



REPORT

Report Date: October 21, 2022
Contact: Celine Mauboules
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RTS No.: 14831
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: November 16, 2022

[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities

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

SUBJECT: Single Room Accommodation (SRA) Demolition Permits for 172 East Cordova and 307 Main Street

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve two Single Room Accommodation (SRA) Demolition Permits in accordance with the Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-law to allow for the demolition of 9 SRA-designated rooms at 307 Main Street and 11 SRA-designated rooms at 172 East Cordova. The rooms will be replaced with an 11-storey mixed use building containing 118 self-contained social housing units, including 40 self-contained units designated for singles that will rent at the shelter component of income assistance (currently \$375 per month).

REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks Council's approval to issue two SRA Demolition Permits to Happy Harvest Incorporated, the owner of two SRA-designated buildings located at 172 E Cordova and 307 Main St. Approval of the SRA Permits will enable the demolition of the existing buildings and the creation of 118 new social housing units, including 40 self-contained units designated for singles that will rent at the shelter component of income assistance.

The Development Permit Board approved the project on September 19, 2022, subject to the approval of the SRA Demolition Permits.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- **Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-law (2003)** – The SRA By-law designates rooms 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”. Owners wanting to convert or demolish rooms designated under the SRA By-law must apply for and obtain an SRA Conversion or Demolition permit.
- **Downtown Eastside Plan (2014)** – In March 2014, Council adopted the DTES Plan, which identifies the need to replace 5,000 SRA rooms over the next 30 years with safe, secure and self-contained dwelling units on a one for one basis, while also upgrading the current stock in the interim.
- **SRO Revitalization Action Plan (2017)** was developed by an interdisciplinary SRO Task Force made up of key stakeholders from the City of Vancouver, BC Housing, community partners, as well as SRO owners, building managers, and tenants.
- **Housing Vancouver Strategy (2017)** embedded the SRO revitalization actions into a citywide framework to address housing affordability. The current Council-approved goal is to replace SROs with self-contained, shelter-rate social housing for singles, with an accelerated replacement target of 2,000 new units over 10 years.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

REPORT

Background/Context

SRA Buildings on Site

Happy Harvest Incorporated purchased two SRA buildings in 2015 (see figure 1 and 2 below). The Vets Rooms, located at 307 Main Street, was built in 1908 and is a two-storey, privately owned and operated rooming house with nine SRA-designated rooms. As of 2021, the ground floor commercial retail space was vacant. The Kyé7e, located at 172 E Cordova, was built in 1913 and is a two-storey, privately-owned rooming house containing 11 SRA-designated rooms which are currently operated by Atira's Women's Resource Society.

Figure 1: 307 Main Street (Vets Rooms) – Image and lot location



Figure 2:172 East Cordova Street (Kyé7e)



Proposed Redevelopment

A development application for an 11-storey mixed use building at 315 Main Street was submitted on May 6, 2022 as part of the Social Housing or Rental Tenure (SHORT) program, under the existing the Downtown Eastside/Oppenheimer Official Development Plan (Sub-area 1) and Downtown Eastside Plan (DTES Plan). The new development is addressed as 315 Main St.

The Development Permit Board conditionally approved the development permit application (DP-2021-00795) on September 19, 2022. Before permits can be issued, the applicant must satisfy all ‘prior to’ development conditions, including obtaining approval of an SRA Demolition Permit and entering into a Housing Agreement with the City that secures the tenure and affordability of the new units.

The proposed redevelopment is an 11-storey mixed use building with 118 social housing units and a mix of units types, as described in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Proposed Unit Mix

Unit Type	Proposed Number of Units
Micro Units & Studios	57
1 Bedroom	29
2 Bedroom	26
3 Bedroom	6

Thirty-five micro dwelling units and 5 studio units (33.9% of the total social housing units) will be rented at the shelter component of income assistance for a single individual (currently \$375 per month). Twenty-nine units will be rented to households making at or below the BC Housing Income Limits (HILs) and rented at no more than 30% of a household’s gross income. The remaining 29 units will be rented at rates no greater than 90% of CMHC’s Rental Survey for Vancouver for the applicable year of construction, or the appraised market rent for a comparable unit in the local area.

In addition to housing, the development will also contain a 1,700 sq. ft. non-profit owned and operated community theatre space on the ground level, as well as 5,042 sq. ft. of office space, 11,530 sq. ft. of space dedicated to educational institutions, 4,900 sq. ft. of retail and restaurant space, and over 10,000 sq. ft. of residential amenity space including a courtyard, an indoor amenity space, a children's play area, and an urban agriculture space.

SRA Demolition Permit

The owner submitted two SRA Permit applications on November 10, 2021 to demolish the two existing SRA-designated buildings on site: 11 SRA rooms at 172 East Cordova and 9 units at 307 Main Street. Staff are recommending approval of the SRA demolition permits to enable the delivery of 118 social housing units, including 40 self-contained units designated for singles that will rent at the shelter component of income assistance. This exceeds Council's policy to replace SRA units on a one-for-one basis with self-contained, shelter rate housing units. The affordability and tenure of the units will be secured through a Housing Agreement, for 60 years or life of the building, whichever is longer, as part of the conditions attached to the Development Permit. Eligible former SRA tenants will be able to exercise their right of first refusal on the new housing units, once complete. This is an innovative project that delivers deeply affordable housing and will contribute to improving the health and well being of the community.

Strategic Analysis

Under the SRA By-law, owners wanting to convert or demolish SRA-designated rooms must apply for and obtain an SRA Conversion or Demolition permit. Council has authority to evaluate each application on its own merits and may refuse the permit, approve the permit, or approve the permit with conditions. The Vancouver Charter requires that Council consider at least four factors when deciding whether to grant an SRA Permit. These factors are:

1. *The accommodation that will be available to the tenants affected by the conversion or demolition*

As per the SRA By-law Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy, the applicant was required to provide a Tenant Relocation Plan (TRP) at the time of development permit application that included provisions regarding tenant compensation, moving costs, and right of first refusal, where applicable.

On September 3, 2021 ACCS staff received a TRP application from Marianne Amodio and Harley Grusko Architects, who are the project architects and are also administrating the TRP on behalf of the owner. At the time of application, three tenants were living at 307 Main Street and ten tenants were living at 172 East Cordova Street. The average length of tenancy at 172 East Cordova was two years and all rents were at the shelter component of income assistance (\$375 per month). The average length of tenancy at 305 Main Street was five years and rents ranged from \$475-\$525, with an average of \$483 a month. To meet the TRP provisions, the applicant has committed to the following:

- The applicant will work with Atira Women's Resource Society to relocate the existing tenants within Atira's broader housing portfolio.
- Tenants currently paying the shelter component of income assistance for their rooms will continue to pay the same rate in their relocation unit.

- For tenants paying more than the shelter component of income assistance, the applicant has committed to finding units at a comparable rental rate.
- The applicant provided tenants with initial notice regarding redevelopment plans. As per the Residential Tenancy Act, the applicant will provide tenants with four month notice to end tenancy once all required permits have been received from the City.
- All eligible tenants will be able to exercise their Right of First Refusal (ROFR) in the new project once it is complete.

ACCS staff are satisfied that the applicant’s tenant relocation plan meets the SRA By-law requirements.

2. *The supply of low cost accommodation in the part of the city to which the by-law applies and in other parts of the city*

The approval of the SRA permit will enable the delivery of 118 social housing units and contribute to the City’s 10-year social housing targets as set out in the Housing Vancouver Strategy (see table 1). Forty units (34%) will be designated for singles and will rent at the shelter component of income assistance.

Table 1: Progress Towards 10 Year Housing Vancouver Targets for Social, Supportive and Co-op Housing as of June 30, 2022

Housing Type	CATEGORY	10-YEAR TARGETS	Units Approved Towards Targets
Social, Supportive and Co-op Housing	Supportive Housing	4,100	878 (21%)*
	Social and Co-op Housing	7,900	6,928 (88%)
	Total	12,000	7,806 (65%)

In addition to city-wide targets, the Downtown Eastside Plan contains social housing and secured market rental targets, shown in table 2. To qualify as social housing under the Plan, at least one third of the units must be occupied by persons with incomes below housing income limits, as set out under the current “BC Housing Income Limits.” Since the Downtown Eastside Plan was approved, 2,815 social housing units have been achieved towards the DTES housing targets.

Table 2: Downtown Eastside Housing Targets Progress Update – as of October 2022

	10-Year Target	30-Year Target	Achieved	Gap (10-Year)	Gap (30-Year)
Social Housing (in the DTES)	1,400	4,400	2,815	1,415 <i>(over target)</i>	1,585

*DTES housing targets are measured from 2014 onwards.

***Achieved units include approved, under-construction, and completed units in the DTES as of 2014.*

As a condition of the development permit, a Housing Agreement will be required to secure the tenure and affordability of the social housing units.

3. *The condition of the building that is the subject of the permit*

Like many buildings constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Vets Rooms and the Kyé7e are nearing the end of their useful life. The proposed redevelopment will significantly increase the number of social housing units in the Downtown Eastside, improve liveability, secure tenure and quality of homes for new and returning tenants and provide much needed retail and theatre space in the community. Staff support the replacement of ageing SRO buildings with secured self-contained social housing units.

4. *The need to replace or improve, over time, single room accommodation in the city*

The proposed demolition of 20 SRA-designated units is in keeping with the City's DTES Plan and Housing Vancouver Strategy goals to replace SRA rooms with secured, self-contained social housing that rent at the shelter component of income assistance. The new housing project will deliver 118 unit of social housing, 40 of which will rent at shelter rates, which exceeds Council's longstanding policy of one for one SRA replacement. The new social housing units will significantly increase livability for tenants, including through the addition of private washrooms and kitchens.

CONCLUSION

This report seeks Council approval to issue two SRA Demolition Permits to Happy Harvest Incorporated to demolish two SRA-designated buildings at 179 East Cordova and 307 Main Street in order to demolish 20 SRA-designated rooms. The rooms will be replaced as part of a larger redevelopment project comprised of 118 social housing units, including 40 self-contained units designated for singles that will rent at the shelter component of income assistance.

* * * * *



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

SR No. _____

Civic Address: 172 East Cordova Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1K9

Legal Description: Lot 1 Subdivision Group 1 NWD Block 9
District Lot 198 Plan 184

Building Name: _____

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

Name: Mark Shieh, Director of Happy Harvest Inc. You are the:
Mailing Address: 500 - 1177 West Hastings Street Property Owner
City: Vancouver Postal Code: V6E 2K3
Company Name: Happy Harvest Inc. Phone Number: 604-889-1721 Agent for Property Owner
Non-Profit Number (if applicable): _____

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: Happy Harvest Inc.
Address: 500 - 1177 West Hastings Street Postal Code: V6E 2K3
City: Vancouver Phone Number: 604-889-1721

Property Owner's Name: Mark Shieh, Director of Happy Harvest Inc.
Address: 500 - 1177 West Hastings Street Postal Code: V6E 2K3
City: Vancouver Phone Number: 604-889-1721

Property Owner's Name: Alex Lau, Director of Happy Harvest inc.
Address: 500 - 1177 West Hastings Street Postal Code: V6E 2K3
City: Vancouver Phone Number: 604-889-1721

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|-----|-------------------------------------|--|-----------|---|
| 001 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Convert* occupancy of designated room(s) | <u>2</u> | Total # of storeys in this building |
| 002 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Change term or nature of tenancy of designated room(s) | <u>11</u> | Total # of SRA rooms in this building |
| 003 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Change frequency of rent payments for designated room(s) | <u>0</u> | Total # of non-SRA rooms in this building |
| 004 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Convert* vacant designated room(s) | <u>9</u> | Total # of tenants in this building |
| 005 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Repair or alter designated room(s) | | |
| 006 | <input checked="" 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:

Demolition for the purpose of redevelopment of the property to a mixed-use development including rental housing.

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 checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
If Yes, you must provide the following information:	
1 The number of permanent residents that will be affected? three (3)	
You must also include with this application the following required supporting documents:	
<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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, Mark Shieh, 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 10 DAY OF Nov 202021

Submit



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

SR No. _____

Civic Address: 307 Main Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1K9

Legal Description: Lot 2 Subdivision Group 1 NWD Block 9
District Lot 196 Plan 184

Building Name: _____

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

Name: Mark Shieh, Director of Happy Harvest Inc. You are the:
Mailing Address: 500 - 1177 West Hastings Street Property Owner
City: Vancouver Postal Code: V6E 2K3
Company Name: Happy Harvest Inc. Phone Number: 604-689-1721 Agent for Property Owner
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