 12 Block 43 District Lot 196 Plan 196*], to convert one SRA designated room into a Participant's Support Office and combine two SRA designated rooms into a programmable recreation space.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks Council's approval to issue an SRA Conversion Permit to BC Housing for the American Hotel, located at 928 Main Street and designated under the City's Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-Law. The 42-unit building requires the reconfiguration and conversion of 3 SRA designated rooms to non-residential use to create Supportive housing for residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness who with some supports can live relatively independently. None of the rooms recommended in the SRA Conversion permit are tenanted. An SRA Conversion Permit is required to enable the scope of work, which includes:

- Converting one SRA designated room to non-residential use (Participants Support Office).
- Combining two SRA designated rooms units with one non-SRA designated caretaker unit, and converting to a non-residential use, including the addition of a kitchen (programming recreation space).

The proposed work under the SRA permit will result in the loss of three SRA designated rooms, as well as one non-SRA designated caretaker unit. All remaining 38 residential rooms will continue to be SRA designated. Development and building permits will be issued for the work

subject to approval of the SRA Conversion permit. The approval of the SRA Permit will allow BC Housing to proceed with obtaining the required development, building and trades permits that are necessary to proceed with renovations to create programming and office space needed to implement supportive housing for American Hotel residents.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- SRA By-law (2003): On October 21, 2003, Council enacted the SRA By-Law to regulate the conversion and demolition of SRAs in the Downtown Core. The SRA By-Law designated all units and rooms that were 320 sf or less in residential hotels, rooming houses, and other buildings in the Downtown Core, as identified in the “2003 Survey of Low-Income Housing in the Downtown Core”.

Under the SRA By-Law owners wanting to convert or demolish SRA-designated rooms must apply for and obtain an SRA Conversion/Demolition permit. Council evaluates each application on its own merits and may refuse the permit, approve the permit, or approve the permit with condition. The SRA By-Law also allows Council to require conditions such as a levy of \$230,000 to deposit into a reserve fund for replacement social housing.

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- In September 2010 an SRA Permit was approved for the American Hotel (928 Main Street) to create 3 more rooms for a total of 42 rooms and to install bathrooms in 38 rooms, subject to the owner entering into a Housing Agreement with the City that secured 6 rooms at \$400/month for 10 years. 41 rooms were less than 320 sf and remained designated under the SRA By-Law.
- The DTES Local Area Plan (2014) includes direction to replace 5,000 SRO rooms with self-contained social housing over 30 years, providing new housing options for low-income singles both inside and outside the DTES. In the interim and while replacement housing is being built, the Plan calls for improving the condition and affordability of the existing SRO stock, while also providing residents with adequate supports.
- The Housing Vancouver Strategy (2017) calls for the replacement of SROs with self-contained, shelter-rate social housing for singles, with an accelerated replacement target of 2,000 new units over 10 years. Recognizing the important role of existing SRO housing in combatting homelessness, the Strategy also calls for improving and protecting the remaining stock for low-income residents through regulatory tools and investment, capacity building efforts, and enhanced partnerships with senior levels of government.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

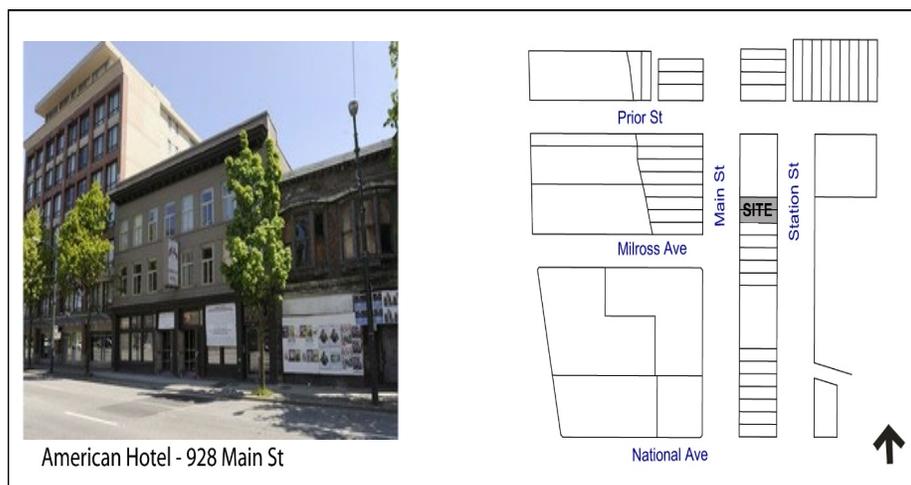
REPORT

Background/Context

The American Hotel is a 3-storey residential hotel located at 928 Main Street in the False Creek District (FC-1), on the east side of Main Street between Prior and National Streets (see Figure 1). The building contains 41 SRA-designated rooms, including 38 dwelling units (with bathrooms) and three housekeeping rooms, as well as one caretaker unit that is larger than 320 sq.ft. and is therefore not designated under the SRA By-Law. The residential portion of the American Hotel is situated above the American Bar, which has a seating capacity of 193 seats.

BC Housing purchased the American Hotel in June 2020 from a private owner. On April 23, 2021, BC Housing submitted an SRA Conversion Application to the City to convert one residential SRA designated room to non-residential use (Participants Support Office), as well as to combine two SRA designated rooms and one non-SRA designated caretaker unit to a non-residential use (programming recreation space), including the addition of a kitchen.

Figure 1: The American Hotel (928 Main St) – Image and lot location



Strategic Analysis

The American Hotel was purchased by BC Housing in June 2020 with the intention of creating safe, secure and affordable homes for people who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. BC Housing purchased the building with the intent to tenant all vacant rooms under a supportive housing model for tenants who can live relatively independently with limited supports. This purchase of the American was part of the Province's housing strategy to continue to support people and transition them into long-term, stable housing. The goal of supportive housing is to provide some support services that build on individuals' strengths and promote personal independence, with the long-term goal of acquiring skills to live independently and maintain a successful tenancy.

When BC Housing purchased the American in 2020, the building was partially vacant. Currently, 16 rooms are occupied and 26 are vacant (including the 3 designated and one non-designated caretaker room that will be affected by the proposed SRA Conversion Permit). The rents on the tenanted rooms range between \$400 and \$1,000/month. The existing tenancies will not be affected by BC Housing's purchase of the building or the transition to a supportive housing model. BC Housing intends to adopt the supportive housing model initially on the 26 vacant rooms, which will be targeted to tenants who can live relatively independently with limited supports. Rents on units will be provided at shelter rates. As existing tenants in the 16 occupied rooms move out on their own accord, new tenants will come in under the supportive housing model and rents will be provided at shelter rates.

In order for BC Housing to implement the supportive housing model at the American Hotel, a change of use and reconfiguration of 3 SRA designated and one non-SRA designated rooms is required to accommodate non-residential uses to support the supportive housing model. This includes converting one SRA designated room to a Participant's Support Office, and combining two SRA designated rooms with one non-SRA designated caretaker's unit to form a programmable recreational space, including a new kitchen.

The approval of an SRA permit will allow BC Housing to proceed with the development, trades and building permits required to undertake the proposed scope of work. Staff are not recommending imposing the SRA permit fee (\$230,000/door) as a condition of the permit to support BC Housing with the changes proposed to support the management and operation of the building under a supportive housing model. Under their supportive housing model, BC Housing has committed to providing rents at the shelter component of income assistance (\$375) for all new tenancies.

The Vancouver Charter requires that Council consider a number of factors when deciding whether to approve an SRA Conversion or Demolition Permit. These factors, discussed below, include the future accommodation of affected tenants, the supply of low-cost accommodation in the area, the need to improve and replace SROs, and the condition of the existing building.

- 1. Adequacy of Replacement Accommodation for Affected Tenants:** The three SRA designated rooms subject to this SRA Conversion Permit and the one non-SRA designated caretaker unit are currently vacant and no tenants will be displaced as a result of the proposed work. BC Housing has provided a notarized affidavit to the City asserting that existing tenants in the building will not be displaced or impacted by the proposed scope of work.
- 2. Supply of Low-Cost Accommodation:** Prior to BC Housing's purchase of the American Hotel, the building was privately owned and all 42 rooms in the building were renting at market rates following the expiry of a 10 year Housing Agreement in 2020 which secured 6 rooms at \$400/month. Under BC Housing's ownership, rents will be provided at the shelter component of income assistance (currently at \$375 for a single individual) for all new tenancies. Although four residential rooms will be lost should the SRA permit be approved, there will be an overall net increase of shelter rate units in the building. In addition, the approval of this SRA Permit will enable the introduction of non-residential uses that are necessary to support tenants and the overall management and operation of the building.

- 3. Need to Improve and Replace Single Room Accommodation:** The proposed scope of work under the SRA Permit is in keeping with Council’s policy to improve existing SRAs while maintaining rents affordable to low-income residents. The approval of the SRA Permit will enable the necessary reconfiguration, improvements and change of use required to implement a supportive housing model, while providing rents at shelter rates for all new tenancies. The 38 rooms unaffected by the SRA Permit will remain designated under the SRA By-Law.
- 4. Condition of the Building:** The American Hotel does not currently have any outstanding life-safety orders against it, and is not considered a high risk SRO.
- 5. Unique Features of Building and Land:** The American Hotel was built in 1907 and is not registered on the City’s Heritage Registry.

Financial Implications

Staff are not recommending the payment of the per room SRA permit charge (\$230,000) for the conversion of three SRA designated rooms in order to enable BC Housing to transition the building to operate as supportive housing with rents provided at the shelter rates for all new tenancies. The approval of this application will allow for much-needed programming and office space in the building, while retaining all remaining rooms as SRA-designated, and ensuring affordability for all the rooms.

CONCLUSION

This report recommends Council’s approval of an SRA Conversion Permit to be issued to BC Housing for the American Hotel, located at 928 Main Street. The permit will allow BC Housing to convert one SRA designated room into a Participant’s Support Office, and combine two SRA-designated rooms with a non SRA-designated caretaker’s unit to create a programmable recreation space, including a new kitchen. The purchase of the American Hotel reflects BC Housing’s close collaboration with the City of Vancouver in supporting the delivery of housing for low-income and marginalized residents. The approval of this SRA permit will enable BC Housing to fully realize a supportive housing model and to enable the provision of associated services in order to successfully transition more Vancouverites from homelessness into long-term stable housing.

* * * * *



**SINGLE ROOM ACCOMMODATION CONVERSION*
or DEMOLITION* PERMIT APPLICATION**

SR No. _____

Civic Address: 926/928/930 Main Street, Vancouver

Legal Description: Lot 6 Subdivision _____ Block 24

District Lot 196 Plan 184

Building Name: The American Hotel

This area must be completed by the person signing this application.

Name: Michael Pistrin
Mailing Address: 1701 - 4555 Kingsway
City: Burnaby Postal Code: V5H 4V8
Company Name: Provincial Rental Housing Corporation Phone Number: 604-454-2041
Non-Profit Number (if applicable): _____

You are the:
 Property Owner
 Agent for Property Owner

Note: If the applicant is NOT the property owner, a letter of consent signed by the owner must also be submitted.

Owner's information (If owner is a corporation, provide Incorporation Certificate and names and addresses of all directors & associates):

Property Owner's Name: Stephanie Allen
Address: 1701 - 4555 Kingsway Postal Code: V5H 4V8
City: Burnaby Phone Number: 604-456-8929

Property Owner's Name: Armin Amrofia
Address: 1701 - 4555 Kingsway Postal Code: V5H 4V8
City: Burnaby Phone Number: 604-439-4198

Property Owner's Name: Angela Grace Louise Cooke
Address: 1701 - 4555 Kingsway Postal Code: V5H 4V8
City: Burnaby Phone Number: 604-439-8555

- | | | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|--|-----------|---|
| 001 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Convert* occupancy of designated room(s) | <u>3</u> | Total # of storeys in this building |
| 002 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Change term or nature of tenancy of designated room(s) | <u>41</u> | Total # of SRA rooms in this building |
| 003 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Change frequency of rent payments for designated room(s) | <u>1</u> | Total # of non-SRA rooms in this building |
| 004 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Convert* vacant designated room(s) | <u>12</u> | Total # of tenants in this building |
| 005 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Repair or alter designated room(s) | | |
| 006 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Demolish* designated room(s) | | |

*see definitions of "conversion" and "demolition" on reverse side of form under "Explanatory Notes"

Describe nature of the proposed conversion or demolition:

To convert 1 SRA room (unit 210) to office space for tenant support workers, program support workers and building managers. To convert 2 SRA rooms and one caretakers suite (Unit 217-219) to a communal program space for tenants to gain skills and independence in a semi supportive housing model.

Please continue application on reverse

THIS SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED:	OFFICE USE
Are there any permanent residents needing to relocate as a result of this proposed conversion?	
<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	
If Yes, you must provide the following information:	
1 The number of permanent residents that will be affected?	
You must also include with this application the following required supporting documents:	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Tenant Relocation Plan Application Form (must be submitted whether or not tenant relocation may be necessary)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 An affidavit, sworn by the owner or, if the owner is a corporation, by a director of the corporation, setting out why the owner wants to convert or demolish the designated room	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3 One set of floor plans of the existing and proposed floor layout as described below*	
<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Tentative schedule for construction (if applicable)	

* Explanatory Notes:

Definition of “conversion” or “convert” means the following under the Single Room Accommodation By-law:

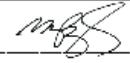
- (a) a change in the form of occupancy, intended form of occupancy, or customary form of occupancy of a designated room from living accommodation for a permanent resident to living accommodation for a transient guest or to another
- (b) a change in the term or nature of the tenancy to which a permanent resident has the right in respect of a designated
- (c) a change in the frequency of the rent payments a permanent resident must make in respect of a designated room,
- (d) an occupancy or use, or the suffering or allowing of an occupancy or use, of a vacant designated room for a purpose other than living accommodation for a permanent resident,
- (e) a repair or alteration to a designated room or any improvement or fixture in it or a replacement of any such improvement or fixture, except for repairs or alterations that are minor in nature and have no material effect on the enjoyment by permanent residents of their living accommodation, and do not include the relocation of a permanent resident during the repair or alteration and does not result in the room ceasing to be a designated room,
- (f) a reclassification of a building or any portion of a building from Class 1-residential to any other class referred to in the Assessment Act and its regulations, or
- (g) a loss of exemption in respect of a designated room from an obligation to pay or remit hotel room tax under the Hotel Room Tax Act and its regulations;

Definition of “demolition” or “demolish” means the following under the Single Room Accommodation By-law: “to pull, knock, or tear down or to raze, wholly or partially, a designated room”

Floor plans must be legible, drawn to a scale NOT less than 1/8” to 1’, and must:

- (a) Include dimensions and layout of all floor levels including basement and underground parking;
- (b) Identify on each floor:
 - rooms that provide accommodation for permanent residents;
 - rooms that provide accommodation for transient guests (tourists);
 - rooms that provide other non-residential accommodation uses (e.g., lounge, storage rooms, etc.);
- (c) Indicate on each floor the square footage of all rooms and common areas;

Office Use Only

- By submitting this application, I, Michael Pistrin , as owner or owner’s agent:
- (a) have verified that the information contained within this document and associated applications and plans is correct and accurate, and describes a use, a building or a work which complies with all relevant by-laws and statutes;
 - (b) acknowledge that responsibility for by-law compliance rests with the owner and the owner’s employees, agents and contractors;
 - (c) acknowledge that any information and documents provided with this SRA conversion/demolition permit application will be attached to the report to Council and as such, be made available to the public; and
 - (d) hereby agree to indemnify and save harmless the City of Vancouver, its officials, employees and agents against all claims, liabilities and expenses of every kind, in respect of anything done or not done pursuant to this application or fact sheet or ensuing permit.



SUBMITTED AT VANCOUVER, BC THIS 23rd DAY OF APRIL, 2021

Submit

STATUTORY DECLARATION

CANADA
PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

IN THE MATTER OF THE PREMISES LOCATED AT
926/928/930 MAIN STREET, VANCOUVER, BC
AND LEGALLY DESCRIBED AS PID: 014-568-845,
LOT 6 BLOCK 24 DISTRICT LOT 196 PLAN 184
(THE "PROPERTY")

TO WIT:

I, ~~Angela Cooke~~ ^{Abbas Barodawalla} ~~Stacey Lee~~, DIRECTOR of PROVINCIAL RENTAL HOUSING CORPORATION, THE REGISTERED OWNER OF THE PROPERTY, 926/928/930 Main Street, Vancouver, BC. (THE "OWNER"), DO SOLEMNLY DECLARE THAT:

1. Each person occupying the building on the Property has been given written notice of the Owner's intent to redevelop the Property as follows:
 - (a) By Memorandum dated April 21, 2021, a copy of which is attached as Schedule "A" hereto (the "First Notice")
2. Twelve (12) units in the building were occupied on the date of the First Notice.
3. No Tenants in occupied units will be displaced as the result of the work being carried out under DP-2021-00274.
4. The Notices were either hand delivered to each tenant in the building or slipped under the door of each unit in the building.
5. The Notices have been posted in conspicuous places in the building, advising of the intent to redevelop the Property.

AND I make this solemn declaration, conscientiously believing it to be true and knowing that it is of the same force and effect as if made under oath and by virtue of the Canada Evidence Act.

DECLARED BEFORE ME at Burnaby,
British Columbia, on this 21 day
of April, 2021.



A Commissioner for taking Affidavits for
British Columbia

CHARLOTTE K. WONG
Barrister & Solicitor
2110 Burquitlam Drive
Vancouver, BC V5P 2P1



~~Angela Cooke~~ Abbas Barodawalla



Stacey Lee



April 21, 2021

Dear Tenant,

Please be advised, in preparation for the implementation of our Semi Supportive Housing Program we will be undertaking the following upgrades/renovations:

- To convert Unit 210 to an office space for our Program support workers. This will involve minor upgrades to the electrical and plumbing in the unit. Dust and noise control measure will be implemented, additionally all work will occur within the unit and there will be minimal disturbance to tenants. This work will tentatively begin in May.
- To convert Unit 217-219 to a communal space for staff and tenants. Dust and noise control measures will be implemented, additionally all work will occur within the units and there will be minimal disturbance to tenants. This work will tentatively begin in June.

Semi-Supportive Living is for people who are ready to live more independently. It gives residents privacy and independence within their own apartment and sets goals to provide people with care plans and access to other supports in the community.

During this transition, BC Housing will increase staff presence in the building and will be providing individual support to meet the needs of the program participants.

As an existing tenant, you will not be displaced from your home under this new housing model. You will always have the option to remain as a tenant under the terms set out in your original tenancy agreement.

BC Housing