

Little Mountain Gallery
195 East 26th Avenue
Vancouver, BC
littlemountaingallerycomedy@gmail.com

RE: 4185 Main Street - DP-2019-00944

Dear Niall Coffey (niall.coffey@vancouver.ca),

We are writing in response to the development permit application at 4185 Main Street, which includes 195 East 26th Avenue where our not-for-profit theatre, Little Mountain Gallery (LMG), has called home since 2006.

Built in 1930, 195 East 26th Avenue was originally the location of Curly's Automotive Garage. Since then, it has been a sheet metal shop, plumbing and heating outlet, a soda pop bottle depot, and a seafood market before becoming a home for the arts in 2001 — first as the Butchershop Collective.

From 2006 until today, the building has operated as LMG, hosting art exhibits, theatre performances, music performances, classes and workshops.

Since 2014, LMG has been Vancouver's incubation hub for local comedic talent, primarily hosting independent comedy shows (stand-up, sketch, improv, and various other formats) as well as comedy rehearsals, workshops and classes.

LMG is an accessible space for aspiring comedians and performers representing equity-seeking (e.g. people of colour and LGBTQ2+) groups. LMG's mandate is to foster the local comedy community and help independent and local artists and producers create great and diverse comedy shows. LMG was voted "Favourite Room" in the 2018 and 2019 Vancouver Comedy Awards. We've also been lucky enough to be recognized by the City of Vancouver's cultural department, receiving a grant this year through their cultural infrastructure program to develop a space plan.

LMG is run as a not-for-profit society with two part-time staff members and a working board. The space hosts 30-55 independently produced shows per month at low cost with rehearsals, workshops, and classes during the daytime. As such, it is an important contributor to the area's local night-time economy. We currently rent the space, month-to-month, on a 'triple-net-lease', and have made significant improvements to the building to make it safer and more accessible, without assistance from the landlord.

City of Vancouver's council approved *Making Space for Arts and Culture* in September, 2019 (part of *Culture|Shift*, the City of Vancouver's comprehensive plan and vision for arts, culture, and creativity), the document proposes ten-year targets and metrics for securing, enhancing, and developing affordable and accessible arts and cultural spaces in Vancouver, intended to

inform City strategies, plans, land use, policy, investment, regulations, partnerships, and advocacy.

One of the key goals of this plan is achieving “no net loss of arts and cultural spaces from developments,” like the one being proposed.

The redevelopment of 4185 Main Street will result in a loss of roughly 2,000 square feet of thriving arts and cultural space in Vancouver. As described in city documents like *Making Space for Arts and Culture*, small arts and culture spaces like ours rely on older, low-cost buildings and secure lease arrangements in order to continue operation - both of which continue to disappear with new developments like the one proposed.

We aren't against the building owner exercising his right to develop his own property as he wishes but we do want to highlight the vulnerability of these type of community spaces and the City of Vancouver's recognition of the issue and stated goals to preserve them from disappearing.

Our hope is that, regardless of the decision on this application, we can continue to provide local aspiring and established comedians opportunities to perform in a safe, respectful, and supportive environment and do so within Vancouver.

Little Mountain Gallery has been recognized as a unique space in Vancouver and we feel its loss would be a significant blow to the city's comedy and arts community.

Best regards,

Little Mountain Gallery Board of Directors and Staff
<http://littlemountaingallery.ca>

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