

July 2012

Dear First Shaughnessy Property Owner,

We, as well as some of you I'm sure, have had our pre-1940 First Shaughnessy District house listed for sale now for many months, without success. Virtually all of the potential buyers, at least in our case, had designs on demolition and redevelopment of our property. We were informed by certain of these buyers and/or their real estate representatives that upon inquiring at City Hall as to the possibility of redevelopment, they were told that no building that pre-dates 1940 can be demolished. As a result, these potential deals fell through, one of which was a full price offer. We have significantly reduced the price of our property twice in the last few months by over \$750,000, and to date it is still unsold.

I am writing to you as you may not be aware that your property is listed in what is known as the "Heritage Inventory", which is essentially a list of pre-1940 residences that was compiled in 1982 in order to identify structures that epitomized the "estate" character of the First Shaughnessy District (F.S.D.). I would imagine that when the list was created, there was indeed some honourable intent to preserve historically meritorious structures whenever practical, however, the list does not make any distinction as to the historical merit, condition, street appeal, use, etc. of any of the structures. It simply encompasses **every building that pre-dates 1940.**

If you inquire at City Hall, you will be informed that there is indeed a process in place that provides for the redevelopment of properties that predate 1940, and this is essentially true. The stark reality however is that it is not only improbable that one would succeed in this endeavor, but in the opinion of many highly respected real estate agents, architects and builders, literally impossible. Virtually all of the professional people I have spoken with in the last couple of months regarding this intolerable situation believe that there is a virtual moratorium with regard to the demolition of pre-1940 structures in effect.

This is a serious situation that has grave and severe implications with regard to our rights as property owners, in addition to having a considerable negative impact on the value of our properties. There have been many pre-1940 homes in our

the market for months, until the listings are either cancelled, or simply expire, in my opinion, due to the same problem. Some of these homes frankly should be demolished. The owners either do not have the will, desire, or the financial resources required to maintain these buildings, particularly the larger structures, of which there are many in this pre-1940 category. One only has to walk around the First Shaughnessy District to witness more and more of these buildings in various and continuing stages of dilapidation. This situation will only worsen with time.

One would think that the City and the First Shaughnessy Advisory Design Panel (F.S.A.D.P.) would welcome the replacement of these old decaying structures with new, high quality, energy efficient and attractive buildings that incorporate historical design elements true to the early 1900's period. Measures are already in place to oversee any new home construction that is contemplated within the First Shaughnessy District, as evidenced in the First Shaughnessy Design Guidelines, which was specifically created to ensure the retention of the character of the neighbourhood.

What the City and the F.S.A.D.P. don't seem to recognize is that every structure has a lifespan, and that continuing to protect any existing deteriorating building from demolition solely because it was constructed prior to 1940 is counter-productive to preserving the integrity and character of the F.S.D. As previously mentioned, these larger homes in the F.S.D. are extremely expensive to maintain and renovate. If the intent of the First Shaughnessy Official Development Plan is to preserve all of these pre-1940 houses in perpetuity, then it would only seem fair and equitable that the City of Vancouver offers to purchase affected properties at fair market value determined by an independent appraiser, if the owner is interested in selling, and the only parties interested in buying are contemplating redevelopment.

In conclusion, I sincerely believe that to protect our rights as property owners, changes must be made to the way that both the F.S.A.D.P. and the City of Vancouver interpret and administer the rules, regulations and guidelines governing the redevelopment of pre-1940 properties in the First Shaughnessy District. In fact, these by-laws and regulations as well should be updated to reflect the current reality of the housing market in the F.S.D., and I have mailed this to over 300 First

Shaughnessy District property owners that are affected in the hopes of galvanizing support for this very important issue that affects us all.

I urge you to make a point of voicing your concerns to any or all of the following people, and thank you for taking your time to read this.

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