



City of Burnaby
Burnaby Legislative Services
Community Heritage Commission
4949 Canada Way
Burnaby BC V5G1M2

To whomever this most appropriately concerns,

I write to you today with regards to a sensitive heritage matter within Burnaby's Edmonds district. A monumental new housing project has recently been announced for Highgate, that aims to see a new 45 story residential tower erected on land presently occupied by an historic neighborhood church. The former Edmonds Baptist Church, a beautiful Arts and Crafts landmark built in 1912 and presently used as a gathering space and community hub, has somehow managed to retain nearly all of it's original architectural integrity and features. We as a ~~community owe it to ourselves to have~~ this important link to our cultural history remain standing as a reminder of this city's pioneering beginnings. Edmonds is Burnaby's oldest neighborhood and sadly there is very little of our built heritage remaining.

This proposed housing project is for said church property at 7135 Walker Avenue as well as an adjoining vacant lot at 7244 Arcola Street, located immediately behind the church. I humbly request that all avenues of preservation be carefully considered... as much as I agree on

the importance of building more affordable housing, it need not come at the expense of our built heritage. Considering the large scale of this proposed project, that the church property is only 50% of the land in question, and that the core 1912 body of this historic church only makes up 45% of it's present footprint, I believe that demolishing it's additions, moving the 1912 portion to a far corner, and building behind and beside a newly restored and legally protected historic landmark could be considered a win-win.

If a proposal to retain this landmark within the new development fails, I would request that the church instead is moved to another location within the Edmonds neighborhood and restored, although removing it from the context of it's original location isn't ideal.

An online petition to save this historic church has been launched, which will stay active for as long as the building remains threatened. I have high hopes that a development solution can be found that satisfies all parties.

Very sincerely yours,

Redacted as per FIPPA S.22

Jonathan Reay

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Note From Lisa Codd, Heritage Planner: A rezoning application for the development site at 7135 Walker Avenue and 7244 Arcola Street has been received by the Planning and Development Department. The following press release provides a brief summary of the rezoning proposal: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2024HOUS0167-001462>

For rezoning applications that include a heritage resource listed on the City's heritage inventory, such as the Edmonds Baptist Church at 7135 Walker Avenue, it is typical for staff to work with the applicant with the aim to integrate heritage elements into the redevelopment of the site. The application has yet to advance to Council for consideration of approval.



