

HERITAGE VANCOUVER

April 15, 1999

Rick Scobie
Development Permit Board
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver BC V5Y 1V4

Re: 55 and 65 Water Street (Malkin Building)

Dear Mr. Scobie;

After some time, we have decided to respond to your letter of January 11, 1999 regarding our position on 55 and 65 Water Street, in Gastown. It was with some surprise that we read your comments that suggested that in not supporting the proposal we stand alone among a body of unqualified enthusiasm for the project.

The minutes appear to support your comments, but the issue bears further examination. We questioned a number of key figures regarding the text of their comments before the DPB, who confirmed that the minutes of the meeting generally failed to record their concerns or critical comments. In addition, the minutes show only the comments of individuals who spoke at the meeting, and do not contain the text of letters forwarded regarding the issue. The written positions of the groups we mentioned—City planning staff, the Gastown Heritage Area Planning Advisory Committee, the Heritage Commission, and the Urban Design Panel, are not included as appendices. We are not suggesting any deliberate attempt to downplay criticism of the application. However, the fact that a public record such as this would not accurately report the concerns of several key participants is a matter of some concern.

Heritage Vancouver is an advocacy society whose mandate is to help to preserve built heritage through education. We stand by our concerns regarding the proposal, including possible precedent-setting aspects, and will continue to work towards a set of guidelines and incentives for Gastown that ensure that this situation does not occur in the future. If you would like the opportunity to discuss this issue further, we would be happy to meet with you.

Sincerely,

Susanna Houwen,
President, Heritage Vancouver

Attachments

Cc: Mayor Owen and City Council
Hon. Ian Waddell, Minister of Small Business, Tourism and Culture
Alastair Kerr, Senior Preservation Consultant, Heritage Conservation Branch
Jeannette Hlavach, Gastown Area Planner, City of Vancouver
Lynn Rippon, Manager Development Application Centre

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