



P.O. Box 3336, Vancouver, BC, V6B 3Y3, (604) 254-9411

July 19, 2006

Mayor Sullivan and Council
Vancouver City Hall
453 W. 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

Dear Mayor Sullivan and Council:

Re: Fire Hall No. 15 Options

We are writing to express our support for Option 7 identified by City staff to preserve this important neighbourhood landmark. The Fire Hall was listed on Heritage Vancouver's Top Ten Endangered List for 2005, and would have been on our 2006 list had we known there were still options on the table for its demolition.

Built in 1913, Fire Hall #15 is the last remaining of its kind still in use, and is the only Edwardian hall remaining on the east side of Vancouver. This building is of great importance to the Renfrew-Collingwood community, as virtually no other structures survive as a record of the neighbourhood's history. As a local landmark, the building is very prominent -- visible from 3 blocks away in all directions.

We support Option 7 which calls for the retention of the existing Fire Hall, with a new two (or three) bay structure built adjacent, but not attached, to the existing building. Option 7 is preferable to Option 4b (new attached structure) because under the City of Vancouver Building By-law, a stucco/fire resistant exterior finish would be required on the east side of the existing building instead of the original heritage fabric (shingle/siding). However, Option 4b is an acceptable compromise if Option 7 is not feasible.

We also support height relaxations for the new building similar to the Prince Albert station to accommodate extra floor area to meet Fire and Rescue Services program requirements.

It is important to note that the Vancouver Heritage Commission evaluated this building as a 'B' only because of the existing renovations; however, fully restored it is a potential 'A' resource not only for its built form, attractive massing, and striking presence but for its historical and cultural value.

With the stucco removed, the window and door trim restored, and a True Colours program utilized, the shingle and siding finish will make this a striking community landmark. With its

extensive interior woodwork, ornate pressed-metal ceilings, and original brass pole, the old Fire Hall has potential to be a vibrant community or cultural centre, similar to the role played by heritage conversions in other neighbourhoods, including the Van East Cultural Centre, the Marpole Place Seniors' Centre (Firehall #22), and the Roundhouse Community Centre.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SBoissonneault', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Susan Boissonneault, Vice-President

c.c. Gerry McGeough, Senior Heritage Planner
Vancouver Heritage Commission
Ray Holdgate, General Mgr., Fire & Rescue Services
Susan Mundick, General Mgr, Park Board