City of Vancouver
453 W. 12th Ave
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

April 19, 2013

Dear Mayor & Council:

Re: Opening of Gabriola Mansion, 1531 Davie Street

The Gabriola Mansion at 1531 Davie Street is one of the three surviving grand estate homes built in the West End at the end of the 19th Century. With its garden space and preserved views, the mansion has contributed to the richness of the streetscape and the character of the neighbourhood for many years, operating as a restaurant and place for special occasions.

The Gabriola Mansion has been closed for several years now. Windows are boarded up and the entrance fenced in. This encourages squatters and other vagrants and puts the building at risk to vandalism. The "A"-listed Mansion has received municipal heritage designation, in a deal that included a subdivision of the property and a density bonus on the adjacent site. In awarding a density transfer, the City has made a substantial financial investment in the property. We have the opportunity to capitalize on this investment by providing a place for people to enjoy.

We have the opportunity to explore how this beautiful building with its magnificent grounds could be reopened, enjoyed by our community and once again become part of our community heritage.

Heritage Vancouver is encouraging the City of Vancouver to enter into a dialogue with the owner to determine his plans for the Mansion and once again bring the space to life. If the owner does not intend to reopen it as a restaurant, we have the opportunity to explore how we could open the building for some community use that could increase its contribution and value to our community.

Sincerely,

Janet Leduc, Executive Director
Heritage Vancouver Society

Cc   Penny Ballem, City Manager
      Brian Jackson, General Manager, Planning and Development
      Marco D'Agostini, Senior Planner, Heritage Group
      Holly Sovdi, West End Community Planner
      Vancouver Heritage Commissioners