

Dear Council Member,

My name is Curtis and I am a resident of Kitsilano. I am opposed to this rezoning application in its Current form.

Over the last few days we have heard from numerous BC Housing employees and a fine gentleman from MPA non profit. All of who I have no doubt are good, kind hearted people. None of which addresses the elephant in the room, how are they going to provide the necessary and critical services to the MOST vulnerable and unwell? BC Housing has handcuffed the City of Vancouver (you) to the rezoning of this site to 129 units and has used the use of public funds as the handcuffs, citing they will move on to other projects within the province. If approved in its current form, the City of Vancouver will be setting a very dangerous precedent with the BC Housing for the rest of the city resulting in buildings that do not adhere to zoning by-laws, setbacks or solar access, or community safety input. That you can throw a democratic process out the window, that you can forget about our City zoning by-laws, as long as you pay up. Ultimately, The City of Vancouver can be bought, because if approved, you have turned a blind eye to the community, the history, the failures, the inadequacies of BC Housing and MOST IMPORTANTLY put the community at risk. This is your chance to change that.

The Applicant, city staff, the proposed operator of this building and also proponents of the building who spoke during this hearing have stated numerous that there are no safety risks and often times or failed to acknowledge immediate and apparent safety risks to housing a potentially large number of people with substance use, mental health disorders together in a supportive housing building that will also be about 18 meters from 500 Small children (ages 3-12). Recent statements to the Vancouver Sun made by the CEOs of Atira and PHS, two very experienced BC Housing supportive housing operators in Vancouver show otherwise. At this time I am going to read a published article by the Vancouver Sun dated March 18th 2021

Wednesday's fatal shooting in a B.C. Housing building in the Downtown Eastside is the latest in a spate of drug-related violence that advocates say the government must urgently address through drug decriminalization, enhanced social housing with wraparound supports and more treatment services for people with mental-health and addiction issues.

Shania Paulson, 24, has been identified as the woman who was shot through a door at 4 a.m. on Wednesday as she walked through a hallway of the six-storey Arco Hotel, a single-room occupancy building at 83 West Pender St.

Janice Abbott, executive director of Atira Property Management, which operates the B.C. government-owned hotel, said she believes the shooting was a result of a dispute between two drug dealers who were long-term tenants of the building. The victim was caught in the gunfire as her boyfriend banged on the door to one of the units.

Abbott said it's clear drug-related violence is increasing in Vancouver and she said supportive housing operators don't have the tools to address the prevalence of guns and drug dealers inside the buildings.

"We know we have dealers in most of our buildings," she said. "People ask why don't you evict the dealers. Because people use (drugs) so they'll just be replaced with other dealers."

Supportive housing staff are unable to search rooms for weapons or prohibit guests because the buildings are covered by the Residential Tenancy Act, Abbott said.

I want you ALL to take a moment to really think about what I just read.

Supportive housing operators don't have the tools to address the prevalence of guns and drugs dealers inside the buildings. These are not my words but the words from Janice Abbott, ED of Atira Property Management

In our Nations Capitals, Victoria City Councillors approved the ONLY other supportive Housing site in our Province that is adjacent (within 20m) of an Elementary school, sound familiar? As quoted by Victoria City Council, "Mount Edwards House is housing for seniors who aren't addicted to drugs and who have been screened for violence in their past." Residents who have a history of addiction do need to be on a recovery path. The City Councillors did not turn a blind eye to communities concerns, they worked with the school and came up with a proposal that served those in most need and maintained all safety concerns within the community. Is the City of Vancouver really going to roll the dice proposal, denying the fact that another major Canadian City already determined that this type of use DOES not work adjacent to an elementary school for the same safety concerns as presented within this hearing? IS the City of Vancouver prepared to be BC Housings guinea pig when it comes to supportive housing adjacent to a schools? City of Victoria said NO.

Five minute cut off....

Referencing other supportive housing projects within the city of Vancouver is not relevant to this rezoning project, none of them are 18M from a school, none of them have 500 students arriving to the school by walk, bike or car immediately in front of the supportive housing already in place. A project that breaks many zoning by-lawys. Council, please ask BC Housing to revise their plan to a manageable size that factors in community safety plans, demographic of tenants, you owe this much to the residents and the community you serve.

BC Housing is asking you to throw your zoning regulations out the window based on need but has not addressed their lack of support to the cities most vulnerable as represented in this article and confirmed by not only one but two prominent housing operators in this city. During these hearings, BC Housing, when questioned about staffing, supports, the size of support spaces within the building.....We have all heard the same answer, we have to look at the budget? There are serious inadequacies in support services being offered that have resulted in death, now they are proposing one of the cities largest supportive housing developments on a piece of land that cannot support its size and they cannot communicate to city council staff the level of support that will be offered? They have NOT demonstrated this ability in the past and surely have not with this rezoning application.

Articles: <https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/fatal-shooting-in-supportive-housing-building-latest-in-spate-of-drug-related-violence>

<https://www.vicnews.com/news/mount-edwards-court-approved-for-supportive-and-affordable-housing/>