

March 14, 2025 Newsletter

Congratulations to Safouh El Rayes, Point Grey Pharmacy



The BC Pharmacy Association has announced that Safouh El Rayes, owner and pharmacist of Point Grey Pharmacy, has won this year's **Excellence in Patient Care Award**. This award is presented to a pharmacist who has demonstrated ongoing excellence in patient care in their professional practice. So well deserved!

Disappointing Results on Future of the Safeway Site

On March 11, 2025, Vancouver City Council unanimously approved the rezoning application for the Point Grey Safeway site, with no additional conditions. Unanimous, but we should note that Mayor Sim did not attend Council even though this landmark development is in his neighbourhood.



Friends of Point Grey Village had high hopes that Council would do some problem-solving on the floor of Council and address the many constructive suggestions made by the community, Friends of Point Grey Village, the Urban Design Panel and the Point Grey Business Improvement Association. Although a number of Councillors acknowledged the long term, passionate engagement by Point Grey residents, City Council ultimately decided against requiring any of the additional improvements that were asked for.

The developer, BGO, a multi-national real estate firm with its global headquarters in Miami, has succeeded in creating a long term investment for Sun Life International.



Jean Baird, Chair of Friends of Point Grey Village explained to Council at the public hearing that despite many attempts by the community to improve the development. “We are offered an aggressive and over-built financial product with no attention to urban design, village scale or character, and no community facilities. “

The table below shows what we asked for and what we got from City Council:

Suggested Improvement	Council Action
Provide a childcare, given current deficit in spaces and added demand created by new development	REJECTED
Construct a mid-block crosswalk to assist in traffic calming, pedestrian safety and place-making	REJECTED
Create a 40 Km Pedestrian Priority Zone on West 10 th	REJECTED
Ask the developer to comply to City guidelines on spacing between western tower and Point Grey Place. Distance is only 65 feet when it should be 80 feet. Reduce height of building in NW corner to prevent boxing in of Point Grey Place.	REJECTED
Ask the developer to enclose the entire open entrance ramp for truck deliveries off Sasamat--this will cause noise and pollution for existing businesses and residents and future residents.	REJECTED
Improve the boring façade on 10 th Avenue by providing more shopfronts and a small plaza at the entrance of the grocery store	REJECTED
Increase the amount of green space at ground level--paths are very narrow and are located in limited corridors.	REJECTED

Some of these actions listed above can be taken by the City now, independently of the rezoning application. Council says they care about our village and our local businesses. Actions will speak louder than words.

Sadly, the narrative embraced by Council led to its inaction, as follows:

- 1) **The population of Point Grey has remained about the same for the last couple of decades (true) and the injection of new residents and replacement of the grocery store will solve all the village prosperity issues with no additional actions from Council.** The reality is that much can be done by the City to improve pedestrian safety and place-making in order to maximize the benefits of the new development and help revitalize the village.
- 2) **All the public benefit from the development is used up by requiring the developer to provide 20% of the units as below rental market housing. No development contributions are left to address community benefits like a child care, traffic calming, better public spaces.** No City funds have been spent on the Point Grey Village streetscape for at least two decades. There are two other sources of funds that no Council or staff mentioned as a way to provide for community benefits: a) property taxes from residents and businesses b) \$8 million in Development Cost levies as a result of the commercial portion of the development.

- 3) **It is okay for Council to approve large developments that add population in established neighbourhoods and not care about whether adequate community services are provided.**

This is not the path to a better city. As explained in Business in BC magazine, March 2025, Frances Bula observes that the City is adding population in established neighbourhoods “with a lack of attention to urban design or neighbourhood improvement that is a startling reversal of past practices.”

- 4) **Council was led to believe by staff and the developer that significant changes had been made to the development from the initial proposal.** Actually, not much changed from BGO’s initial rezoning proposal submitted in November 2023. A new vehicular entrance was provided off Sasamat, the towers were pushed back and the podium height was reduced. In exchange, the developer was given a net increase in density, including increasing the tower heights to 21 and 19 storeys from 19 and 17 storeys. The plaza was expanded by approximately the size of one picnic table and the sidewalk was modestly expanded in parts. The City made no effort to look at the use of City property to improve the public realm.

Some articles that may be of interest:

[U.S. developer snags \\$611,000 property tax break for creating Vancouver 'dog park' | Vancouver Sun](#)

[Tale of 3 Safeways: What their redevelopment plans say about Vancouver | Vancouver Sun](#)

[Three Safeway developments: 'Overbuilding everywhere' across Vancouver | Vancouver Sun](#)

<https://canada.constructconnect.com/joc/news/projects/2025/03/another-vancouver-safeway-site-to-be-redeveloped>