



Heritage Vancouver

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February 14, 2018
Katrina Hsieh, Project Coordinator

RE: **3473 Cambie Street - DP-2017-01239**

Dear Katrina Hsieh,

We wish to submit our comments to the proposed development at 3473 Cambie Street. Development ought to make a site better off than it already is. In this particular case, we stress the extraordinary loss that would take place with the demolition of the building and the departure of the business on this site.

According to Vancouver building permit no. 5699 issued July 20, 1938, the two storefronts at 3473 Cambie Street were built in 1938 by contractor John Scutnabb in the art moderne style, for owner E.M. Deacon at a cost of \$2,300 containing two storefronts. Its first two tenants were the **Lovely Lady Beauty Salon** at [3473 Cambie](#) managed by Mrs. J. Streng, and lasted up to 1950 when it then became **Chez Michel Beauty Parlour**. At [3475 Cambie](#), Miss Mildred Donaldson owned a dressmaker's and women's clothing shop called **Penelope's Shop**, which lasted about 10-years, to the late 1940s.

Importantly, the current tenant went to great lengths to adapt the interior space to complement the older physical building with lovely results. They created a charming atmospheric interior for a beloved and apparently successful neighbourhood restaurant that is responsive to its delightful exterior character which is of strong visual interest on the street. Even great attention is paid to choosing the lettering which adorns both inside and outside the restaurant. This type of reuse should be praised and celebrated.

But aesthetics is only one reason why this site conveys an immensely strong sense of place. A large number of people will identify this site as the Pronto/Prontino restaurant. There is no question that it is a fundamental piece vital to the human network in Cambie Village and the neighbourhood. The demolition of the building and departure of the business will impose a massive cost on the health of this neighbourhood, commercial street, and the city. One obvious interdependency jeopardized is the relationship between the Park Theatre and Pronto/Prontino which brings life to the area by drawing in nearby residents to participate in not one, but a variety of activities. Social and economic connections are at risk here.

3473 Cambie is merely a location; it is Pronto/Prontino which gives it meaning and connects it to people. We are aware that the regulations do not allow 3473 Cambie to be looked at in terms of Pronto/Prontino or treated as a vital part of the human system. It is precisely for this reason that we urge the City of Vancouver to look for and implement solutions to this problem so that we as a city are better equipped to ameliorate or even prevent the loss of businesses that are fundamental to the positive relationships that people have with their neighbourhoods. At a minimum, it is essential that new development on this site not damage, but improve upon the interdependencies between people and place and that if it is unavoidable that existing ties are broken, that those relationships can be repaired and grow with a new business coming in.

Additionally, although 3473 is not on the Vancouver Heritage Register, it is undeniable that Pronto and its associated building are of significant value. We urge the City of Vancouver to explore options around retention of the building in some form.

Sincerely,

Bill Yuen
Executive Director, Heritage Vancouver Society