

CD-1 Rezoning: 5455 Balsam Street - Oppose

Date Received	Time Created	Subject	Position	Content	Author Name	Neighborhood	Attachment
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2024-07-08	15:32	CD-1 Rezoning: 5455 Balsam Street	Oppose	<p>I am a resident of a low-rise apartment building located at 5454 Balsam Street, across the street from proposed development. I've lived here for 13 years. I have a chronic illness that prevents me from travelling outside the neighbourhood much, and thus I am an excellent witness as to what living on Balsam Street is like.</p> <p>Although, at first glance, this proposed development appears to tick off a lot of marks for increasing density with access to amenities and creating needed rental housing (but at so-called "market" rates), has the committee considered the impact of this monstrosity on those already living here? Balsam Street is a generally quiet street. Observing foot traffic sees many seniors with carers, walkers, and canes; students on their way to and from school; individuals and families walking their dogs; and a fair amount of bicycle traffic. It also sees a lot of emergency vehicle traffic, as well as delivery vehicles. Adding 145 rental units to the street will bring more traffic than it can handle, causing a huge disruption to the neighbourhood for those living on the street, as well as those navigating as pedestrians or cyclists. It has already seen an increase in vehicle traffic in the 13 years I have lived here.</p> <p>Traffic and Parking: I understand the current parking for Fontainebleau Apartments will be cut off from use for the duration of the construction of the proposed development, resulting in 100 vehicles needing to find somewhere else to park over this time. Currently, there is already insufficient street parking for visitors. This has obviously not even been considered.</p> <p>At an earlier public consultation done in 2022, I recall the investigation into traffic use was done during the covid lockdown when residents were not able to venture out to work and elsewhere, which would invalidate the results of that investigation. Has this research been updated since?</p> <p>The Urban Design Panel Minutes dated March 2, 2022, states that "the applicant" has "tried to provide a contemporary architecture that is appropriate to the Kerrisdale setting. It is not appropriate at all! The surrounding area consists of low-rise apartments, condos, and residential housing. Page 10 of the Minutes continues, stating that "the majority of the Panel noted the architectural fit feels generally okay for the density of the area". I really can't comprehend how anyone could feel it "generally okay" if they've spent any time in the area.</p> <p>I ask that you seriously take into consideration my arguments against this development along with the many others I am sure you've received. Going ahead with it will seriously damage our neighbourhood, removing the livability of it from its current (and future) residents.</p> <p>Beverly Faryna</p>	Bev Faryna	Kerrisdale	
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2024-07-08	16:21	CD-1 Rezoning: 5455 Balsam Street	Oppose	<p>I live adjacent to the proposed property. I will be directly affected if you choose to approve this proposal. Despite giving my feedback in February, I feel none of my concerns have been addressed. The council report by the general manager of planning is very much one sided and conveniently omits facts to make it sound that the neighbourhood is in favour. I would strongly urge you to vote against this rezoning until the city can provide answers to the people who actually live here. I have summarized my questions/comment below:</p> <p>1) Public Input: In the council report it specifies on page 10 that there were 247 submissions of feedback. What it omits is how many were in favour and how many were against the project. Page 11, the response to public comments do not seriously address the concerns outlined by residents. Surely public input should mean a 2 way conversation, why were we never contacted after our first input in February with detailed answers to our concerns?</p> <p>2) Family housing and affordability - The project purports to meet the criteria for 35% family sized units. This is a vague criteria that is up to interpretation. Does the city consider a 600 sqft 2 bedroom apartment adequate for a family? And how much is the developer going to charge for this? The average rent at the nearby development on Arbutus starts at over \$3000 for a similar square footage. I thought the purpose of rezoning was to provide affordable housing. We have enough luxury apartments for rent that are sitting empty. How does this project help with affordability? I see no argument in their proposal how this is benefiting the lack of affordable housing.</p> <p>3) Unfit for purpose - Having read the guideline for high density housing for families and children, I don't think this project meets their criteria. For example, I don't see any information that addresses "consideration must be given as to how the additional demand could be accommodated. Discussions should be held with City, Park and School Board staff early in the site selection process to determine the capacity of community amenities. I know for a fact that projections from the Vancouver school Board have been grossly wrong for many years. This year they had 800 more elementary student admissions citywide than they had forecasted. Quilchena, the neighbourhood school is already at maximum capacity. Your general manager of planning has not addressed these issues.</p> <p>3) Shadow - The fly by video on the homepage has been generated without showing how the shadow will affect the buildings around. This is disingenuous, intentional and completely untrustworthy. In addition, the way my house s. 22(1) Personal and Confidential has been drawn and positioned in the video and shadows projections, is factually incorrect. I will be affected by the shadow of the building and the revised shadow studies by the architect are simply wrong.</p> <p>4) Congestion - Balsam street and 37th is already very congested as it is.</p>	Pierre Romano	Kerrisdale	
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2024-07-08	17:00	CD-1 Rezoning: 5455 Balsam Street	Oppose	<p>Karen Kasowitz, resident of §. 22(1) Personal and Confidential opposes the rezoning of that address. For public hearing 6PM July 9.</p> <p>I am continuing the thesis that Larco has done a poor job managing our Fontainebleau building so Larco should not be permitted to construct and manage another rental building.</p> <p>(1) Lack of management. Despite the fact that Larco claims that its properties are "professionally managed," the managers it hires have worked only part time here, dividing their time between this building and other buildings owned by Larco. Presently there is only a part-time manager for our building of 88 suites and 125 residents. But the manager's hands are tied because the Fontainebleau's owner is reluctant to spend money for the amenities that</p>	Karen Kasowitz	Kerrisdale	

are due us. There are times when we tenants take upon the responsibility of cleaning the common areas of our building—the elevators, the laundry rooms, the garbage area, and the pool area; and also watering the plants in the lobby, and watering the garden last spring when the sprinkler system was not working.

(2) Dirty carpets. Under the previous owner, the carpets in the halls were shampooed twice a year. But Larco shampooed them only once in the five years since they took over.

(3) In addition to the swimming pool, another source of exercise for us seniors is the garden. We residents walk around the garden for exercise, socialize there, and find shade under its trees. But if the rezoning is approved, the garden will be demolished.

(4) If the rezoning is approved, 73 residents will lose their parking spaces and will be forced to compete with motorists in finding parking space in an already busy neighborhood. 65 to 70% of the residents at the Fontainebleau are seniors. We need our cars. We cannot take taxis and buses all the time to do our shopping and go to medical appointments. Many of us have mobility problems. We do not want to be forced to park 15 or 20 minutes away from the Fontainebleau and have to walk back with walkers in the rain, carting our groceries. Many of us will feel forced to move out. Where can we go? Many of us are on fixed incomes. Don't squeeze us seniors out of existence. If you truly want to make Vancouver "A Better City", include us seniors too.

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2024-07-08	19:55	CD-1 Rezoning: 5455 Balsam Street	Oppose	<p>The company owner Larco, of 5455 Balsam St, has already shown poor caretaking or completely ignored problems of concern for tenants in this building, and in their other buildings. These are not good landlords. Cityhall has been notified a number of times by tenants, of lack of heat, water, and other issues. A cracked concrete front entrance walkway caused one visitor to break two bones. It was not repaired for many months.</p> <p>Another Larco building's tenants have recently filed a class-action lawsuit. Twenty-seven tenants of Regency Park reported multiple issues with air quality and ventilation in the building, to cityhall. On March 4, a city inspector apparently confirmed multiple heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) building code violations at Regency Park. The tenants have allegedly suffered from serious health affects – such as chronic bronchitis, sleep apnea, and migraines – that they say may be caused by indoor air pollution in their homes.</p> <p>Another Larco building's tenants sued the company, when Lalji owners had another building erected right beside theirs, and shut off the ventilation in the first building, causing health problems, including excessive heat. The tenants won their case against Larco.</p>	Der Oh	Kerrisdale	
2024-07-09	08:51	CD-1 Rezoning: 5455 Balsam Street	Oppose	<p>This development will eliminate the parking for the existing building during construction. This will result in an increase in cars needing to park on the street and Balsam street has very little available parking. Many of the car owners are older adults who rely on their car to maintain their autonomy and independence. While I use and support public transit - it is not always a feasible option for all. In addition, the transportation report admits that the development does not meet the required parking spaces and will mitigate this with more bike racks. The reality is that the majority of people do not use bicycles as their main form of transportation. It is a fantasy to believe that somehow bikes racks will reduce the number of people using cars.</p> <p>Over the years, I have heard stories of the mismanagement of the existing apartment building. In addition I have read articles about this Larco and they don't seem to care about communities only their profits. Trees and green space are important to mental health and well-being and if this development is allowed, we will lose a significant amount of greenery. This would be a loss to the neighbourhood and also to the animals supported by this garden.</p> <p>Please don't allow the development of high priced market rentals that puts profits over the people. Please do not reward Larco for their mismanagement of the existing property. Relying on market forces to bring down rental costs is not the right way to go about improving the housing situation in Vancouver. There needs to be more focus on non-market affordable housing that is actually usable for different types families, not tiny expensive apartments that force families to be under housed. Do not ignore the concerns and needs of older adults in this community.</p>	Nicole Kern	Kerrisdale	

2024-07-09	09:42	CD-1 Rezoning: 5455 Balsam Street	Oppose	letter to mayor and Councilors attached	Nonie Lyon	Kerrisdale	APPENDIX A
2024-07-09	11:51	CD-1 Rezoning: 5455 Balsam Street	Oppose	<p>Dear Mayor and Council</p> <p>I am writing in opposition to the rezoning at 5455 Balsam Street.</p> <p>We have lived on Balsam Street for 35 years, 16 of them being at 5455 Balsam. It has been a great area to live and raise a family. The existing density with its open and green spaces around the apartments has contributed to that greatly!</p> <p>Being able to look out your window and see trees, the sky or just an open space has more value than I can express, versus having to keep your blinds, etc closed just to maintain some privacy. That's not acceptable or good for one's mental health.</p> <p>With eight apartment buildings, six of them being high rises I think Balsam Street between 37th and 41st has done its part for the density of the city in a very livable way, which should not be destroyed.</p> <p>I'm not sure why people living in apartments who already have a small footprint, should be subjected to being crammed as tight as possible for the sake of high density and more rental housing while other areas remain single family housing.</p> <p>There is an empty lot on the corner of 41st and Larch that was slated to be condos, but has remained empty for many years and is now for sale by court order.</p> <p>To destroy a beautiful green space that is valuable to many people, much wildlife and its cooling effect does not make sense when there are other options.</p> <p>I see in the referral report it states under the Secured Rental Policy no residents of the existing building would be displaced. Maybe residents won't be officially displaced, but without a doubt some elderly residents will not be able to continue living here during construction without close access to their vehicle, as well as others who will not be able to tolerate the years of unimaginable chaos while the tower is being built.</p> <p>Street parking is already often difficult to find, so combined with the vehicles displaced from the parkade during construction, along with the many construction workers coming to the site, as well as decreased parking along Balsam it seems like an impossible situation.</p> <p>Larco Investments has been such a negligent landlord who does not care for or about the building that already exists, often compromising the health and safety of the residents. To allow them to build another on this site would be</p>	Judy Huser	Kerrisdale	

				<p>absolutely unjust.</p> <p>Many things in the referral report just don't ring true, like openness to the sky not significantly impacted, a large separation between towers. Approving this additional tower because it is consistent with similar building forms approved on other large RM-3 sites seems like a poor reason for approval, and a low bar to reach.</p> <p>A development like this does not contribute to making Vancouver a very livable city, which is very unfortunate.</p>			
2024-07-09	15:37	CD-1 Rezoning: 5455 Balsam Street	Oppose	<p>The neighbourhood around the proposed development- 5455 Balsam St- is serene and quiet (I live 2 blocks away)- and, yes, this area is traditionally one that is senior-oriented. I read all the comments- both in opposition to the development, and in support of- and I am opposing for all the reasons stated, especially the fact that I have heard several times from various people in Kerrisdale of the terrible situation in the existing building re: upkeep, repairs, proper maintenance, etc. by Larco Investment Group. It is unconscionable to permit this same group to build a new tower when there is a pile of complaints at city hall.</p>	Angie Dee	Kerrisdale	

June 25, 2024

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

I understand that Council is to hear a request for a zoning change in relation to the property at 5455 Balsam St. on July 9, 2024. This change would pave the way for the construction of a 14 story apartment building with 145 units on the property which would be in addition to the present 13 story building, built in 1966, with 88 apartments. I am writing to you to encourage you to oppose this zone change.

I have lived at ^{s. 22(1) Personal and Confidential} since returning to Vancouver in 2007. Until late 2019, the building was owned by a single local person. Just before covid appeared, she sold it to Larco Investments, Maple Leaf property management. We had become used to a management couple living in the building attending to the many issues that can arise in an older building in a timely manner. The current owners are not looking after the building until forced to do so, at times. Instead of fulltime, in residence, managers, we have had part-time, 2 days a week. We have had 7 different managers in the 4 years since the building was sold. Mostly these managers have worked hard but are caught between the needs of the residents and the lack of response from the owners. You will have received a number of letters on the issue of how the owners have been slow to act. I will not take your time to list again the numerous complaints which are one part of our concern about the approval of another building for this site. The current owners have not looked after the building. Their neglect should not be rewarded by permission to build.

Two other issues are of concern for me and hopefully you and others on the Council: **Parking and impact on this residential area and the need for affordable housing. Parking is especially concerning.** The proposed building will be erected on what is now a garden, below which is our current parking. We will lose that as soon as the excavation for the new structure starts. The new building plan shows 142 parking spaces for that new building but not nearly enough to accommodate the current building parkers as well. We've been reassured that there is lots of local street parking but we know that the streets around us have lots of cars already. Parking a number of blocks away doesn't work for many who live here, myself included, as we are older and can't lug bags of groceries that distance. During the construction phase it will be especially challenging but even later, likely several years later, parking will pose a problem for people in the area. I know there is an environmental need for fewer cars to be in use. I agree strongly with that. We need creative solutions to meet the needs in a different way.

Affordable housing. The proposed apartment building will have 145 units. The square footage indicates that they are smaller than usual. The rents charged by the company in this building have increased greatly whenever someone leaves and a new tenant comes in. As I have lived here for 17 years, the rent on my 3 bedroom apartment is \$2913 which includes parking. A similar apartment is now being rented here for \$5100. Two bedrooms and one bedroom apartments have also gone up in a similar way. I understand that in other buildings owned by our landowner, rents are similar. This is not affordable housing!

I urge you and the other councillors to consider at least a delay in changing the zoning and permitting this company to erect this building. Council could request the company to develop a

plan to meet some of the concerns regarding parking, consider a smaller building that would fit into the neighbourhood better, and offer to include a percentage of affordable units. While there are some taller buildings in the area, most are only several stories and the recent density building has been to change single family houses into housing for 5 families. This seems appropriate for this area.

In summary:

Is there a plan to address the parking issues? Not that we know about.

Will the proposed building offer affordable housing? Not as currently designed.

Have the current owners demonstrated the ability to manage a building in a responsive way to meet the legitimate needs of the tenants and ongoing necessary upkeep? No, they have not!

Please deny the approval for a zone change at this time for this site.

Sincerely,

Nonie Lyon

S. 22(1) Personal and Confidential