

MEDIA RELEASE

Vancouver Artist Tiko Kerr unveils painting “Heritage Takes Many Forms (St John’s Presbyterian Church)” at West End rezoning hotspot site

(Vancouver, October 25, 2010) Popular Vancouver artist Tiko Kerr unveiled an original acrylic painting titled “Heritage Takes Many Forms (St John’s Presbyterian Church)” at 4:30 pm on Saturday in front of the West End heritage church, a site slated for a controversial rezoning to make way for a 22-storey tower. The painting is expected to be sold at a charity art auction to raise funds for the community. See West End Neighbours [website](#) for photos of event.



This rezoning application for this church site at 1401 Comox Street is one of about ten “radical rezonings” already in the pipeline for this community of about 46,000. West End Neighbours has collected 11,000 signatures on its “No Rezoning Without a Comprehensive Plan” petition.

Kerr said, “Part of my job as an artist is to be a record keeper, so what I am doing is documenting the buildings slated for potential destruction, and leaving a permanent visual record for art history in Canada of how our city is conducting this process. I am predicting eight to ten paintings in the whole series.”

Photo: Tiko Kerr shows “Heritage Takes Many Forms (St John’s Presbyterian Church)” painting. (Video: www.youtube.com/user/WestEndNeighbours). More photos on request.

The art unveiling on Saturday was part of a weekly walk through the West End to visit rezoning hotspots. After the unveiling, the West End Neighbours also held a street-corner information session, and then a symbolic planting of perennial flowers and edible plants as a sign of hope for the future of this site.

WEN spokesperson Randy Helten said, “This St John’s Church site is just one of about ten ‘spot rezoning’ sites that could bring thousands of new residents into the West End. The city needs to respect existing zoning guidelines, take a more comprehensive view of planning needs in this community. We also need a public discussion about the best use of this particular site, which both served the community and was supported by the community for over a hundred years.”

In the coming days, West End Neighbours will release on its website (1) a report to set the record straight on misinformation that has been circulating from the church site’s current owners (Westbank Projects Corp., the Peterson Group, and project architect Henriquez Partners Architects),(2) a WEN report to dispel confusion by proving that the West End has actually seen much new construction in the past two decades, (3) calculations of developer profits due to incentives under the city’s controversial Short Term Incentives for Rental Housing (STIR) program, and (4) a paper to correct errors printed in a City brochure about the STIR program.

Visual artist Tiko Kerr has devoted his life and energies to painting and to his community for the past 30 years. He settled in Vancouver’s West End in the late 1970s and began a three decade-long series of paintings, vibrant warring visions of urban landscape in Vancouver, a city that has never ceased to captivate him. Winning a struggle with HIV and the public health system inspired him to use his artistic talent to facilitate social change and serve the community of Vancouver, which had supported him when he needed it the most. Tiko Kerr hopes that his art will help to promote constructive dialogue among all the stakeholders who will determine the future of a neighbourhood he lives in and loves. Previous works in the West End series are “A Night Full of Stars (Maxine’s)” (the first STIR rezoning site at 1215 Bidwell, owned by Millennium Developments) and “Davie Street & Goliath.”

West End Neighbours (WEN) is a network of residents that has grown to thousands of West End residents concerned about the impact of “spot” rezonings on livability in the West End and the implications for all of Vancouver.

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