

## GASTOWN HISTORIC AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE AGENDA

DATE: Wednesday, November 15, 2023  
TIME: 4:30 pm  
PLACE: Cascadia Room (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Vancouver City Hall)

*Please e-mail [ghapc@vancouver.ca](mailto:ghapc@vancouver.ca) if you are unable to attend this meeting.*

- 
- |  |  |                    |
|--|--|--------------------|
| <b>1. Introduction</b>   |  | <b>4:30 - 4:35</b> |
| <b>2. Adoption of Agenda and Minutes</b>   |  | <b>4:35 - 4:45</b> |
| <p>Proposed meeting agenda, and minutes of October 18, 2023 to be adopted.</p>   |  |                    |
| <b>3. Rezoning Application (RZ-2023-00035): 8-36 W Cordova St &amp; 15-27 W Hastings St<br/>Dunn and Miller Block, VHR-A, M (8 W Cordova St)<br/>Callister Block, VHR-B, M (30-34 W Cordova St)<br/>McIntosh Block, VHR-B, M (36 W Cordova St)</b> |  | <b>4:45 - 5:30</b> |

The City of Vancouver received a policy non-compliant application to rezone 8-36 West Cordova Street (HA-2, Gastown Historic Area District) and 15-27 West Hastings Street (DD, Downtown District) to CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) District under the Downtown Eastside Plan.

The rezoning application for both sites are concurrently under review, but the focus of VHC's review would be on the proposed rezoning of the West Cordova site that is within the Gastown Historic District National Historic Site of Canada, particularly the proposed façade-only retention strategy of the three designated heritage properties.

### Key relevant policies on built form strategies under Downtown Eastside Plan

#### *Gastown Historic Area (HA-2) District*

- the maximum density is determined through site-specific context, heritage considerations, and urban design performance;
- the permitted height for a heritage building is its existing height, with a maximum height of up to 22.9 meters (or 75 feet);
- rezoning applications will not be considered for market residential development or for increasing the heights and densities from what current zoning permits.

#### *Downtown District – Victory Square sub-area*

- the maximum density is 5.0 FSR, with a maximum of 3.0 FSR for residential floor area.
- subject to retail continuity requirements, support relaxation of the maximum residential density of 3.0 FSR for projects that include a minimum of two-thirds social housing or 100 percent secured market rental housing, or through rezoning for public benefits.
- the maximum permitted height, through rezoning, is up to 105 feet for market projects for public benefits including social housing, secured market rental housing, and/or heritage building rehabilitation.

### Rezoning Proposal

The proposal for the West Cordova site is an 11-storey building (commercial and office uses), with a building height of 48.7 m (159 ft.), and a floor space ratio (FSR) of 8.77. The proposal for the West Hastings site is a 19-storey building (commercial and residential uses,

with 127 secured market rental units and 62 below market units, a building height of 54.8 m (179 ft.), and a floor space ratio (FSR) of 9.49. More information is contained with the [Rezoning Application Booklet](#), along with other application documents, that available in the [shapeyourcity](#) webpage.

#### Heritage Conservation Plans: Façade-only Retention

The West Cordova site includes three landmark historic buildings that are legally protected by municipal designation: the Dunn and Miller Block (8 W Cordova St); the Callister Block (30-34 W Cordova St); and the McIntosh Block (36 W Cordova St). They form part of an important historic commercial streetscape, notable as early buildings to be constructed of load-bearing masonry walls after the great fire of 1886. Their historic value is also associated with providing single-room accommodation for resource industry workers and travelers, illustrative of the early development of this historic area.

Three Heritage Conservation Plans are prepared by Luxton & Associates for each of the protected heritage buildings, including their historic context, statements of significance, and conservation recommendations. In general, the primary conservation treatment for all three heritage buildings is façade-only retention. This would result in substantial demolition of the exterior and structure of the heritage buildings to accommodate the construction of a contemporary, multi-storey addition behind the three retained historic façades. Based on their preliminary assessments, none of the changes over time, particularly the later concrete structures, have become character-defining elements that would merit conservation.

#### **Issues:**

- i. The proposal, as presented, includes substantial demolition, severe alteration, replacement of original building structure, removal of character-defining elements or loss of heritage value, and façade-only retention of three protected heritage properties.
- ii. The detrimental impacts of the proposed height and overall scale of development to the federally designated Gastown Historic District National Historic Site (exceeding maximum two-storey addition up to a height of 75 feet, with substantial setback from the historic façades).
- iii. There are no rezoning enabling policy within the Gastown Historic Area (HA-2) District under which the proposal for the West Cordova site can be considered. Although the application is considered policy non-compliant, the proposal was formally submitted for a comprehensive rezoning review process.

**Staff:** Chee Chan, Rezoning Planner  
Hiroko Kobayashi, Development Planner  
Elijah Sabadlan, Heritage Planner

**Applicant:** Jill Wanklin & Nathaniel Funk, Bosa Properties  
Chris Knight & Sindhu Mahadevan, Michael Green Architecture  
Levi Stoelting, Glotman Simpson Consulting Engineers  
Donald Luxton, Luxton & Associates

#### **4. New Business**

**5:30 – 5:45**

#### **5. Next meeting**

**DATE: December 20, 2023**

**TIME: 4:30 pm**

**PLACE: Cascadia Room (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Vancouver City Hall)**