

Report date range from: 2/14/2023 5:00:00 PM to: 2/14/2023 10:30:00 PM

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PH 1 - 4. CD-1 Rezoning: 6151-6261 Granville Street and 1511 West 47th Avenue - Support

Date Received	Time Created	Subject	Position	Content	Author Name	Neighborhood	Attachment
2023-02-14	17:39	PH 1 - 4. CD-1 Rezoning: 6151-6261 Granville Street and 1511 West 47th Avenue	Support	<p>Good evening Your Worship and Councillors,</p> <p>My name is Jessica Bouchard, and I live at s. 22(1) Personal and Confidential in Vancouver.</p> <p>Tonight, I speak as a family member whose loved ones – my late grandmother, father-in-law, and aunt – all lived with dementia until they passed away. Today I would like to speak about my aunt’s story in particular.</p> <p>It was challenging when it became clear that my aunt could no longer live safely in her own home as she had done for many years. My Aunt, though living with dementia, was still physically fit and actively mobile – like so many other seniors around us. She enjoyed walking ... but one winter day went out walking and became lost. She wandered into the North Shore mountains just up the street from her home, and it took days to find her. When they did, sadly, the search and rescue team only recovered her body. Such an unhappy ending to a very happy life.</p> <p>My family’s tragedy should serve as an urgent call to action, to safeguard vulnerable seniors in our community. The projected numbers for our rapidly aging population and the exponential rise of dementia worry me deeply. With dementia set to increase over 200% in our province in 20 years, how will we protect our loved ones? That is not much time, when you consider all the preparations and resources that must be secured and built to care for a large portion of the population who will be living with advancing and complex needs.</p> <p>Many solutions are needed - and building continuums of care right now - not waiting for 5 years or 10 years to get started - are a vital part of the plan.</p> <p>Mr. Mayor and Council, more seniors housing with care is urgently needed on the westside, where I live. I ask you, therefore, to please approve this development application for a continuum of care – and help protect our elderly loved ones in this community. Thank you.</p>	Jessica Bouchard	Kitsilano	

2023-02-14	19:27	PH 1 - 4. CD-1 Rezoning: 6151-6261 Granville Street and 1511 West 47th Avenue	Support	My letter in support was sent last Thursday and I received confirmation #201000387523. However, my letter does not appear in the correspondence received so I am resubmitting it during the Public Hearing.	John Kuharchuk	Kitsilano	Appendix A
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John Kuharchuk

s. 22(1) Personal and Confidential

February 8, 2023

CITY OF VANCOUVER
453 West 12th Avenue, Third Floor
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

Attention City Clerk's Office

Dear Mayor and Council –

RE: 6151-6261 Granville and 1511 W 47th Ave Rezoning

I've been involved in the development industry for many years and over the last ten or so I've focused on bringing continuum of care rental housing for seniors to what can best be described as "high barrier to entry" locations. I say "high barrier to entry" because the locations were in mature, built-out communities where the only opportunity for new development was through redevelopment and densification.

The opposition we encountered was at times formidable, primarily because the benefits of helping seniors age safely in place in their own communities are not well understood. To illustrate, the Chair of an Advisory Design Panel here in the Lower Mainland told the panel members he knew a much more suitable site than the one we'd proposed. It sat between a freeway and a tired strip mall from where in his words "the seniors could walk to their old neighbourhood" some four kilometres away down a steep hillside. It may as well have been on an icefloe.

Keep in mind he knew the average age at entry into one of these residences at that time was between 85 and 87. In his view which was echoed by many others in that community, a market condominium on the site we'd proposed would be far less disruptive than congregating so many seniors in one place. The sad irony is that they felt justified in denying the seniors that had built the community a continued place within it.

Facing what can often be a daunting prospect, one might ask "why keep doing it?" The simple answer is because it is the right thing to do. The seniors these residences are intended to serve and support live in the surrounding communities. They've contributed to and helped build these communities over their lifetimes. They've raised their families in them and in the process established a myriad of personal connections, whether from shopping at the same grocery, visiting the same clinic, going to the same bank branch, or chatting with the same fellow dogwalkers.

These neighbourly iterations grounded in familiar settings have been shown to contribute to better wellbeing as they keep people connected. Public health bodies around the world report that loneliness and social isolation pose serious health risks for seniors, significantly raising the risks of premature death, dementia, stroke, and heart disease. Estimates today are that nearly one-fourth of adults 65 and older in North America are socially isolated and as our society ages significantly in the years ahead the incidence of loneliness and isolation could reach epidemic proportions, spiking those health risks along with it.

That said, potential sites in mature neighbourhoods are pricey and securing them often means competing with multifamily developers who may justify paying more by raising the prices of their product. This further raises the barrier to entry and contributes to the reasons why many seniors' residences end up being built in peripheral locations where the sites are less costly and there's less opposition. However, it should not surprise anyone that when the need for care and support that can't easily be accommodated at home arises and the only option for getting that means leaving their home, their community, and a lifetime of personal connections, the vast majority of seniors will stay put – unfortunately often for far longer than they should for their own physical and mental wellbeing.

There are other significant considerations. Continuum of care residences are inherently 'inefficient' in their spatial use and cost more to build and equip. While the saleable area in a market condo typically comprises 87% or more of the above grade-built area with the balance used for amenities and circulation, the rentable area in a continuum of care residence is typically less than 70%. The remainder is needed to provide the supportive services and accommodate triplication of amenities like activity and dining rooms. For example, a residence of this caliber would usually have at least two dining venues for its independent supportive living residents, and one for each assisted living or memory care area because those residents are often too frail or are otherwise unable to use the main dining venues unaided.

So why build a continuum of care residence if they are relatively inefficient and expensive to construct? Because they provide for aging in place. Imagine having made the decision to leave your community in order to move to a retirement home, then you or your spouse's support needs grow. Now you're forced to move again to somewhere that offers more care or one of you stays and the other one moves. Moving is tremendously stressful, particularly after you've already been forced to leave your long-familiar surroundings. Factors like advances in medicine, better diet and physical fitness, and the availability of home care have contributed to longer life expectancies. That means seniors are able to stay in their homes for longer, but by their mid-80s their care needs can change quite rapidly. A continuum of care can accommodate these changing and often complex needs, as well as provide for palliative care when the time comes.

The land is expensive, the buildings are comparatively inefficient, the building costs are higher, and it takes a lot of trained staff to provide the supportive services. The only way to avoid building the equivalent of a "gated community for wealthy seniors", as one municipal councillor coins it, is by adding density so the costs can be amortized across more units to bring the rents down. However, there's another equally important consideration. Senior housing providers like Amica prepare extensive demographic and feasibility analyses to make a determination of the depth of need to ensure a residence is "right-sized" for the community it is intended to serve. The magnitude of the investment and difficulty of the undertaking necessitate this to avoid over-building and any potential "build it and they will come" thinking.

I don't have a dog to walk here. I'm not involved in this application, nor am I being paid in any way to state my opinion. Two of the residences I had a hand in creating are now Amica-owned, but I've had no involvement with Amica for a few years now. However, I am an advocate for the creation of new continuum of care residences for seniors in the communities where they want to continue to live, and for creating more complete and inclusive communities that include the seniors that helped build them.

I have a soon-to-be 88-year-old mother with a heart condition that could conceivably need to move to a residence like this in the not-too-distant future. I don't want her to be compelled to choose between continuing to live alone in relative isolation or moving to what is tantamount to warehousing for seniors, far away from where she's lived some 65 years of her life.

I wholeheartedly support this application and others like it. Thank you.

Sincerely,

s. 22(1) Personal and Confidential"

John Kuharchuk
Email s. 22(1) Personal and Confidential"