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North Vancouver highrise approved amid controversy

[Brent Richter](#) / North Shore News

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Victoria Park resident Linda Heese addresses members of a protest Feb. 15 over the **new tower slated for 161-165 East Keith Rd.** The group asked City of North Vancouver council for a new public hearing, but the tower got its final approval Monday night. Photo Cindy Goodman

It was a rough landing for the latest residential tower voted through by City of North Vancouver council Monday night.

FDG Property Management won final approval to build a **16-storey tower containing 52 strata units and 41 rental units at 161-165 East Keith Rd.** (<http://www.nsnews.com/news/victoria-park-to-get-new-condo-rentals-1.1740746>) but not without a bout of controversy.

The project drew a protest of about 50 residents on Sunday asking for a new public hearing.

The group charged that the developer failed to provide clear information on the project's floor space ratio, the square footage of the units and number of units of each size, the property setbacks, estimated rental rates and detailed calculations of land transfers and density bonusing.

The group cited a recent win in the courts by the Community Association of New Yaletown in its lawsuit with the City of Vancouver over a botched public hearing in 2013.

Former council candidate Joe Heilman attempted to address council during the meeting's public input period but was asked to

halt his presentation due to bylaws that prevent council from hearing new information about a project once the public hearing is over.

Linda Heese, who lives in one of the highrises across the park, had better luck. "It seems to me these requirements would be the basis for any reasonable and valid public hearing and I do not believe any fair person could look at the situation and the documents in a recent situation and feel that these had been fairly met," she said at council.

But the project passed 4-3 with no discussion at the council table. Couns. Craig Keating, Linda Buchanan and Holly Back, and Mayor Darrell Mussatto voted in favour while Couns. Don Bell, Pam Bookham and Rod Clark voted nay.

The meeting was coloured with one other curiosity: the presence of RCMP officers during the public input period.

"Who asked for two police officers to be present for our council meeting tonight?" Bookham asked.

"We'll get back to you on that," the mayor responded.