



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: September 1, 2010  
Contact: Liza Jimenez  
Contact No.: 604.871.6848  
RTS No.: 08832  
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: September 23, 2010

TO: Standing Committee on Planning and Environment  
FROM: Director of Social Development  
SUBJECT: Single Room Accommodation (SRA) Permit for 928 Main Street (American Hotel)

**RECOMMENDATION**

- A. THAT Council approve an SRA Permit for the American Hotel, located at 928 Main Street, in order to add bathrooms and create 3 more rooms for a total of 42 rooms, as per DB433820, subject to the condition that prior to the issuance of the SRA permit that the owner will enter a registered Housing Agreement with the following terms:
- i. That 6 rooms (as per drawings related to DB433820 rooms #320, 301, 312, 313, 212, 213) will rent at \$400/month for 10 years including cable and WiFi, and
  - ii. Any rent increases will be proportional to increases to the shelter component of welfare, currently set at \$375/month.
- B. THAT, subject to the approval of RECOMMENDATION A, the Director of Legal Services be instructed to prepare the necessary agreement described above in consultation with the Managing Director of Social Development and to bring forward the by-law necessary to approve the Housing Agreement.

**GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of the aforementioned.

**CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

The City Manager RECOMMENDS approval of the aforementioned.

### ***COUNCIL POLICY***

On October 21, 2003, Council enacted the Single Room Accommodation By-law (“SRA By-law”) to regulate the conversion and demolition of single room accommodation.

On October 23, 2003 Council amended the Zoning and Development By-law to require an SRA Permit prior to the issuance of a Development Permit.

### ***SUMMARY & PURPOSE***

This report seeks Council’s approval to issue an SRA Permit 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 a Housing Agreement that secures 6 rooms at \$400/month for 10 years. All 42 rooms will remain less than 320 square feet and therefore will remain SRA-designated.

### ***BACKGROUND***

In October 2003, Council enacted the Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-law to regulate the conversion and demolition of single room accommodation. An owner wanting to change the configuration of an existing SRA-designated unit must apply for and obtain approval from Council for an SRA Permit, which must be issued prior to the issuance of a building or development permit. Council assesses each application and may refuse the permit, approve the permit outright, or approve the permit subject to conditions such as a Housing Agreement, a Heritage Revitalization Agreement, and/or payment to the City’s replacement housing fund.

### ***DISCUSSION***

The American Hotel is a 3-storey building which is not on the heritage registry. It is 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 below. This year, the applicant purchased this building which has been closed since 2006. The second and third floors formerly served as a residential hotel with 39 rooms. The ground floor is a 193-seat pub, which has been closed since 2004. The applicant, 928 Main Holdings Ltd, purchased the property in June, 2010.

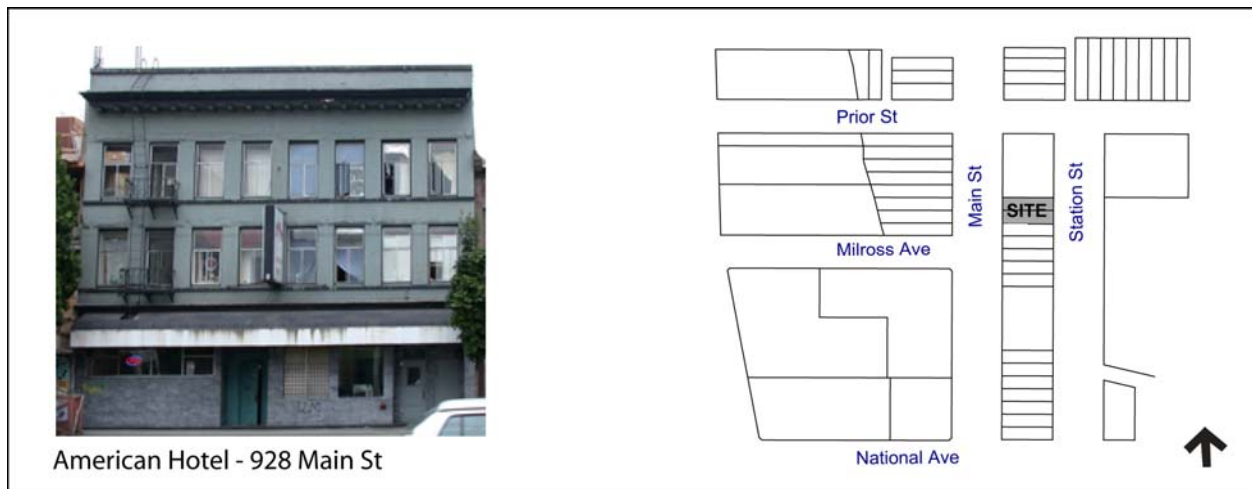


Figure 1: American Hotel, 928 Main Street

The applicant proposes to renovate the existing 39 rooms to include bathrooms and create 3 more rooms for a total of 42 rooms by making use of the wide hallway space. Nearly every unit (38) will include bathrooms and there will continue to be common bathrooms for those rooms that do not have bathrooms (2 rooms on each floor). The owner also plans on re-opening the pub as part of the overall renovation and reinvestment in the building.

This combined development/building permit application has received approval, subject to the issuance of the SRA Permit (DB433820).

As outlined in the Vancouver Charter, Council is required to consider a number of factors in deciding whether or not to grant an SRA conversion or demolition permit. These factors include:

1. **Accommodation for Affected Tenants:** There are no affected tenants as the American Hotel is vacant.
2. **Supply of Low-Cost Accommodation:** The total low-income housing stock for singles in the Downtown Core remained relatively stable between January 2003 (11,390 units), when the SRA By-law was enacted, and January 2010 (11,340 units). By the end of 2013, there will be over 1,100 additional units of non-market housing for singles added to the stock. The following table shows the changes of SRO and non-market housing by sub-area since 2003.

Sub-Area	Change Since 2003						TOTAL
	SROs			Non-Market (singles)			
	2003	2010	Change	2003	2010	Change	
Downtown Eastside	5,273	3,827	-1,446	3,899	5,463	1,564	118
Downtown South	784	544	-240	808	1,063	255	16
Rest of Downtown Core	433	30	-403	187	409	222	-181
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,490</b>	<b>4,401</b>	<b>-2,089</b>	<b>4,894</b>	<b>6,935</b>	<b>2,041</b>	<b>-47</b>

3. **Condition of the Building:** Like many buildings constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the American Hotel requires upgrades. This proposal includes minor renovations to the building and the addition of bathrooms to most of the units to improve livability.
4. **Need to Improve and Replace Single Room Accommodation:** The American Hotel is located in the sub-area called Rest of Downtown Core. Since the enactment of the SRA By-law in 2003, the SRO stock has decreased by 403 rooms in this sub-area because 3 SRA Permits were issued (-110 units) and nearly 300 units were converted to non-market stock (Dunsmuir House & Marble Arch Hotel). Throughout the Downtown Core, the Province has recently purchased and/or leased 24 SRO buildings as a means of improving and securing low cost housing.

5. **History of Building and Land:** This property has a history of poor management and non-compliance with Provincial legislation. In 2006, the tenants were illegally evicted and the owner closed the building. The City asked the owner to re-tenant the building however, it was never re-tenanted. The applicant, 928 Main Street Holdings Ltd, bought the vacant property in 2010.

#### Condition of Approval

Through the SRA permitting process the City encourages re-investment in SRA-designated buildings while discouraging owners from neglecting or emptying their buildings in the hope of obtaining permission to convert or demolish in the future. This application is aligned with those goals.

First, the SRA Permit will not affect the SRA status of the building. The renovations are such that extra space is used from hallways to allow for bathrooms in most of the units. The result is that the units remain less than 320 square feet and therefore remain SRA-designated. This means that any future changes in the building will require an SRA Permit.

Second, the recommended condition of approval for this SRA Permit secures some affordability (6 rooms at \$400/month for 10 years, with increases tied and proportional to increases in the shelter component of welfare).

Third, the applicant is a new owner which has a record of good management of other SRO buildings in the City.

These three factors, along with the significant reinvestment in an SRA -designated building make this application supportable and reduce the likelihood of losing this low-income housing stock.

#### ***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

There are no financial implications.

#### ***CONCLUSION***

This report seeks Council's approval to issue an SRA Permit 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, all subject to the owner entering a Housing Agreement that secures 6 rooms at \$400/month for 10 years. All 42 rooms will remain less than 320 square feet and therefore will remain SRA-designated.

\* \* \* \* \*



CITY OF VANCOUVER  
COMMUNITY SERVICES  
Housing Centre

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

SR No. \_\_\_\_\_

Civic Address: 928 Main St., Vancouver, BC

Legal Description: Lot \_\_\_\_\_ Subdivision \_\_\_\_\_ Block 24 District Lot 196 Plan 184

Building Name: American Hotel

→ 66'7" x N 18 inches of the E49 & 42 Hundredths Ft of 8 Ref 516A

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

Your Name: Christian Willows

You are the:

Mailing Address: 4th Floor, 52A Powell Street

01  Property Owner

City: Vancouver

02  Agent for Property Owner

Postal Code: V6A 1E7

Phone Number: 604-216-0801

Company Name: Living Balance International Trading Ltd.

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 <u>928 Main St. Holdings Ltd.</u>	
Address: <u>4th Floor, 52A Powell Street</u>	City: <u>Vancouver</u>
Postal Code: <u>V6A 1E7</u>	Phone Number: <u>604-216-0801</u>
Property Owner's Name <u>Steven Lippman</u>	
Address: <u>439 Eastcot Rd.</u>	City: <u>West Vancouver</u>
Postal Code: <u>V7S 1E3</u>	Phone Number: <u>604-216-0801</u>
Property Owner's Name <u>James Stewart</u>	
Address: <u>#901-525 Seymour Street</u>	City: <u>Vancouver</u>
Postal Code: <u>V6B 3H7</u>	Phone Number: <u>604-683-6040</u>

<p>This application is to: (Check applicable box)</p> <p>001 <input type="checkbox"/> Convert* occupancy of designated room(s)</p> <p>002 <input type="checkbox"/> Change term or nature of tenancy of designated room(s)</p> <p>003 <input type="checkbox"/> Change frequency of rent payments for designated room(s)</p> <p>004 <input type="checkbox"/> Convert* vacant designated room(s)</p> <p>005 <input type="checkbox"/> Repair or alter designated room(s)</p> <p>006 <input type="checkbox"/> Demolish* designated room(s)</p> <p>*see definitions of "conversion" and "demolition" on reverse side of form under "Explanatory Notes"</p>	<p>Total # of storeys in this building: _____</p> <p>Total # of SRA rooms in this building: _____</p> <p>Total # of non-SRA rooms in this building: _____</p>
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Describe nature of the proposed conversion or demolition:

Reconfigure Rooms to provide 42 rooms, 38 with private washrooms and 4 sharing common washrooms.

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RECEIVED  
JUL 14 2010  
Returned to \_\_\_\_\_  
File No. \_\_\_\_\_

City of Vancouver Single Room Accommodation Conversion or Demolition Permit Application - continued

THIS SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED:	OFFICE USE
Are there any permanent residents needing to relocate as a result of this proposed conversion? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
If Yes, you must provide the following information:	
1. The number of permanent residents that will be affected? _____	
2. A list of names of the residents needing relocation, their room nos. and length of residency	
3. Proposed relocation strategy for existing tenants	
You must also include with this application the following required supporting documents:	
1. 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	
2. Records required under the Hotel Guest Registration Act or Hotel Room Tax Act, tax assessment records, guest ledgers, and daily rent receipts, for the current calendar year and for the three immediately preceding calendar years, in respect of the designated room	
3. One set of floor plans of the existing and proposed floor layout as described below*	
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 purpose,
  - (b) a change in the term or nature of the tenancy to which a permanent resident has the right in respect of a designated room,
  - (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,
  - (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

As owner or owner's agent, I have verified that the information contained within this document and associated applications and plans is correct, and describes a use, a building or a work which complies with all relevant by-laws and statutes. I acknowledge that responsibility for by-law compliance rests with the owner and the owner's employees, agents and contractors. I will 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, including negligence and/or the failure to observe all by-laws, acts or regulations.

Further, I 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.

SIGNED AT VANCOUVER, BC THIS

14 DAY OF July

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Signature of Applicant

