

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
MAY 17, 2004**

**SOMETHING'S ROTTEN AT UBC**

The Wreck Beach Preservation Society (WBPS) was puzzled to hear Dennis Pavlich, VP of External and Legal Affairs for UBC, say that the Phase I, Tower #1 of the Marine Residences would now move forward. Tower I is the farthest-removed from the cliff edge in the Marine Residences proposed 4-tower complex, and Mr. Pavlich is saying it would NOT be visible from the beach, although the WBPS blimp was! We are dismayed that UBC suggests they have tried to be “neighbourly and fair in spades,” but have never sat down with us to discuss possible alternatives to the towers.

Vice President Pavlich said UBC is “under no legal obligation” to listen to concerned citizens about the potential destruction of a Vancouver heritage viewscape.

What he is NOT telling you when he says UBC raised its own blimp on May 11th, is that Project Manager, Jas Sahota, did not raise the blimp to the full height of the building. That is unfair as even if students would not be allowed up to the full height of the tower, the tower would still be visible from the beach by five stories.

When Mr. Sahota was on the beach photographing the top of the cliffs, he could not see the blimp because he was at or above the high water mark! UBC has never played fair ball when they have indicated they would drop the heights of the buildings if they should be visible from the beach. What they should have but did not add was that they would lower the heights of the buildings IF THEY WERE VISIBLE FROM THE HIGH WATER MARK OR ABOVE!

WBPS Chair, Judy Williams and WBPS Public Relations Officer, James Loewen were told by Mr. Sahota that they had “to be reasonable” and had to expect to see the buildings at moderate to low tides from the tidal flats. The Society photographed the cliff tops from moderate low tide on April 10, but UBC photographed the cliff top from the top of the Breakwater at high tide! That is comparing APPLES and ORANGES and the people of Vancouver will not tolerate this myopic disregard by UBC of the public will.

How shameful to sacrifice heritage views for the sake of luring new students. If a university of the stature of UBC cannot attract students because of academic excellence and one of the most beautiful campus's on this Earth, then it will forever be UBC's shame to be so tied to profit that it would destroy one of Canada's national treasures for the sake of short-term gain, especially when graduate design students have identified numerous locations where housing potential is underutilized. Totem Park alone could have its beds doubled, and Place Vanier is also under-utilized with regard to student housing. Yet, no one from UBC has sat down to speak with the public and their own students about alternatives to the proposed towers. And now we are told, they are steamrolling ahead!!!

UBC may not be under any “legal obligation,” but they ARE under a moral obligation to the people of Vancouver. Why is UBC not following its own principles stated in “A Promise and A Legacy!” The Marine Residence towers are in no way sustainable, and innovative, and only prove once again how lacking in vision this university truly is!

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**Media Advisory:** A Proclamation supported by 5,051 signatures and 150 letters will be presented to the City of Vancouver by Wreck Beach Preservation Society officials and other concerned citizens of Vancouver on **May 18th at 10:30 am**. Preparations for this presentation will begin on the **south steps of Vancouver City Hall**.

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May 17, 2004

Mayor Campbell and Vancouver City Councilors,  
Vancouver City Hall,  
453 West 12th  
Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1V4

Dear Mayor Campbell and Vancouver City Councilors:

Tomorrow May 18th at 10am concerned citizens of Vancouver will gather on the South steps of Vancouver City Hall to raise further awareness about UBC's Marine Residence development. We invite you Mr. Mayor (or your official representative) and all City Councilors to join us to receive a scroll from citizens concerned about the imminent loss of Point Grey's heritage viewscapes of forested cliffs by the sea. Would you Mr. Mayor, or whomever you designate as your official representative, be able to meet us at 10:30 on the south steps?

The situation brewing at UBC is becoming urgent and intolerable. UBC issued a press release May 12 announcing they are going ahead with plans to build a massive student housing development of four twenty storey high rise towers at 6600 NW Marine Drive despite increasing public opposition. This location is directly across the street from bald eagle habitat and perilously close to fragile, perched-aquifer cliffs. If built, this development would tower above the tree line and totally dominate the natural surroundings.

Visitors to Wreck Beach from around the world generate millions of dollars annually for the City of Vancouver. For example in 2001 Wreck Beach visitors generated 61 million dollars in goods and services for Canada's economy. Many of these people comment that perhaps the most impressive feature of this splendid place is the fact that adjacent to our full and vibrant city, there remains one opportunity to look back at the hillside and see no sign of civilization at all. When you look up at those trees, all you can see are the eagles swooping around with nothing but blue sky behind them. No buildings, no artificiality, no ambient light, unlike anything else at all in the whole Vancouver area. How absolutely priceless it is.

This is the last unaltered skyline in Vancouver. This wilderness like area is a Canadian treasure, sacred land to the first peoples of this region, and it must remain untouched and preserved in perpetuity. For anyone to consider destroying that skyline and creating a permanent blemish on it for the sake of economic development is simply preposterous.

We recognize that Vancouver has no jurisdiction over UBC land, the cliffs or the foreshore, but hope you might bring pressure on UBC to ethically reconsider this ill-proposed and environmentally-damaging project.

Most sincerely yours,

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