

To Public Hearing
Date: June 15, 2009
Item # 1
Re: Bylaw 8403, 8404
8405 Steveston
Conservation Plan

**MayorandCouncillors**

**From:** Carol-Lyn Sakata [csakata@sd38.bc.ca]  
**Sent:** June 10, 2009 11:25 PM  
**To:** Crowe, Terry  
**Cc:** tburnette@richmond.ca; Erceg, Joe; MayorandCouncillors  
**Subject:** Kay Sakata Property-Steveston  
**Categories:** UCRS CODE / FILE NUMBER: 08-4200-08

As you encouraged the audience at the recent Public Meeting on June 4 to do, I have written the attached letter. Once again, I have written the letter to you, but will fax it to the City Clerk as a written submission for the June 15th Public Meeting.

Carol-Lyn Sakata



3760 Granville Avenue  
Richmond, BC V7C 1C9

June 10, 2009

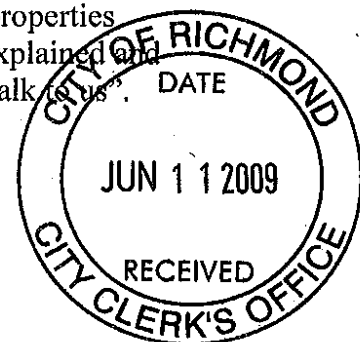
Mr. Terry Crowe  
Manager of Policy Planning  
City of Richmond  
6911 No. 3 Road  
Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1

Dear Mr. Crowe,

RE: KAY SAKATA'S PROPERTY - REQUEST FOR REMOVAL FROM THE  
PROPOSED STEVESTON VILLAGE CONSERVATION STRATEGY AS  
A HERITAGE PROPERTY

Having attended the meeting on June 4 at the Steveston Community Centre, my family is even more convinced that my mother's property on First Avenue be removed from the proposed Steveston Village Conservation Strategy as a heritage property. Noted in the documents available at the meeting on June 4<sup>th</sup>, the following excerpt stood out, "In December 2008, at the request of Councilors, City staff invited all owners of the identified heritage properties (18) to meet and discuss the proposed Strategy and Implementation Program and their benefits and implications." As stated in a previous letter dated May 17 (attached for your reference) addressed to you and copied to City staff, mayor and councilors, we had no knowledge of my mother's home being proposed as a heritage residence. We were prompted to look into this from a telephone message left by a concerned Steveston resident on May 11. So it does not surprise us that in your own staff recommendation report to Richmond City Council on page 6 under item "5. Support", it is stated, "The meeting (December, 2008) was not well attended, as only representatives from five properties attended . . . Properties represented at meeting = 6 (33%) includes the City as it owns 2 heritage buildings." If you excluded the City, the statistics would read only 25% of 18 heritage properties represented. We would have assumed that such an important matter would have warranted personal contact with the affected property owners and/or explanations as to the process before any subsequent meeting was called and certainly before the first reading of the changes to the Bylaws which occurred on April 27, 2009.

During my telephone conversation with you on May 11, you invited me to attend a public meeting on May 12 and a City Council meeting on May 19, which I was unable to attend due to prior commitments. Once the agenda item was deferred to June 15, you and a registered letter have invited me to the public meeting on June 4 and now the City Council meeting on June 15. Once again, before any of these meetings, I believe the owners of all 18 affected properties should have been individually contacted and the situation and implications fully explained and understood by each, not just invited to the meetings and welcomed "to come and talk to us".



Listening to the speakers at the June 4 meeting, it is clear that each property has a unique story. In my mother's case, her property is one of three private residences, and personally, I am resentful of having to speak of individual and private matters in public.

The "private", is the story of my parents and their intent for the property. After the Second World War, my parents came back to Steveston, my father to fishing and my mother to working in a cafe/grocery store owned by her and her two siblings. In 1950, my parents proudly purchased a newly built house with extensive land for gardening. This is the current home on First Avenue where my brother and I were born and raised. In the several years before my father died in 1990, he was plagued with very lucrative offers by developers to sell the land he purchased as a single residential lot, but by then was zoned as two commercial properties. He agonized over the decision to sell or not to sell for some time. Before he was diagnosed with cancer, he had made the decision that the property was his and our mother's legacy and ultimately the inheritance for my brother and I. This is the sentiment that my mother continues to hold. We have spoken to her about what we understand is the City's intent. My mother is a happy person with a great attitude towards life. When we spoke of this she became visibly anxious and saddened. Her response was, "No, no, no. I don't want anyone to tell me what to do here. I want to live here until I die, then this house and property is for you and Adam. Nobody else."

Since the very brief time that we have had to wrestle with my mother's property possibly being designated a heritage site, we have many questions about its future implications. It is hard to see how a house built in 1948 is "heritage" and how the gardens can also be "heritage" considering there are many similar houses and gardens in the area. A lovely green space and joy in the village core, we agree. In the draft report Steveston Village Conservation Strategy – Managing Change, it is the only property (with a building) that does not meet criterion 3 "The level of importance of associations with an era important in Steveston's history and development". Also, how can what my parents were forced to accept when their single residential property became zoned as two commercial properties now effectively be considered residential again. The inclusion of my mother's property has significant future financial implications for my brother and I. Should the Conservation Plan be passed as is, my mother's property will suffer a significant devaluation by a stroke of a pen.

My parents have suffered and proudly recovered from a previous blanket government edict. My father and a partner once owned the commercial block on Moncton Street where Dave's Fish and Chips is now located. My mother's family owned a seven acre plot of land on Gary Street across the Buddhist Church where they lived and farmed. Both these properties and my grandfather's fishing boat were confiscated and they, along with all Japanese Canadians living on the coast, interned. I request your consideration and compassion towards my 93 year old mother in her twilight years by having her property removed from this Conservation Plan at this time.

Along with many others who attended the meeting at the Steveston Community Centre on June 4, contrary to what is written in reports to the Council, it seemed various property owners were

Mr. Terry Crowe, June 9, 2009 – Page 3

not consulted and informed. Also at the meeting, there seemed to be a clear sentiment expressed by several speakers that the three private residences be individually considered and possibly removed from the Village Conservation Strategy. As stated in the previous letter, we ask that her wishes and intents for her property be left as is in her lifetime so she can live and continue to putter in her garden in peace. We, my brother, husband and I would also like to expend our energies caring for her and helping her with the quality of life at this time rather than fighting for her property and rights.

Thank you for your consideration of this very urgent matter.

Yours sincerely,

Carol-Lyn Sakata Thaler

cc Mr. Terry Brunette, Staff Liaison – Heritage Commission  
Mr. Joe Erceg, General Manager, Planning and Development  
Mayor and City Councillors

## MayorandCouncillors

**From:** Carol-Lyn Sakata [csakata@sd38.bc.ca]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 19 May 2009 11:46 AM  
**To:** MayorandCouncillors  
**Subject:** Fwd: Heritage Property-Kay Sakata  
**Attachments:** Heritage LT 09 05 07.doc

<b>To Public Hearing</b>
Date: JUNE 15, 2009
Item # 1A,B,C
Re: Steveston Conservation Plan

This letter to Mr. Crowe is e-mailed to the Mayor and all the City Councillors who this letter is meant to copied.  
Carol-Lyn Sakata

----- Original Message -----

Hello Terry, copied below and also attached is the letter I was able to write this weekend.  
Once again, thank you for listening last week and for your suggestions.  
Carol-Lyn Sakata

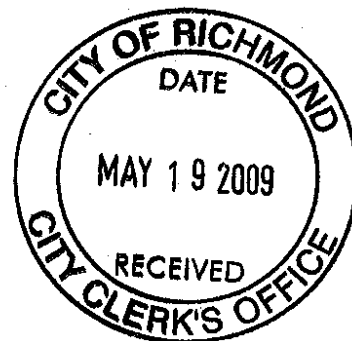
3760 Granville Avenue  
Richmond, BC V7C 1C9

May 17, 2009

Mr. Terry Crowe  
Manager of Policy Planning  
City of Richmond  
6911 No. 3 Road  
Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1

Dear Mr. Crowe,

**RE: KAY SAKATA'S PROPERTY  
12080 FIRST AVENUE, STEVESTON**



As you know from our telephone conversation on May 12, 2009, I was very surprised and shocked to learn, the day before in a telephone messaged by a concerned resident of Steveston, that my mother, Kay Sakata's property is to be designated as a heritage building/property as part of the "Steveston Village Conservation Plan" at the next Council meeting on May 19<sup>th</sup>. This is the first that I have heard of this. Over a year ago, I did receive a call from someone at City Hall inquiring about when my mother would be selling the home or leaving the home. At that time, I told the person my mother had no intention of selling the home or leaving and that if there were further issues from the City regarding my mother's home, they not bother her but be in touch with me. I gave the person my contact number.

My mother, Kay Sakata, was born, raised and lived in Steveston all of her 93 years. My father purchased the current home in 1950 and my mother has lived there since.

Though she has had some health issues the last few years she is determined to live there on her own. My brother, Adam Sakata, and I have contact with her every day and care for her and her garden. She has stated that she wants to live there until she dies. It is the intention of my husband and I to move in with her in the next few years to care for her.

It was the intention of my husband and I to renovate the home and move there permanently. When we made inquiries to the City regarding this, we were told that we could not sell the home as a resident, but we can renovate (with building and renovation restrictions) and live in the home as descendants of the original owner.

We were also told if it is sold it must be sold as commercial or that we can develop it as such with commercial activities on the lower floor and residents on the upper levels, as are the surrounding buildings. The current "Steveston Village Conservation Plan" and its imminent passing of the Plan at the next Council meeting strike an ominous blow to my mother at this stage of her life and certainly to our rightful plans for the property.

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From our point of view there has been no contact or consultation regarding the fate of my mother's property. You mentioned that all property owners had been contacted and that there was a public meeting held at the Steveston Community Center in December and you urged me to attend a meeting the evening we spoke, May 12. You also said I can come to speak with a planner before the meeting of the 19<sup>th</sup>. As a property owner, my mother does not recall being contacted by anyone about her property and I certainly was not contacted. You mentioned that the meeting in December was poorly attended and I questioned why there would be a second meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center on the evening of the Provincial Election if high attendance and much input was sought. Unfortunately, my work schedule and pre-existing plans to be out of town on the long Victoria Day has left me little time to personally attend to this. As the message left on the phone by the Steveston resident stated, "they are ramming this thing through and just going through a quick superficial process". It certainly appears to be the case.

You asked what I think can be done. As I mentioned, I would like to have my mother's property not be part of the "Village Conservation Plan" at this time, until she, and we, have the opportunity to fully understand the role of her property in the "Plan" and the implications and the consequences for my mother, and us, of her property being part of the "Plan". I believe strongly that my mother deserves the respect and consideration. As many, many passers-by have said of her property, it has beautified and been a place of enjoyment for them in Steveston. At this time in my mother's life, it is our wish to have her live in her home and putter in her garden without being encumbered with zoning and other issues about her property. For any inquires regarding my mother's property, please direct them to me as I indicated in a previous e-mail to you with all my contact information.

Though I write on behalf of my mother and her property, I wish the same respect and consideration for all the property owners in the Steveston Plan. Knowing all who are part of the Plan have been sincerely and fully consulted can only result in proceeding with confidence that the Steveston Plan can be successfully implemented.

Thank you for your consideration of this very urgent matter.

Yours sincerely,

Carol-Lyn Sakata Thaler

cc Mr. Terry Brunette, Staff Liaison – Heritage Commission  
Mr. Joe Erceg, General Manager, Planning and Development  
Mayor and City Councillors