



Date: November 4, 2024

Re:

- The Temporary Use Permit for 28, 32, 34 6th Street and 606 Clarkson (Cliff Block) for a 24/7 Winter Shelter that would operate between November 1, 2024 and April 31st.
- The Temporary Use Permit will be considered for issuance at 502 Columbia street. The TUP is for emergency shelter use at the Former Army and Navy store, allowing either a nightly shelter or a 24/7 shelter as a permitted use.

On Behalf of The New Westminster Homelessness Coalition Society

The New Westminster Homelessness Coalition Society would like to express its strong support for City Council's approval of the aforementioned Temporary Use Permits for 28, 32, 34 6th Street, and an emergency winter shelter at 606 Clarkson (Cliff Block), as well as a 24/7 shelter at 502 Columbia Street.

Based on consultation with the Lookout + Housing Society, and the Lower Mainland Purpose Society, we would like to share the following insights regarding these sites and the corresponding proposed Temporary Use Permits.

Regarding 28, 32, 34 6th Street, and 606 Clarkson (Cliff Block):

- The Lookout Housing + Society is a trusted non-profit service provider that has for many years been at the forefront of providing shelter and other services to the unhoused population in New Westminster and other jurisdictions. They have a commitment to responding to and working to mitigate community concerns that arise regarding their many low-barrier housing, shelter, and other services.
- The Emergency Winter Shelter ensures that those using the service can stay there during the day, thereby mitigating the risk of negative encounters with businesses and other community members. They also provide an overdose prevention site, mobility access, showers, and other services that will meet the range of essential needs that unhoused

individuals require, and this too mitigates the risk of potentially negative encounters with businesses and other community members as they try to get their basic needs met. This site has no record of critical incidents.

Regarding 502 Columbia Street:

- The Lower Mainland Purpose Society is a dedicated and innovative non-profit service provider that has for many years been at the forefront of providing shelter, harm reduction, and other essential services to the unhoused population in New Westminster and other jurisdictions. They too have a commitment to responding to and working to mitigate community concerns that arise regarding their many low-barrier housing, shelter, and other services.
- The 502 shelter is full each night, sheltering 50 people. This fact alone illustrates the essential nature of this service in mitigating the street homelessness in the city, and addressing the needs of unhoused individuals who might otherwise have few options regarding where to go to receive service. The shelter's sanitation trailer had between 1300 and 1700 visits a month between July to September 2024, filling another essential need. Allowing this shelter to become 24/7 would likewise contribute significantly to mitigating the risk of negative encounters between with local business and other community residents.

While emergency shelters are not the ideal housing that anyone feels we should be striving for, they are a necessity in the absence of a sufficient quantity of adequate affordable and accessible housing in this city and across the lower mainland. The ever-worsening housing crisis makes these steps a necessity. While the City of New West has made important strides toward building affordable and accessible housing, far more needs to be done. We look forward to a day when we are celebrating everyone in this city getting access to safe housing that meets their needs. However, in the meantime, it is our moral and ethical responsibility to ensure that our city's most vulnerable residents are not left with nowhere to meet their most basic needs, like protection from the elements, and the ability to get a safe night's sleep – something many take for granted each day.

It is for all of these reasons that the Homelessness Coalition Society not only supports the Temporary Use permits being put before City Council, but would consider the rejection of these permits to be a moral failure, and failure of leadership.

Sincerely,

Jack York

Board Chair,

New Westminster Homelessness Coalition Society

From: Nicole Kan S.22(1)Personal and Confidential
Sent: Saturday, November 9, 2024 10:44 AM
To: External-Legislative Services
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for Temporary Shelter at 502 Columbia Street

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of New Westminster's network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi,

I am a resident at 39 Sixth Street NW, and I appreciate the City's efforts to seek public input on the proposed temporary shelter for homeless people at 502 Columbia Street. I want to express my support for this initiative.

I have been living in this area for two years and often see homeless individuals in the community. I wonder what our community can do to address their needs. In my opinion, providing a 24/7 shelter for them is a critical first step, and I hope that more support can be directed toward assisting them, especially as many may be facing mental health or substance use challenges.

Warm regards,
Nicole Kan

From: Paul Schmidt S.22(1)Personal and Confidential
Sent: Saturday, November 9, 2024 11:21 AM
To: External-Legislative Services
Subject: [EXTERNAL] TUP for Army & Navy shelter

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of New Westminster's network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I received the notice for the extension on the TUP of the Army and Navy shelter on Friday, November 9. In order for correspondence to be on the agenda at the Nov. 18 meeting, we would have to send such correspondence in by Monday, Nov 11. This is a grossly inadequate amount of time. To allow for sufficient time, you need to send out these notices at least 2-3 weeks earlier.

The Army and Navy shelter was initially proposed as an emergency weather shelter. Very soon after, and with no public consultation, it was changed into a year-round shelter. In a downtown core that always hot already has several other supportive housing habitations for addiction (and now another shelter on 6th St), please consider, as you say in your letter, moving the shelter to another area of New Westminster, as it is unfair for downtown residents to continuously have to bear the brunt of the addiction crisis. Since the shelter was put in, crime, street disorder, public drug use have skyrocketed. The impacts around Columbia Station have been dramatic, and the Skytrain police told me that since that the shelter opened, there has been a huge increase in problems at that station.

I don't actually agree with shelters as a concept in general. When you concentrate so many people with addiction issues in one place, they just continue their lifestyles of crime and addiction, and don't mix into the community or have a chance of recovery. I believe in a more scattered approach, which is also better for other community members, and lessens negative liability impacts that shelters bring in such a concentrated manner.

Downtown residents (every single one I talk to) are fed up with shouldering the lines share of this burden, and we're very frustrated about this. I understand a staff report from 2021 promised that once the Agnes Street supportive housing is built, the Army & Navy shelter would no longer be needed. For this to be honored, if there is a decision for an extension against the wishes of the majority of downtown residents, a maximum of 3 months would be plenty of time.

I do agree that while it remains open, with offering the shelter 24/7 rather than just 8pm-8am, so you don't eject the people out into the street.

But overall, it's grossly unfair for downtown residents that this shelter is granted an extension, as it was always supposed to be temporary.

Thank you for listening.

From: Evgeny S.22(1)Personal and Confidential
Sent: Sunday, November 10, 2024 7:30 PM
To: External-Legislative Services
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment - Temp Use Permit (TUP00032)

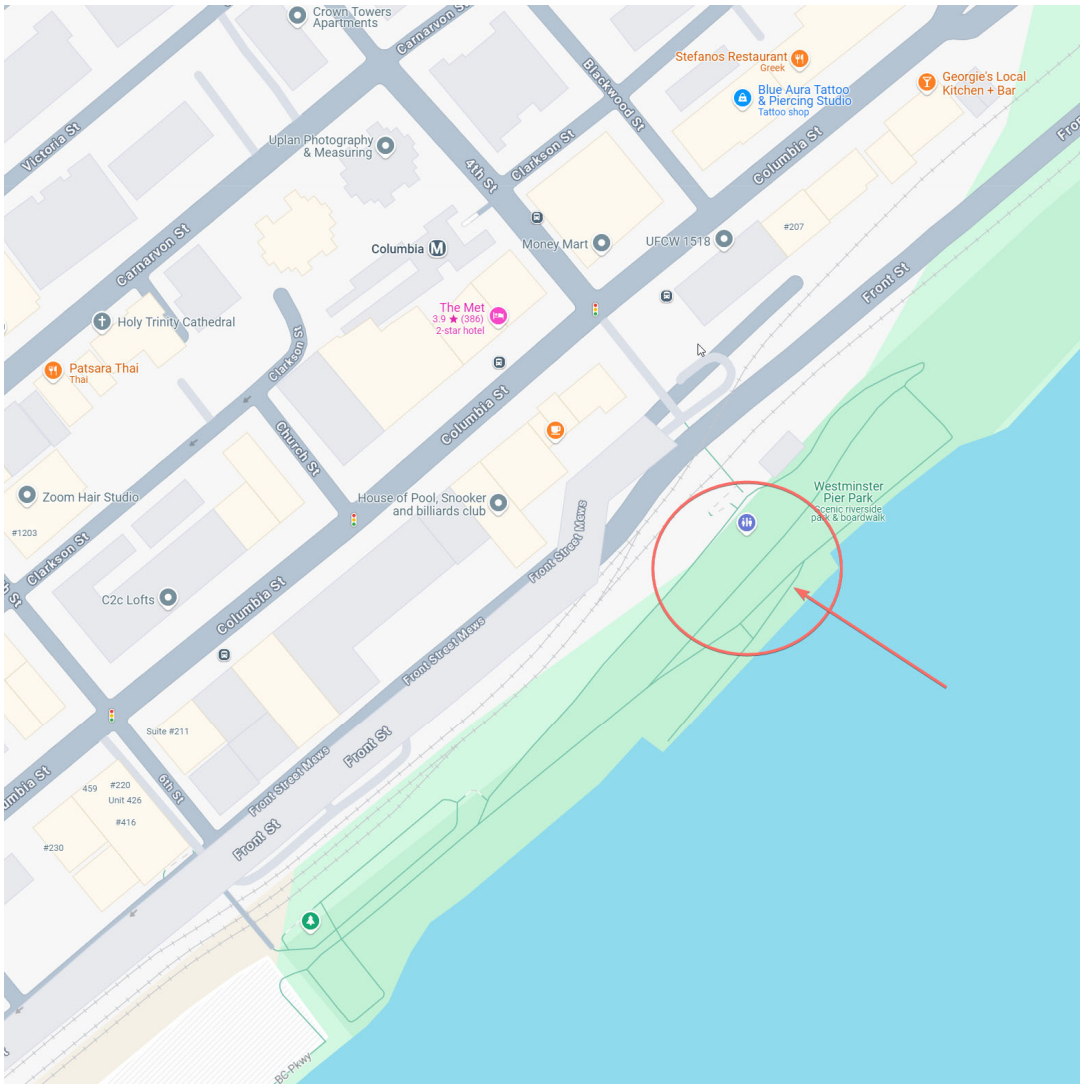
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Hi,

My name is Evgeny Averin, and my address is S.22(1)Personal and Confidential 420 Carnarvon St., New Westminster. I'm a father of two kids: a 7-year-old girl and a 3-year-old boy.

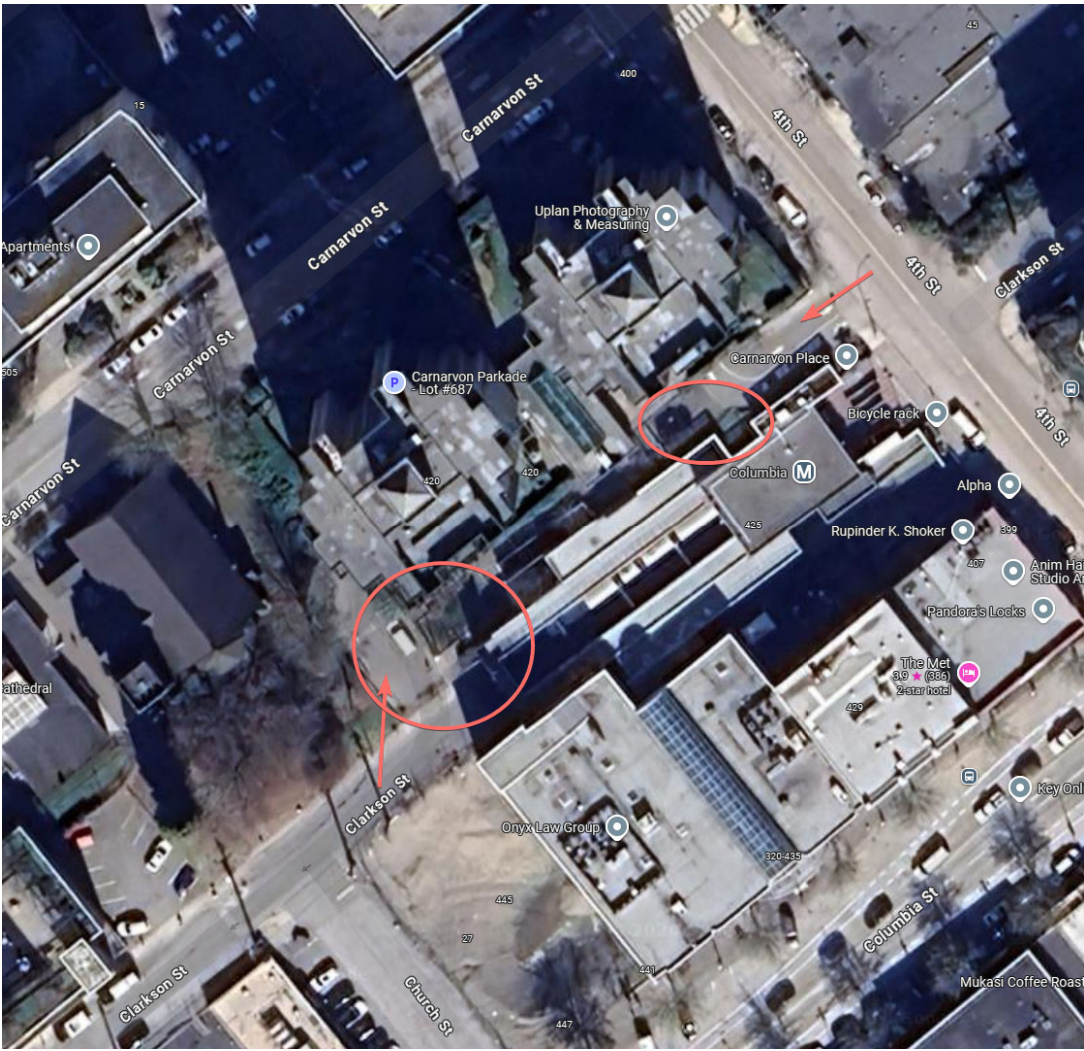
We have lived in New Westminster for about 8 years. When our family moved here from Metrotown, we considered New Westminster a safe place for the family. As many others I believe, considering how many families with kids live here. However, in the last 2-3 years, our perception has changed.

1. Starting with the allowing drinking in Pier Park.



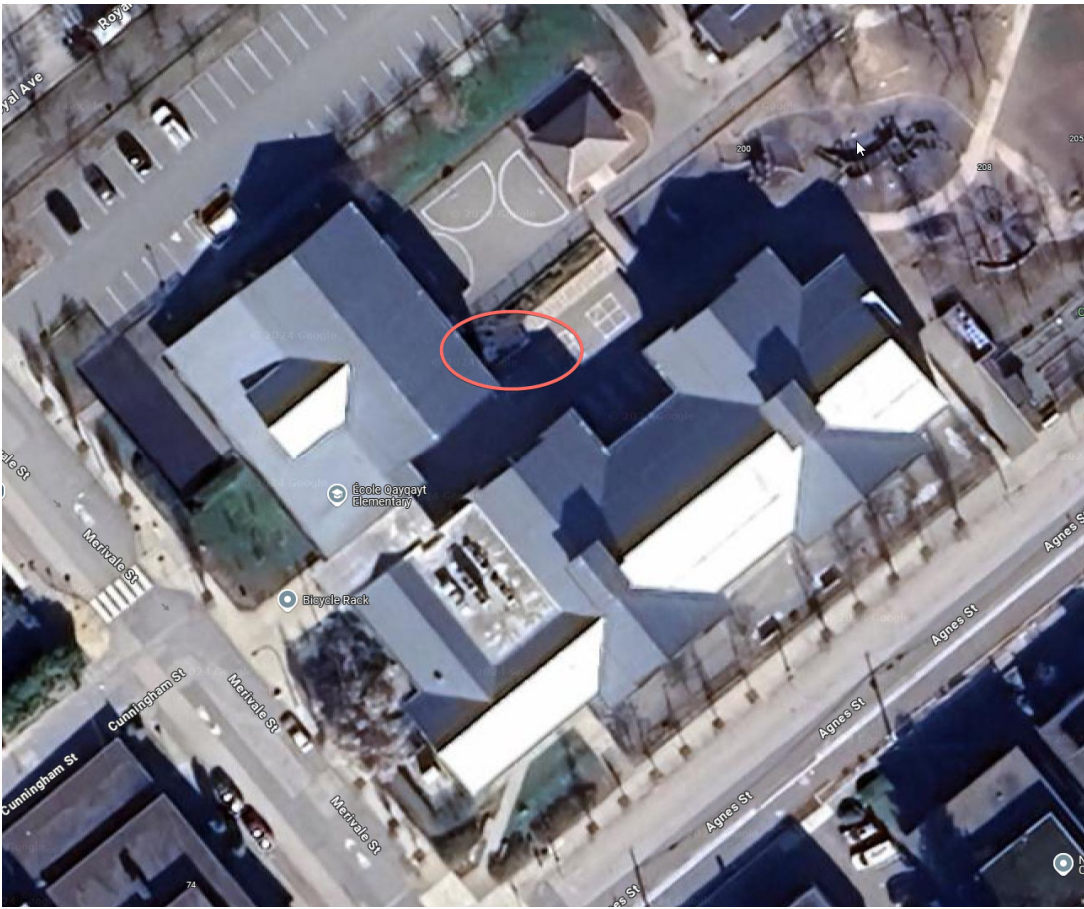
When this happened, we immediately reduced our visits to the Pier Park Playground and started taking a different route. Instead of just walking down to 4th St., we take Carnarvon St. and go down 6th St. to avoid the drinking area. My wife refuses to go to the Pier Park Playground on her own with kids because she doesn't feel safe there anymore. A couple of years ago, I was walking around the drinking area by myself and was approached by an individual offering me sex services. It was 6 PM. I reported this incident to City Hall. Just last weekend, I went to the park with a kid and passed this area around 10 AM. The place was full of garbage and trash. (To be fair, when we walked back, it was cleaned up, likely by city personnel).

2. Our backyard doesn't feel safe at all. Very often, when we drive with our kids, there are people using drugs in two highlighted areas. It doesn't matter what time of day; it can happen at any time.



I used to take my kid with me as an activity to wash our car in the designated car wash area (highlighted left area above). But not anymore, because I found a glass drug pipe right next to the water hose.

3. Last summer, when we were at the Qayqayt playground, all the parents witnessed a tent on the school premises.





I called the non-emergency line, but they said that if the individuals are not doing anything illegal, the police can't do anything. So, all the parents and kids had to stay away from this area of the playground.

4. My neighbor was bitten and robbed about a year ago near our building on Columbia Street. (He did report it to the police).

5. Our family friends told us how their grandma was walking with their 2.5-year-old granddaughter on Columbia Street during the day and was approached by a tall guy who spat on the child's head. This happened this year.

6. From the news (2023, 2024):

- Police arrest suspect after stabbing at Columbia Street Skytrain station in New Westminster, link: <https://vancouversun.com/news/stabbing-at-columbia-skytrain-station-in-new-westminster>
- 3rd suspect charged in April stabbing at Columbia SkyTrain station, link <https://globalnews.ca/news/9805537/columbia-skytrain-stabbing-charges/>

Thank you for reading up to this point. Considering what I just mentioned above, we feel that Downtown New West is not as safe as it used to be even though the police station is right there. If we can't handle the safety issues with current capacity, how can we afford to add more safety risks to this neighborhood? I'm strongly against adding more shelters to this area.

Thanks,

November 12, 2024

Legislative Services Department, City Hall
511 Royal Avenue
New Westminster, B.C. V3L 1H9

Re: Temporary Use Permit Application 502 Columbia Street

Dear Sirs and Mesdames:

Anthem Properties is the authorized representative of the building located at 600 – 604 Columbia Street, known as the Spencer Building.

Over the last 12 months The Spencer Building has been struggling with homeless people entering the building, hiding in remote stairwells within the building, and utilizing the building's common area washrooms after regular business hours. Every morning the cleaners of the Spencer Building deal with hypodermic needles, blood, human waste, and abandoned clothing. Our building tenants and occupants are fearful of their safety.

We have increased security patrols to the building, incurring additional expenses in order to operate the building in a safe manner.

Anthem Properties, on behalf of the registered owner of the Spencer Building, is strongly opposed to extending the Temporary Use Permit for an additional three year period.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Anthem Columbia 6th Holdings Ltd., by its agent,
ANTHEM PROPERTIES GROUP LTD.



Gina Johansson
Senior Manager