



## Heritage Vancouver

www.heritagevancouver.org  
info@heritagevancouver.org  
604 254 9411

PO Box 74123, Hillcrest Park PO,  
Vancouver, BC  
V5V 5C8

September 13, 2015

Mayor Gregor Robertson and Vancouver City Council  
Vancouver City Hall  
453 West 12th Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

### **Re: First Shaughnessy Heritage Conservation Area**

We are writing to express **our strong support** for the **proposed First Shaughnessy Heritage Conservation Area**. We spoke in favour of the proposal at the July 21, 2015 public hearing and we want to reiterate our unequivocal support for the creation of the Heritage Conservation Area in the First Shaughnessy District ahead of the third Public Hearing as it is our view that these regulations promote the greater public good of the community.

Heritage Conservation Areas align with a broad range of current values many Vancouverites hold: sensible density increase, affordability, environmental concern, neighbourhood character, community, and respect for the city's heritage. They have been successful in over 70 locations in BC including ten neighbourhoods in Victoria.

Additionally, they have been proven to be effective by two recent reports (*Heritage Conservation Districts Work! Heritage Conservation District Study Summary Report 2009* and *Heritage Districts Work – More Stories of Success Heritage Conservation District Study Phase 2 Summary Report* are available at <https://uwaterloo.ca/heritage-resources-centre/projects-research/recent-projects> ) on 32 well-established Heritage Conservation Districts in Ontario- many of which were designated in or before 1992. Conducted by the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario with cooperation from the Heritage Resources Centre at the University of Waterloo, the reports examine resident satisfaction, the meeting of heritage and planning goals, and community involvement. They conclude that these districts have been overwhelmingly successful in all these categories.

There is also empirical research pertaining to the strength of property values in Heritage Conservation Districts in the above reports. They found that “real estate values in Heritage Conservation Districts generally rise more consistently than surrounding areas.” These findings in addition to the Coriolis Report should be of merit in addressing concerns about perceived downward pressure on property value gain.

There has also been concern about the negative impact by additional density on the character of First Shaughnessy. We would like to point out that this area actually has a long history of multiple dwellings and the subdivision of large homes into smaller units during the Depression years and the Second World War. Furthermore, it is important to note that it is not the increase in density per se that is potentially detrimental to an area but the manner in which it is increased. If the increase maintains the estate character of First Shaughnessy, which the proposed HCA does, then it is hard to see how it would have a substantial impact.

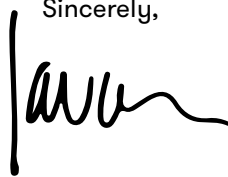
We would argue that the status quo, where housing size is allowed to increase to the point where it threatens the estate character of the area, is far more malignant to the very things that make First Shaughnessy a treasured place in Vancouver.

Finally, much has been made of monetary loss. But there are also social costs in the form of loss of neighbourhood character, loss of history, loss of community and unnecessary waste from demolition and massive new builds that lead to an unjustifiably large environmental footprint. We feel it is extremely important that these real and actual social costs not lose their rightful place in this discussion and be overshadowed by perceived monetary loss in the form of “less gain” on property value (which can be disproved by credible research as cited above).

With its provisions, the proposed Heritage Conservation Area balances the needs of property owners with those of Vancouver and its need to preserve and protect its environment and common history through heritage.

We ask that City Council vote in support of this important initiative.

Sincerely,



Javier Campos  
President, Heritage Vancouver Society

cc. Penny Ballem, City Manager  
Brian Jackson, General Manager, Planning and Development  
Members of the Heritage Commission  
Marco D'Agostini, Senior Planner Heritage Group