

**Date:** May 29, 2023  
**Time:** 3:00 p.m.  
**Place:** Town Hall Meeting Room City Hall/WebEx (livestreaming)

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**PRESENT:**

**Board**

C. Okell	Director, Permitting Services
A. Law	General Manager, Development, Buildings & Licensing
L. LaClaire	General Manager, Engineering
T. O'Donnell	General Manager, Planning, Urban Design & Development

**Advisory Panel**

C. Taylor	Representative of the Urban Design Panel
G. Song	Representative of the Design Profession
K. Krangle	Representative of the General Public
M. Gordon	Representative of the Heritage Commission
M. Moore	Representative of the General Public

**Regrets:**

D. Pretto	Representative of the Development Industry
J. Carreira	Representative of the Development Industry
M. Joko	General Public
C. Vaness	General Public

**ALSO PRESENT:**

**City Staff:**

J. Olinek, Development Planning  
S. Black, Development Planning  
J. Greer, Development Services  
C. Chant, Engineering Services  
D. Autiero, Development Services  
J-L Borsa, Development Services

**105 Keefer St – DP-2017-00681– HA-1 (COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

**Recording Secretary: K. Cermeno**

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**1. MINUTES APPROVED**

It was moved by Ms. Law and seconded by Mr. LaClaire and was the decision of the Board to approve the minutes of the meeting for May 1, 2023.

**2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

None.

**3. 105 Keefer St – DP-2017-00681– HA-1 (COMPLETE APPLICATION)**

Applicant: Beedie Living

Request: To develop a 9 storey mixed used building with one level Retail (1st floor), including a cultural amenity space, and 8 levels of residential (2nd to 9th floors) containing 111 dwelling units all over three levels of underground parking, having vehicular access from the lane.

**Opening Comments**

Sailen Black, Senior Development Planner presented the proposal and summarized the recommendations contained in the Staff Committee Report.

Staff also presented on the results and recommendations from the previous submission back in 2017 and the judgement from the Supreme Court decision.

**Applicant's Comments**

The applicant noted their reasons for resubmitting their proposal and noted they are willing to work with staff to meet the conditions for approval within the bylaws and policies.

The applicant and staff took questions from the Board and Panel members.

**Comments from Speakers**

Speaker Frantz De Rycke noted his opposition for the project. Frantz has been to many other major cities surrounded by big developments with no spirit and noted it is important to protect the little culture Vancouver has. The Beedie project offers no effort regarding integration and demonstrates a lack of respect. Chinatown and its cultural elements should be protected.

Speaker Sam Alder, designer and homeowner in Vancouver noted that the previous application had over 100 individuals that voiced their opposition to this proposal and on that day members of the public were given a sense of voice when the project was opposed. Beedie is aware that the community has rejected the proposal and it is inappropriate for this community. Going beyond the voice of the people is disrespectful and had Beedie been listening 6 years ago they would understand the reasoning behind such large opposition. It is not right that decisions are

continuously made based on money. Sam noted his opposition for the proposal.

Speaker Zhang Zhi Ping has lived Chinatown for more than 10 years. Zhang has personal experience with the low-income group and noted many face barriers due to language and cultural differences. Chinatown provides the ability for the Chinese community to thrive in Vancouver with resources that help with their day-to-day living. There is an established network in Chinatown. Zhang noted the old age should be able to live peacefully regardless of income status. When government and civilians work together, victory is ours. Zhang opposed the proposal.

Speaker Anna Lau has lived in Chinatown for more than 10 years and most of that time has been in single rooms. The homelessness within the Chinese is very difficult and there is need for community housing. Chinatown offers a sense of belonging with no barriers or judgement. Despite low-income status many of the community will get together to share food and living expenses with others. A strong network includes many successful stories. Anna noted had the government worked to resolve all the problems in the downtown east side they would have noticed the solution is to increase community housing. Anna opposed the proposal.

Speaker Teng Lai Wah noted his participation in the 2017 meeting. The building is nice but does not synchronize with the community around it; it is not compatible with Sun Yat Sen or Memorial garden. The building does not respect the monument or the two figures beside that represent the sacrifice of all the railway workers. Teng requested that Beedie change the exterior design to honor the railway workers. Teng noted housing for seniors is needed. Teng opposed the proposal.

Speaker Devon Knight lived in city gate complex south of Chinatown last 19 years. Devon strongly opposed the proposal. Devon has made a point to learn the history of Chinatown and participate in the community as much as possible. The Board was right to reject the proposal in 2017. The inappropriateness of the project is evident and the main problem is the scale, it will dominate the surroundings and the massiveness cannot be masked. Too many massive developments have been allowed in Chinatown and this particular development is by far the worse as it overlooks the main center monument, which is the heart of Chinatown. Please reject this proposal.

Speaker Stephen Bonus is a renter who has been evicted illegally therefore understands how crucial it is for renters. Stephen pointed out a discrepancy in a drawing posted on the City's website. This massive site overpowers Chinatown and its monument. This project is an intrusion to the Chinatown community. This is a form follows profit project; there is nothing about a form that respects Chinatown's guidelines, it is a for profit proposal. Concerned with gentrification with the precedent this development will create. Stephen opposed the project.

Speaker Lewis N. Villegas, an Urban Design specialist with over 30 years' experience in Canada and the United States. Lewis noted the scheme presented is all about form follows profit. Chinatown square is really a triangle there is a leg missing which can only be resolved by extending it. This will achieve a number of civic goals. Once Chinatown square is extended, many other good things will follow. A great fountain can be created in the extended square. Extend Chinatown square to the lane and add to the museum. Lewis opposed the proposal.

Speaker Patrick Leong strongly opposed the proposal. Patrick noted past and generations to come have lived in Chinatown. There have been various attempts from the government to erase Chinatown from history. The years of opposition has created a large group of low-income families and individuals in addition to the rising costs of living and gentrification. However, despite these obstacles the Chinese community has worked hard to get ahead in life. An example is the towers at Keefer they did not save Chinatown. These developments are displacing residents and erasing its culture. The choice here is between a harmful project and a project that could help the community. Back in 2017, it was decided this project was not a positive contribution and was rejected. More work is needed on the massing, frontage and saw tooth, it offers no pedestrian interest and Beedie did not engage with any artist that would help integrate with the community. The backdrop to the monument square is inappropriate. This project will only increase the lack of support and housing available for its residents.

Speaker Clare Yow, a member of the Chinatown community and artist renting a below market rental studio in the community. Clare noted concern with the proposal and the threat it will have against the low-income individuals. The Chinatown monument honors many veterans and the generations before us who suffered the pain and exclusion of the Chinese exclusion act and yet still fought to in live under these horrific acts. This project does not honor any of this. Does Beedie consider how they are excluding the community when it open opens the door to wealth and gentrification? It does not improve the housing crises, the residents, or revitalize the community. Clare noted her opposition for the proposal and strongly urged the board to oppose the proposal.

Speaker Hannah Goa noted it is important to consider the environment. Best to leave the monument square as it is, if you develop there will be no space for the Chinese community to get together and organize. Chinatown should have a chance to improve and unify. Chinatown needs good leadership.

Speaker Yang Gang Ku has lived on Keefer Street for the last 22 years. Yang noted developers have so many sites where they can develop their high rise and this is not a big site for this type of development. Many tourists from around the world come to visit Chinatown. Would like to ask the developers to leave a senior activity center. When you enter at the entrance of the memorial garden, you will see a large number of seniors using this space for their wellbeing. Hope the developers will respect the Chinese history and leave a space for seniors to do their activities. Government officials should work with the developers to protect the Chinese community and preserve their status quo.

Speaker Julia Wong works for many organizations that advocates for the health and wellbeing of the Chinese and downtown eastside. Julia noted her grandparents immigrated to help with the construction of the pacific railway. Chinatown exists because of years of exclusion and segregation from the rest of the population. A lot of seniors and Chinese immigrants continue to live in the neighborhood, yet our voices continue to not be heard. This development has come to council multiple times and every time has been opposed. Julia noted her opposition for the proposal.

Speaker Rita Wong a Professor of environmental ethics at Emily Carr, noted that many of her students shared that they cannot afford housing and housing should be a human right, instead of allowing for profit developers who do not care about the community. This design is not right for the space. When the project was rejected back in 2017, it was noted that work needed to be done to reduce the massing and floor area to mitigate impacts to the memorial plaza. This site is the heart of Chinatown, a public space for intergenerational cultural practices and should be given the proper respect. This building is an insult to the function of the community. A deep understanding of the community has been alienated from the proposal. The building will overshadow the square, which is problematic as this is the entryway to Chinatown. The addition of the red boxes is an insult to the community. Do not approve this application. If changes are made, considering involving the public and community to review. I hope this panel understands the historical wrongs that have led us to this moment. Rita noted her opposition for the proposal.

Speaker Bruno Clapci noted visitors from overseas always come to visit Chinatown. It is important to defend the interest of the Chinatown community who have built this spot for future generations, protect the wonderful Chinese buildings made by the ancestors. It would be a tragedy if the panel allows for transformation of this area. The building being proposed does not resemble Chinatown in anyway. It is critical the planning of the new development achieve the vision of the Chinatown direction. This development will make Chinatown unaffordable and unlivable. Bruno noted his opposition to the proposal.

Speaker Charles Barber came to learn the many stories of the people of Chinatown from an Opera he created called Chinatown. Charles asked whose story we are telling when building this development. During the assessment of policy, do we make choices as to what belongs to who and where this project may meet the technical aspects but omits the spirit of the community and the people it serves? It is a project that could meet with great success somewhere else but not for the irreplaceable elements, that is Chinatown. Charles asked the board to reject the proposal.

Speaker Kathy Shimizu a Japanese settler who has been working in the downtown eastside since 1991. Kathy asked the DPB to reject the proposal as it did in 2017. Because of the sites, cultural square and gateway to Chinatown, this application should be met with review from members of the community. Chinatown is a place with deep history and meaning. These communities were created because they were not allowed to live anywhere else. The history of the head tax and the cultural creation by the members of the community cannot separate the social and technical elements of the development. The voices of the members of the community such as the low income and the residents of the downtown eastside need to be heard. Perhaps this is an opportunity to create a community land trusts with all the charitable work Beedie does.

Speaker Lewis Hart owner of two Chinatown businesses noted support for the development. This proposal allows for revitalization efforts. There is a need for individuals with expendable income to live in the neighborhood to keep it thriving. Residents are more likely to spend money at the legacy businesses rather than tourists. Many associations do not agree what is the best for the Chinatown area, Chinatown deserves to move forward to be a place like the rest of the neighborhood.

Speaker Melody Pan noted the board focused only on the architecture context in 2017. The project harms the mental physical and wellbeing of the community. This building will aggravate the mental health of the community and downtown eastside. Melody noted the example of the Montreal Chinatown, which has been ruined by similar developments. Melody noted opposition for the proposal.

Speaker Karine Ng has experienced Chinatown as both an immigrant and settler. Karine witnessed firsthand how any change in the demographic shift changes the communities. Developments such as 105 Keefer do have an effect of segregation and red lining. There is a big divide between those who have and have not. Many seniors have to travel further and further away to have their needs met, please listen to our seniors they are our ancestors. An alternative can emerge if this application is rejected, such as an alternative land, a land swap or land trust but by approving this proposal, we are foreclosing any alternative solution.

Speaker Stephanie Leo has a historical and familial attachment to Chinatown. Stephanie noted the development is out of touch with the community needs. Memorial square honors those who fought for our future it should not be threatened by luxury condominiums; Beedie could have engaged the community in the process but did not. The development does not provide any affordable units or units for the seniors. Stephanie asked the board to reject the proposal and noted the following points:

- The proposal disregards the culture management asset plan passed in 2022;
- Beedie has disregarded their revitalization efforts;
- Negative impacts of previous developments, these developments did not fulfill development promises making it difficult for the community;
- Memorial square is not being respected;
- The saw tooth pattern is not in line with the heritage patterns of the community.

If the city is looking to improve the pedestrian interest, need to understand what that means for this community. Stephanie opposed the proposal.

Speaker Peggy Lee, a Chinese Canadian lawyer, noted her opposition for the proposal. There are many reasons this proposal should not be approved. Peggy urged the board to reject the application as it did in 2017. This site is next to the veteran memorial and monument, which has a lot of significance to the Chinese community. The proposal has no regard to the historical context and culture of this community. Peggy has heard from many seniors who stated they are being booted out of places to practice their exercise. These are luxury condominiums that do not belong to this site. It is adding insult and harm to our ancestors. It is limiting the opportunities for affordable housing. Peggy urge the City and developer to look at the needs of the community. Please stop irreparable harm.

Speaker Kay Higgins noted Chinatown is a welcoming space, and social spaces for the use by seniors and youth are already limiting. Flexible accommodating spaces allow for new innovative social movements where people associate, reinvent and merge connections. There is nothing distinctively Chinatown proposed with these buildings. It is a very large mass for the area. This site deserves so much more consideration and concern with integration with the entire community. Kay noted opposition for the proposal.

Speaker Robin Tavender noted the City of Vancouver is a franchise. Government must take all measures that laws are consistent with the declaration. The applicant promotes segregation with this proposal, and the speakers have not been given a fair process.

Speaker Hai Lin a Canadian Citizen who has lived in metro Vancouver for more than 26 years. Consider the design of the building it does not have any tradition Chinese cultural elements. Chinatown will be destroyed. Hai suggested leaving a certain amount of space at the monument so the Chinese can express themselves and can commemorate the Chinese descendants. Hai opposed the proposal.

Speaker Terry Hunter strongly opposed the proposal. The proposal was refused in 2017 and should be refused again. With the escalating rents and property taxes deeply concerned with Chinatown's future and the horrible impact on the community presently. Legacy businesses are being priced out. This site is a gateway to the heart of Chinatown. Market price condominiums does not meet the needs of the Chinatown community. The design does not meet the historical context of Chinatown. Consider a land purchase or land swap with the Beedie group.

Speaker Arthur Shu Ren Cheng expressed severe concern with the proposal especially at the north side of the monument. This monument was completed in collaboration with the City of Vancouver and the public art has great significant to the community and rest of Canada. This is a serious issue to invade this cultural space. Tall buildings are proposed, the significant height causes an awkwardness and it is a sign of disrespect to the monument. Consider a space that fits Chinatown and its cultural value and future. Arthur suggested a design competition to see which best meets the need of the area. Arthur opposed the proposal.

Speaker Christina Chiu noted while growing up in Vancouver every Sunday would go to Chinatown to attend a Chinese-speaking place of worship and to get affordable groceries and meals. Chinatown has been our only connection to the joyful and painful history of our people. Christina asked the panel to consider protecting the Chinatown community and reject this proposal, as there is no social affordable housing and it will displace seniors that have lived here for years. This is an area where they have foods they can eat and resources in their languages and this will be taken away by this development. This is a key cultural location; do not let these seniors be pushed out. Soften your hearts and hear the comments of the working and low-income people that make up Chinatown and the downtown east side. Beedie Corporation cares nothing for the residents that already exist. Chinatown needs resources to help this community regain its vibrancy. Safety and revitalization needs a development that has a wide range of individuals that are involved in the development process while gaining resources from all levels of government.

Speaker Jean Swanson worked in the downtown with the east side resident association. Jean spoke against this site in 2017 and speaking against again. This site is important to the community as a gateway to Chinatown. Things to consider is will the Chinese seniors feel comfortable at their own memorial square. Will there be any housing for the Chinese seniors living in shelter. Will this important site be its own exclusion of its people? Who do you want

Chinatown and the memorial square be for? Consider a building that the community needs and wants. Jean opposed the proposal.

Speaker Sarah a former social worker in the downtown eastside regularly in the Chinatown area in the SROs. The people who can afford to live in these condominiums are not in a state of crises. The focus should be on diversity and social equality. This condominium will raise rent up therefore individuals of color, downtown eastside, and the Chinese community will be most affected. This application does not fit with the goals listed in the city website. Members of the community are being forced out of an area that provided resources for Chinese seniors that speak the language, such as doctors. Beedie has not spent any time in the community. You are talking about the lives of the resident and surrounding community. Sarah opposed the proposal.

Speaker Mark Lee noted Chinatown is already unrecognizable. Chinatown already has developments that are unrecognizable and are difficult to way find which affects the long-standing members of the community Chinatown. The use of what they believe are Chinese colors are offensive. The proposed building does not fit with the neighborhood it is an insult to the people in Chinatown. Mark opposed the proposal.

Speaker Hayne Wai a Vancouver resident for 68 years opposed the proposal. In 2017 Hayne opposed the proposal due to concerns with the height, density and the impact of the massing on the square and Sun Yat Sen Garden. There is need for more public consultation. The application has not met the design test. During the pandemic, there has been Asian hate and increase in crime and poverty. The proposal will only contribute to this. Hayne noted Chinatown does have a need for developments that will bring back its community members, smart developments with cultural responsible designs and a distinct cultural heritage. Hayne recommended dialogue that is more meaningful and planning involving community members.

Speaker Cynthia Lam noted her attendance at the Vancouver Chinatown rally and noted it was truly an intergenerational event with individuals of all ages and backgrounds. This is an urban neighborhood for seniors to live they are the memory keepers of the community and therefore there is great need for social housing for the seniors. The seniors do not ask for much but a small living quarter where they can keep passing on the triumphs, tragedies, and lessons from our history and live within their amenities and cultural needs. Deluxe condominiums is not the answer instead we should be supporting out local youth clubs and encourage intergenerational activities. Cynthia opposed the proposal.

Speaker Jayce Salloum lived on the edge of Chinatown for 27 years. Jayce noted support for the seniors and opposed the proposal. Jayce chose Chinatown due to the richness of the area; everyone had deep and meaningful stories to share. There have been many developments dropped in the Chinatown area that have not been successfully and have been detriments to the Chinatown community and culture. The proposal needs to be reconsidered to positively affect the community, the surrounding area and the poverty of the downtown eastside.

Speaker Bryon Peters, a sessional instructor at Kwatlen and UBC lived within the Chinatown area for most of his adult life. Bryon noted the concerns are far beyond the visual, the proposal does not comply with the zoning development bylaw regulation and the HA-1. The proposed

development at 105 is not contextually appropriate for Chinatown and its historical surroundings. The project is not in line with the HA-1 urban guidelines.

The development completely disregards the Keefer triangle, which should be preserved for generations to come. The development should not be overshadowing the memorial square. The building's mass, density and design are not appropriate. If this proposal is approved it will set a negative precedent. The building's 111 new condominiums will only displace more residents and go against addressing the housing crises. The banality of evil from this building is a real thing. Chinatown has already lost much of its legacy businesses. It is not a time to add luxury condominiums in already a fragmented neighborhood. Rejecting this proposal is a small step towards making Vancouver livable.

Speaker William Liu second-generation owner of a Dim Sum location in Chinatown noted accessible food and affordable housing is much needed. Many of the members of Chinatown want to be treated with dignity. Many legacy businesses have already been lost. There is a large year-to-year increase in rent, which have pushed out many its members. There is no protection for the legacy business owner or long standing community members. How does this development support any of the objectives in the report? This development will only have long term negative results and call for new business that will push out the traditional ones. Please consider the seniors are losing affordable housing and places to eat. William opposed the proposal.

Speaker Adele Noronha used the memorial square as a place socialize with new and old friends. This is a space to gather and share treats and stories. Adele echoed past comments that elders are being displaced from these spaces, where they also practice exercise for their own health needs to and to pass on healthy practices to the younger generations. The mass of the proposed building hides the monument of the building that is to represent the historical oppressed members of the community. Cannot believe this is back on the table since the 2017 rejection. Adele opposed the proposal.

Speaker Jordan Eng a member of the Business improvement association noted his support for the proposal. Jordan noted this is culturally appropriate space not only for the social needs of the Chinese community but also to connect our community to others. Chinatown needs to remain an inclusive community and supportive neighborhood.

Speaker Kim Tran a member of a family owned restaurant on Pender Street noted support for the proposal. The proposal brings economic support and revitalization in this area. Kim noted they have participated in providing affordable meals to the community however, it is difficult to sustain, as there is a decline in patrons and loss of foot traffic. There has been a decline in the neighborhood's vibrancy, which effects its businesses. The new building provides hope for economic growth. The new residents will foster Chinatown with a prosperous future. Agree the building can do more in providing inclusivity and cultural prosperity. Let us not limit opportunity for change and transformation.

Speaker Syrus Lee, founding chair of the Vancouver Chinatown BIA 21 years ago and director of the merchant society. Syrus noted witnessing the difficulties of Chinatown and the impacts of

covid and changing City Council. Businesses and property owners have suffered the last 4 years, however this year, 2023, Chinatown has started to see positive changes and is a glimpse of what Chinatown could be. Hope new building with new retail will bring more customers to Chinatown.

Speaker Ameet Johan noted he chose to live in the Chinatown neighborhood due to its history and spirit. This area needs more inclusivity of individuals, there should be an increase in generational vibrancy not just gentrification. Not in favor of development, that does not respect history of the community and the needs of the community. Development should add life to the community. Can understand the fear demonstrated in 2017 by the members of the community. It is important to encourage renewal and reinvestment however would like to see the local business reap the benefits. During covid, many of the residents came out to make sure the seniors were safe. Cannot rely on the people that do not live in the community. Do not support white washing this historical community and advocate the preservation of the neighborhood

Speaker Jerry Rakhra noted support for the proposal. Jerry noted new retail will draw more people into the neighborhood. More individuals/families could call Chinatown their home. Understand the fear of the culturally sensitive neighborhood, but doing nothing is causing Chinatown to suffer; the proposed area should not just be an empty lot.

Speaker Rachel Lau, an employee and volunteer in the neighborhood noted opposition for the development. The needs of the community should be considered. In the last 6 years Beedie has made no effort to communicate with the community, this is just a tokenized playground for the wealthy. If nothing has changed since the last proposal, why should it be approved today? In 2017, Mr. Kelley noted the applicant should amend their application to encourage the full engagement of the community in the design development. This has not been done instead Beedie has challenged the supreme court order so that the City is forced to approve their unchanged proposal. Given the cultural and historical significance of the memorial site, the community, public and design panel should review this proposal. Is the legacy of Chinatown for the people or for profit? Rachel ask the board to reject the proposal.

Speaker Nathalie Lim Picard has a personal and professional connection to Chinatown. Beedie is not just proposing a building on a significant community but on a land that is significant itself. Nathalie continued to read from a historical insert regarding Lot 23. Nathalie opposed the proposal.

Speaker Fred Mah founding board member of the Chinese cultural center, has chaired many public projects. This development is culturally inappropriate for this historical area. The proposed building has a mass and density that is a negative impact on the square and monument. There have been no changes since 2017. Reject this application development will destroy Chinatown. Engage the community in the design process to meet the design test. Instead of taking encouragement from Mr. Kelley the applicant took the city to court, they care nothing about Chinatown. Fred opposed the proposal.

Speaker Lillian Deeb a worker advocate with years of experience with the Board of Vancouver tenancy union, noted opposition for the proposal. Back in 2017, the board had good reasons for

rejecting the proposal. The opposition of 2017 marks an intergenerational organization to make support of the opposition happen. It took a whole community to come together to make the voices heard. There are solid ground to reject this proposal a sixth time.

Speaker Michael Tan has lived his entire life in Chinatown. Michael strongly opposed the proposal. There are guidelines created with consideration and aiming to preserve the heritage of the community. Scale and density of the development is out of proportion and fails to integrate harmoniously the existing streetscape. This proposal diminishes the quality of life for the existing residents. In 2017, DPB board found the application lacking, support the decision back in 2017 and should be rejected again.

Speaker Chris Gardner, resident of the downtown core, support the proposal. There is a need invest and build our communities or else they will wither away. These developments are important to create a vibrant and excited community. Remove the red tape and roadblocks and allow for more people to come coming we need to create a market for rental or the affordability will get worse.

Speaker Carven Li opposed the proposal. Carven noted opposition in solidarity with all the residents that spoke. Consider who will be excluded if this design is approved. A tower of private market housing will negatively affect their sense of belonging. The development is too high for the site. Encourage neighboring groups by including them in free community events. Private market units will make decrease the amount of open space in that plaza. Creative alternative solutions are needed. There is already a huge shortfall of units provided for seniors I implore the board to reject this application. Consider a land swap for a social housing.

The meeting ended at 9:56pm.