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Mayor and Council
District of West Vancouver
750-17th St.
West Vancouver, BC

Re: Sewell's Ltd. Redevelopment Application, Horseshoe Bay

Dear Mayor Goldsmith-Jones and Councillors:

The following is respectfully submitted *without prejudice* out of concern for detrimental effects on my neighbourhood should the above-referenced proposal be approved. No aspersions toward any individual or organization are intended or should be inferred by the reader.

I have lived at the same address in Horseshoe Bay since 1973. My home is within fifty yards of the proposed redevelopment at the end of Bay Street and the foot of Nelson Avenue. The subject application is disturbing on several levels.

Only three or four years ago, the applicant himself spoke forcefully against the placement of a small tourist attraction featuring a tiny aquarium at the end of the former government wharf adjacent to his marina, citing concerns over the increase in traffic congestion this little building might generate. This applicant has also, over many years and numerous applications by other would-be developers, steadfastly opposed development on Tyee Point (on the other side of his marina), reinforcing his opposition by refusing to grant more than the legal minimum ten-foot right-of-way across land he controls. His stated reasons for this are on record as being concern for:

- increased traffic congestion at the Bay-Nelson intersection, and
- the detrimental effects of increased density in this small area.

The only access to the subject site is Bay Street, one-way heading east. The only egress is Nelson Avenue, one-way south. We are given to understand that the application proposes an unspecified number of commercial tenant lease spaces in addition to upwards of 150 residential units. This density and attendant traffic volume plainly can not be accommodated by the infrastructure—road access, utilities, offsite parking, emergency services—now existing or achievable in this constricted pocket of Horseshoe Bay. This corner of the community is already trying to cope with disproportionate traffic pressure and congestion due to

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transient tourists, BC Ferries, Horseshoe Bay Park, The Boathouse Restaurant, the public access wharf, and the Marina's own various enterprises. Not to mention the actual residents who, some might argue, retain some residual rights to a peaceful, private life in the quiet village atmosphere for which Horseshoe is known and loved. Should you be tempted by the usual old chestnut, "they ought to have known when they chose to move there"—clearly no ordinary person could reasonably have been expected to forecast such a thing as this ten, fifteen, or twenty years ago.

It could be suggested that the mayor has misjudged "what the twenty-first century is going to be about in Horseshoe Bay," perhaps due to a lack of input from ordinary residents. This brings up another disturbing issue—the claim that "public consultation with nearby resident associations" has somehow already been addressed *by the developer*. This turns out to have been an informal, applicant-initiated get-together with some members of the executives of said organizations and other supportive locals by invitation only. Council would be well-advised to inquire as to the paid-up membership rosters of those associations to establish what proportion of the local population they can claim to realistically represent. For example, the writer was not notified of this meeting, while one of my neighbors (living further from the site) was asked to attend.

This proposal has been promoted in some quarters as offering an option of "affordable housing" for retired seniors on reduced/fixed incomes who want to remain in Horseshoe Bay. A close look at the illustrations as presented so far are more indicative of high-end luxury condos. This is not to say that such housing is objectionable *per se*; but pitching the proposal under the guise of something quite different might be. This has already transpired in another recent Horseshoe Bay development, promoted throughout as "artists' live-work studios," but presently being marketed as regular commercial lease-space below with (mostly unsold) high-end condos above.

Amending West Vancouver's OCP for the benefit of a specific applicant is viewed by the average taxpayer as extreme, if not improper. Should the OCP be utilized as a spot-zoning tool? The *North Shore News* quotes Coun. Walker (May 06, 2009) as stating she "wants to see this project get underway ASAP because of its import to renewing the face of Horseshoe Bay, which fits within the objectives of the OCP." I submit:

- Were it to fit within those objectives, amendment would not be necessary
- Such a remark indicates a bias in favour or an application long before all of

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its implications are known, or meaningful public consultation has occurred

- The local residents' opinions as to non-residents' political notions for "renewing the face" of our neighbourhood deserve more consideration – and respect – than has heretofore been evident.

If this proposal were substantially downsized, much of the above would no longer apply. However, it seems unlikely that a development any smaller or less ambitious would be economically attractive to the applicant.

I urge Council to pursue a significant downsizing of the Sewell's Ltd. proposal or, failing that, to reject it rather than supporting a policy of "spot"-amendments to our Official Community Plan.

Sincerely,

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June 4, 2009

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