December 21, 2018
City of Vancouver
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC
V5S 1V4

Attention: Ms. Karen Hoese, Senior Rezoning Planner and Mr. Zachary Bennett, Rezoning Planner

Re: Rezoning Application for 720 Beatty Street

Dear Karen and Zak,

Over 4 years ago, Creative Energy purchased and rebranded Central Heat Distribution Ltd., a critical step in the City's 2020 Greenest City Action Plan. This purchase included both the business and lands, much of which are surplus to the utility’s current and future needs. The British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) has agreed with Creative Energy that the site has land not required for the operations of the plant, ultimately allowing Creative Energy to split this land off from the utility itself. Creative Energy currently has a customer base of over 210 buildings in Downtown Vancouver, along with major customers such as BC Place Stadium and St. Paul’s Hospital. There are also current and future expansion plans to develop new heating and cooling networks in Northeast False Creek, South Downtown, the West End and the Cambie Corridor. The spin off and development of the surplus land/air rights of this site is necessary to help fund the growth and development of these expansion networks, create new low-carbon sources of energy and upgrade the infrastructure of the existing plant, which now 50 years old. Most importantly, the redevelopment of this site supports a broader neighborhood vision for Vancouver.

The redevelopment site at 720 Beatty Street sits within the Central Business District (CBD). It is located within a hub of large scale sports, culture, and entertainment venues, including BC Place Stadium, Rogers Arena and the Plaza of Nations. The site is also connected to Yaletown (South), Downtown (West), International Village and Chinatown (North), and the Citygate Towers (East). In 2009, Council approved land use policies to create a vibrant, mixed-use waterfront district inclusive of the realignment of the viaducts with an at-grade road network – this would maintain the essential movement of goods and services to and from Downtown but also create a new gateway into Downtown Vancouver. The viaduct realignment will also allow for improved connections between Vancouver’s historic neighborhoods and False Creek, more park space along the False Creek waterfront, development of the vacant City-owned blocks on either side of Main Street (currently interrupted by the viaducts) and new housing opportunities throughout the area. Although this Creative Energy site is currently less than prominent, it will quickly become the new gateway into both the CBD and NEFC neighborhoods.

Now is the opportune time to redevelop this site given the timing of viaducts replacement and if both are not considered concurrently, this gateway site will become a missed opportunity and a potential eyesore. A significant portion of the Georgia Street frontage is located on this redevelopment site and the success of this is contingent on having a coordinated design solution.

This rezoning proposal seeks to repurpose these industrial lands and increase the existing allowable commercial density rights from 7 FSR (under the CBD policies) with 55,481 sqm (597,192 sqft) of office, retail and Creative Energy plant space on 720 Beatty Street. As one of the largest and only undeveloped areas in the downtown peninsula, we have an extremely rare opportunity here to not only significantly upgrade an aging steam plant, but also create an architectural landmark capable of housing large office floorplates that will draw creative economy tenants into Vancouver. This will allow our city to attract both talent and employers that would otherwise find the standard Vancouver size office floorplates and workspace offerings inadequate for their needs.

The adjacent site at 701 Expo Boulevard is currently zoned under BCPEd where a development permit application will be made for intended retail uses. The intended design for this has been shown within this application for context as it pertains to 720 Beatty and the public realm.

Below is a summary of the benefits of this redevelopment proposal:

1. Upgrading Creative Energy’s Infrastructure: As part of the redevelopment, the existing infrastructure and plant equipment will be brought up to current codes and standards for higher resiliency and reliability for customers. The existing infrastructure is now 50 years old and both St. Paul’s Hospital and BC Place (post-disaster facility) are major customers. The reliability of both these facilities is extremely important to Vancouver in a disaster situation.

2. Improved Air Quality: The steam stacks of the existing plant are currently extremely visible within the public realm. The redevelopment will raise the stacks above the rooftop of the redevelopment, also improving the air quality for the residents of Vancouver.

3. GHG Reductions and Repurposing Unused Space: This redevelopment proposal intends to reduce the amount of Creative Energy plant space available at 720 Beatty Street through the redistribution of a portion of the plant to unused space within BC Place along Expo Boulevard. Through a special partnership with PavCo, the redistributed plant will house brand new, high-efficiency equipment resulting in annual GHG reductions of 6,500 tonnes for the Creative Energy system. This is equivalent to taking 1,350 cars off the road a year. In addition, future on-site low-carbon energy generation is being explored.

4. Unique Office Offering: This is one of the only sites in Downtown Vancouver that is capable of housing office floorplates larger than 30,000 sf. This redevelopment significantly increases the amount of office space on this transit-oriented site, which is necessary to attract large creative economy tenants to Vancouver.

5. A Gateway Building: This is an important transition site between the CBD and the surrounding entertainment/cultural districts and requires a built form capable of breaking down the scale of the area and will greatly enhance the beauty of this new gateway into downtown Vancouver and NEFC.

6. Activating the Public Realm: On this important transition site between the large scale surrounding stadiums, adjacent residential buildings and downtown, the redevelopment’s plaza will infill the gap between the site and the BC Place concourse. Retail opportunities will also be created for both during and outside of major events.

7. Creating a New Pedestrian Networks: The new public realm plaza will significantly improve access to and from BC Place through new pedestrian networks and a porous public realm.

8. Upgrading Expo Boulevard: Both sides of Expo Boulevard, a street in dire need of revitalization, will be greatly enhanced and activated with the new distributed Creative Energy plant to the East and the parkade entrance of this redevelopment to the West.

9. Demonstrating Green Building Leadership: The redevelopment will show considerable leadership in green building design through synergies with Creative Energy and innovative technologies.

We believe that the concept for this redevelopment addresses the needs of our city on multiple fronts and hope that the application can be seen in this context. We look forward to collaborating with the City of Vancouver to realize this project.

Sincerely,

Ian Gillespie
Westbank

Krishnan Iyer
Creative Energy

Bjarke Ingels
BIG

City of Vancouver
December 21, 2018
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Karen Hoese
Senior Development Planner
Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability
City of Vancouver
2nd Floor, West Annex
515 West 10th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4

RE: Rezoning Application for 720 Beatty Street

Dear Karen Hoese,

On behalf of Westbank, Creative Energy and BIG, HCMA Architecture + Design is pleased to submit this Rezoning submission for the proposed development and rezoning at 720 Beatty Street located in the Central Business District (CBD). The following submission illustrates our team’s vision in regards to the re-development of the site, and how it supports and responds to the City’s broad vision of providing more high quality office space design to attract the High Tech business sector, as well as bolster Vancouver’s sustainable vision outlined by the City’s 2020 Greenest City Action Plan.

Brief Description of Proposal

The following redevelopment proposal seeks to increase density by proposing a new 17 storey commercial office building. The project will ultimately attract new employment and economic growth to augment a district already incorporating cultural, arts, recreational and institutional uses. The proposal offers a number of additional public benefits such as:

- Providing much needed large commercial floorplates to attract High Tech employers that require larger floorplates than what is currently available.

- Creating an iconic and innovative gateway building design to the downtown adjacent the Georgia viaduct re-alignment.

- Enhancing the public realm “experience” at the building’s ground and lower levels while helping to activate, support, and transition the surrounding large scale sports, entertainment and cultural venues, with the neighbouring residential and commercial downtown.

- Enhancing the skyline views on the upper levels by adding a unique and landscaped architectural office tower design while adding pedestrian scaled retail opportunities.

- Serving as a sustainable beacon by contributing to the City’s overall GHG reductions while upgrading Creative Energy’s potential efficiencies.

We look forward to receiving comments back from the CoV in regards to our Rezoning submission. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or require any additional supplementary information.

Sincerely,

HCMA Architecture + Design

Darryl Condon
Architect AIBC, AAA, OAA, FRAIC, LEED AP
The proposed development is located in a ‘split-zoned’ site, located at the intersection of two Official Development Plans. The larger northwest site at 720 Beatty Street is located in Area C1 of the Downtown Official Development Plan (DODP).

The following outlines the principle intentions of the Official Development Plan and how the proposed development meets the City’s Policy objectives:

**Uses**

Office - As part of Area C1 of the DODP, Office Use is permitted and this proposal addresses the need for non-residential Office Use on the site, as required by the DODP and the Metropolitan Core Jobs and Economy Land Use Plan.

Retail - Although Retail is a permitted Use under Area C1 of the DODP, on the Downtown District Map 2 - Retail Uses does not indicate that Retail is either required or prohibited. We believe that the provision of Retail is especially important to the proposed development and surround areas, to reinforce and extend existing and new pedestrian routes. This proposal provides retail at grade level throughout the public realm.

**Density**

The DODP states that Area C1 shall not exceed a FSR of 7.00, however an increase in commercial density allowances are to be contemplated under the Metropolitan Core Jobs and Economy Land Use Plan. Under Section 6 of the DODP there is also allowances for increased density where there is a need for public, social or recreational facilities or areas. The proposed development includes a large public plaza between Georgia Street and the BC Place concourse.

**Height**

View Cone E1 restricts this height to approximately 67.22m at the corner of Beatty and Georgia Streets, although the discretionary maximum height of the building under the DODP is 137.2m. Due to the unique nature of this site, the redevelopment sits on top of an existing and operational steam plant which will be upgraded as a result of the redevelopment. The stacks from the boilers within the plant however are required to run through the redevelopment and extend beyond the roof. Refer to sections 2.2.2 (pages 28-31) and 2.3.5 (pages 46-49) for further detail on the redevelopment and compliance with Viewcones.

**Setbacks**

We understand that there is a desire for a 5.5m pedestrian setback along Beatty Street and 2 additional setbacks desired along Georgia Street as part of the realignment of the viaducts; a 12.5m pedestrian setback from Georgia Street to accommodate increased pedestrian flows to and from BC Place and a setback to allow for views to the BC Place lights. The proposed redevelopment provides a 10m setback from the curb of Georgia Street as discussed with planning to accommodate increased pedestrian flows, however, encroaches slightly into the BC Place view setback. In addition, existing Creative Energy steam headers along Georgia Street encroach momentarily into the 10m pedestrian setback. These steam headers provide heating to the entire downtown Creative Energy network of over 210 buildings and cannot be relocated or removed from this setback area. We have included a memo from Creative Energy in Appendix 3 outlining why these steam headers cannot be relocated and further detailed a design solution to account for increased pedestrian flows around the steam headers in section 2.5.3 (pages 70-71). We have also included a pedestrian flows study in Appendix 1 showing that the pedestrian widths provided within the public realm are appropriate for the traffic flows anticipated from BC Place.

Along Beatty Street, a 5.0m setback has been accommodated at grade, extending up to the underside of level 7. The setback steps to 2.5m at the underside of level 4 and then to 5.0m at the underside of level 7. Above that the remainder of the building cantilevers over the setback area.

**Public Realm Area**

Both Sections 6 and 7 of the DODP outline the importance of the Public Realm in the Downtown. Although there is an opportunity to provide on-site amenity for the social and recreational enjoyment of employees of the proposed development, the real potential of this site is its’ position as part of a cohesive and distinctive area within the city as a regional entertainment, sport, cultural and public activity draw. The existing detachment between the Downtown and BC Place can be mended by connecting Georgia Street to the BC Place Concourse with a public plaza which gives BC Place and the BC Sports Hall of Fame an important new front door off Georgia Street, similar to its connection at the end of Robson Street terminating in the Terry Fox Plaza.

The proposed redevelopment will create a new public realm that will significantly enhance the existing concourse and provide a pedestrian connection between the new developments to the West (Sub-area 5b) and East (sub-area 7a) of BC Place. In addition, this new plaza will also facilitate the implementation of the new Georgia Street ramp by mitigating grade changes and edge conditions as Georgia Street slopes down to Pacific Boulevard. In this light, the re-development will offer considerable public benefits by playing a pivotal role in connection BC Place with Downtown and Downtown with False Creek North.