
Stanley Park Advocates
News Release
January 16, 2018

After a failed process and inadequate consultation, City Council is poised to approve Anheuser-Busch's manufacturing facility that contradicts traditional Park zoning. The Park Board has modified their news release two days before they go to City Hall for approval to build this controversial Anheuser-Busch brewery in the world-cherished Stanley Park.

Up until this time, the related marketing material has promoted the added brewery to a long-established restaurant location. They are now downplaying the brewery aspect of their venture with the emphasis of a restaurant. This exact 'marketing' behaviour has the public concerned.

"Just tell the truth and be accountable to citizens by holding a public meeting so questions can be answered. Why isn't the Park Board following their Public Engagement Standards? Why are they so reluctant to hold a basic public meeting for everyone?" says Val Lemaitre, a resident of the West End neighbourhood.

Changes in building and purpose

The Park Board indicates that there will be no change to the building footprint, yet their submitted plans show an expanded patio and patio capacity more than tripling near the at-risk heron breeding colony. The Park Board indicates this will activate this public space. It will also offer retail off-sales of alcohol where alcohol is prohibited. In fact, aside from a restaurant, people don't want the space activated. Besides, the Park Board doesn't know what people want from this area as they haven't asked. There has been no forum to collect community thoughts or ideas to draw any conclusion.

As City Hall Watch expresses, "Our elected officials have the ethical and legal obligation to serve the public interest above all, but how are they to make the wisest decisions [without collecting stakeholder views]?"

A failed process and inadequate consultation

The sequence of events from 2015 to 2016 involved a highly regarded local restaurant, selected through the City's procurement process, exiting and the newly acquired Anheuser-Busch's subsidiary, Stanley Park Brewing Co., being

sole sourced for this site. Although many local and Canadian companies were interested in the spot, the world's largest beer conglomerate was chosen. Never before has a brewery been allowed into B.C.'s park system. All of this was done without proper public consultation.

For the neighbourhood, one site sign was posted on the garbage fence behind the building. Not one resident out of 1500+ has received the official notification card sent to five property management firms. No management firm remembered receiving it or forwarding it on.

A few support letters don't constitute stakeholder support

The Park Board indicates they have received public, stakeholder and First Nations support. Aside from First Nations approval, one cannot draw a conclusion of stakeholder support. The Park Board received more than four times the opposition to the proposal than support from residents who became aware of the project. In a democratic process they say 'the nays' have it.

The Park Board indicated they received one support letter from the nearby tennis club. The tennis club now has allocated club space in the Fish House building. The nearby lawn bowlers, who now have a season's supply of Stanley Park Brewing drinking cups, sent a support letter too. West End is a large and dense community with thousands of residents, businesses and organizations this is not clear evidence of support.

For the Herons, how extinct do they have to be for Park Board protection?

The Herons have become habituated to a range of disturbances during their critical breeding season. However, their habituation tolerance doesn't provide grounds, nor authorize the Park Board to keep testing their threshold level.

The brewing company and Stanley Park Ecology Society assure people that the at-risk Great Blue Heron Colony will not be harmed. They cannot state this as fact. The Park Board is violating their own guidelines and agreement with the federal and provincial ministries in allowing further disturbance in this area. The Park Board has abdicated their stewardship role for this vulnerable species.

- The Park Board is elected to provide responsible stewardship. Currently they are violating their own Heronry Management Plan guidelines. Their Plan states, the Park Board should be working to minimize disturbance. Their Plan recommends expanding the critical season to Jan-Sept rather than Feb-Aug while also preventing nearby special events, construction or other disturbances.

- The Environment Ministry mandates a 200-meter buffer zone for nesting colonies. The Park Board has special agreement for a 60-meter buffer zone. And they continue to violate their own regulations by introducing more disruption less than 30 meters away during the breeding season
- For at-risk species officials are not only governed by the provincial and federal environment ministries, but also by a signed international treaty called the **Precautionary Principle that states officials who have the power to protect these species, must do so, even when all the evidence is not in.** The Park Board's decision does not constitute environmental stewardship.
- The main difference for the Herons is the nighttime noise, not the daytime disruption. Up until now, they generally have the quiet of the evening .The Fish House was a quiet place that closed early. The proposed venue differs in operating hours, usage and purpose. The proposed expanded patio is being constructed on the side facing the herons.
- We don't know if this will cause them to abandon their nests, eggs, or chicks or whether it won't. Hence the Precautionary Principle in the environmental world guides decision-making.

The \$4.5 M investment is predominantly needed to build a brewery rather than for the necessary kitchen and window upgrade. In recognition of concerns raised, Stanley Park Brewing has agreed for the first 6 months of operation, they will close by 11:00 pm, and weather permitting, close the patio by 10:00 pm. Citizens are still puzzled by what this achieves and how it will work when the Park and parking lots close at 10:00 pm.

On Wednesday, January 17th City staff will present a report to Council recommending that they endorse a Limited Liquor Primary License to facilitate growler re-fills for the restaurant. Council Policy requires new liquor primary licenses to be **subject to Public Consultation. Public Consultation has not happened.**

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