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Submitted on Thu, 03/23/2023 - 11:47
Submission # 278

Submitted values are:

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Heights Merchants Assn, 4019 Hastings Street
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FIPPA Sec 22(1)

Rezoning application or bylaw number
21-24 (Bylaw No 14553)

Submission

While the Heights Merchants Association generally supports the revitalization of our aging buildings and commercial spaces, and this development will no doubt be an attractive addition, we do have some important factors that need to be pointed out to the City, that are in the Hastings Street Area Plan to preserve the Urban Village viability and vitality. The land use plan does not appear to be being followed, as recent developments have not included the types, sizes and quantity of units that are described in the Plan to preserve retail and smaller units at ground level, and larger units for medical, dental and professional offices on the 2nd floor. The Area Plan does allow for 5 and 6 storey buildings but these are not being built. There is presently a commercial space "crunch" in the Heights (as in many parts of the region) and we would like the City to work with developers to encourage more units, and more smaller units (900-1200 sq ft) to allow for more retail, daily trade at street level, and encourage more economic diversity. Our district is losing retail at an alarming rate (44% drop in the last 10 years) due to the lack of available commercial space and the resulting skyrocketing rents. This lack of commitment to keeping or increasing the same numbers of commercial units to attract retail and daily trade is incompatible with our Hastings Street Area Plan for the Heights and our district. This is worrisome to the HMA and problematic for its commitment to securing an economically sustainable and vibrant district for the decades ahead.