



## Heritage Vancouver

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City of Vancouver  
453 West 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

### **Re: Gabriola Mansion Re-Development support—with provision**

Dear Catherine Neill,

Gabriola Mansion is one of the last extant mansions in Vancouver's West End. The mansion is valued for its association with the early development of Vancouver's West End; its ownership by the influential Rogers family and later, the Bentall family; its transitional Victorian era architecture as designed by prominent architect Samuel Maclure; along with stained glasswork by Henry Bloomfeld and Sons, and stonework by John Wills Bruce, and its estate like setting with mature plantings.

The stained glass throughout is exemplified by the elaborate art-themed tripartite assembly on the main stair landing. The intricate stone work both on the exterior and interior features smooth, pitch-faced, and tooled Gabriola Island sandstone. Interior character defining details include a grand dog-legged staircase with turned balusters, square newel posts and facing rounded 'balconies' at the landing and second floor levels, a massive Arizona sandstone overmantle in the main entry, a central 'BTR' cartouche sculpture, original moulded and beamed ceilings and fireplaces, and mantles and tilework throughout.

In the 1920s, the Dominion construction company facilitated the adaptation of Gabriola into six apartments and in 1978 Dominion construction subsequently refurbished the estate for use as a restaurant.

The current development proposal design by Ankeman Marchand Architects would involve:

- the conversion of the mansion into 16 market rental units,
- four new infill market rental townhouses to be developed in the northeast corner of the property,
- an increase in FSR from 0.35 to 0.89, and
- no increase in height from the existing CD-1.

As part of the project's offering, a registered covenant will be on title that protects all interior character defining elements. Further the large interior spaces on the main floor of the mansion are not being programmed for residential/rental use. Rather the main entry, lobby, grand stair, limestone fireplace and upper landing are all being reserved for public use including tours hosted by the heritage community.

The market rental townhomes (financially essential for the feasibility of restoring the home and bringing it up to code) have been located on the most benign portion of the site leaving an uninterrupted view of the mansion from virtually every important angle.

Heritage Vancouver would like to see more visual, architectural connection between the townhomes and the mansion but agree that reducing the number proposed and aligning them with the lane ensures they are placed in a subordinate position to the mansion creating a backdrop and ensuring the view of the mansion is in no way compromised.

The entire front grounds of the project, will be left intact and improved as will the driveway and grass lawn. There are over twenty trees on the site, three of significance within the footprint of the proposed development. Of those three, one healthy specimen is being transplanted, and the other two assessed as being in poor condition, have been deemed not worth saving by the arborist.

Therefore, Heritage Vancouver Society **supports this re-zoning heritage project with the small provision that the design of the infill townhouses be tweaked** to afford greater visual congruency with the Mansion.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Javier Campos', with a vertical line to the left of the name.

Javier Campos  
President, Heritage Vancouver Society