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

September 19, 2013

Dear Mayor & Council:

Re: Development applications (DE417015 and DE417016), 1872 Parker Street

The historic Brookhouse Residence, a landmark heritage mansion located at 1872 Parker Street, is once again under threat of demolition. After a prolonged negotiation with the City, and an application for a Heritage Revitalization Agreement, the developer has now proposed to demolish the heritage mansion and replace it with two duplexes.

The Brookhouse Residence is an extremely important heritage asset; it is one of the iconic turreted homes of early Grandview and survives in very intact condition. Any proposed development of this property should retain and restore the heritage home. The City of Vancouver has the tools and incentives to make this a viable heritage retention.

In view of the fact that this threatened historic building holds a prominent position in the landscape and is an important part of the heritage character of the Grandview Woodland neighbourhood, Heritage Vancouver would like to recommend that the City of Vancouver carry out the following actions:

- Commission a qualified Heritage Consultant to prepare a Statement of Significance for the Residence at 1872 Parker Street, before making a final decision on the future of this important landmark.
- Conduct a review of how to streamline the Heritage Revitalization process. We have received much communications about the delay of heritage developments due to prolonged negotiation processes, and the frustration that this causes property owners and developers.
- Introduce a “fast track “ policy for heritage properties. The timing is appropriate especially in view of the fact that the city has a policy to “fast track” permits for the deconstruction of buildings including heritage buildings. Prolonged delays can thwart projects, or cause additional costs that makes the final project less affordable. One of the original pillars of Vancouver’s Heritage Program was a “Green Door” policy that expedited heritage applications; this policy should be revived.

- Quickly proceed with the upgrade to its Heritage Register. This process has been stalled on several occasions. The Brookhouse Residence, which was not listed on the Heritage Register, may well end up a victim of the city's out-dated Heritage Register process.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding these suggestions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Janet Leduc".

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
Vaughn Kopy, Project Coordinator
Vancouver Heritage Commissioners