



talkvancouver.com



Talk Housing With Us Unconference Book of Proceedings

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Book design by Laura Galloway

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**The City wishes to thank all participants, discussion leaders and
presenters for their support and contributions toward ensuring
everyone in Vancouver has a home.**



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**“(The Unconference) was very open, collaborative,
and encouraged people to participate and speak out
on a wide variety of issues”**

- Unconference participant

Executive Summary

On June 4, 2011, nearly eighty citizens gathered at the Talk Housing with Us Unconference to share ideas on the actions required to ensure everyone in Vancouver has a home.

Hosted by the City of Vancouver as part of the Talk Housing with Us engagement program, the Unconference provided an opportunity for housing stakeholders, experts and interested community members to present ideas, seek advice, and engage one another to find solutions to the challenges of housing affordability and homelessness.

Community leader Michael Harcourt opened the session, encouraging creative thinking and reminding the group of the power a united community can have toward achieving positive outcomes, referring to his success in the late 1960s rallying community support to prevent construction of a freeway through Vancouver's downtown core.

City Councillors Kerry Jang and Andrea Reimer thanked participants for taking time to work together and share their ideas, knowledge and tools and expertise.

Participants at the Unconference designed a robust agenda for discussion, including topics focusing on how to strengthen tenants' rights, how to solve the problem of limited housing supply and how transportation planning decisions affect housing and community affordability.



Leading up to the Unconference, people were encouraged to give others a preview of their Unconference discussion topics, with suggestions ranging from taxation of offshore condo owners to address rental unit shortages to finding long-term partners to deliver affordable housing.

Following an afternoon of lively and energetic discussion, participants reconvened in a large circle to share what they had learned. Participants described new ideas, actions, and relationships formed, and especially a sense of reinvigoration and motivation to continue to work, as many do every day, to address problems of housing affordability and homelessness and ensure everyone has a place to call home.



“Loved the opportunities to learn what residents think, feel and know about issues important to build a common frame of reference.”

– Unconference participant



ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

The City of Vancouver’s core mission is to create a great city of communities which cares about its people, its environment and the opportunities to live, work and prosper. Two key goals for realizing this mission are to end street homelessness by 2015 and increase housing for low and modest income households.

Recognizing that success toward these goals depends largely on the support and cooperation of stakeholders and partners, as well as widespread support from the community, the City launched the Talk Housing with Us engagement program. The program was designed to engage Vancouver’s citizens in a dialogue about housing and homelessness and to help inform and shape the City’s Housing and Homelessness Strategy. City staff will present the Housing and Homelessness Strategy to Council for approval in Summer 2011.



Leading up to the Unconference

Notification and outreach

A goal of the Unconference was to engage a diverse range of participants, including people who work in the housing field as well as people who may be less familiar with the issues but have an interest in learning about, and working to find, solutions.

The City employed a range of tactics to get the word out and invite people to the Unconference:

- Newspaper ads were placed in the Georgia Straight, Westender, Vancouver Courier
- Online ads were placed on Vancouver is Awesome, Vancouver Observer, Westender, and Georgia Straight
- Posters were put up on the streets across the West End, Gastown, Downtown, Yaletown and in community centres, cafes, and libraries around Vancouver
- Information was sent out through social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, blogs) and the Talk Housing with Us online forums
- Electronic invitations were sent by email to several thousand people in the BC Nurses' Union, the Canadian Federation of Students, the BC Federation of Labour, arts community, aboriginal community, renters' community, housing and homelessness community, intercultural community, and Vancouver's post-secondary community

Let's talk housing!

The City of Vancouver invites you to an unconference to learn about, discuss and explore ideas and actions to end homelessness and create affordable housing in Vancouver.

We set the stage, you set the agenda.
You can lead or join any discussion that interests you.

Join us at the
Talk Housing with Us
Unconference:
Saturday, June 4, 2011
10am - 5pm

Lunch and light refreshments will be served.



Empire Landmark Hotel
1400 Robson Street, Vancouver, BC

SPACE IS LIMITED

RSVP for the unconference on the Talk Housing with Us website at talkvancouver.com/housing or by calling 604-673-8285 by June 2, 2011.



talkvancouver.com

Let's talk housing!

What can we do to ensure everyone in Vancouver has a home?

On Saturday, June 4, the City of Vancouver invites you to an unconference to learn about, discuss and explore ideas and actions to end homelessness and create affordable housing in Vancouver.

We set the stage, you set the agenda.
You can lead or join any discussion that interests you.

Have a question you want answered? Have an innovative idea to present or a project you need help with? Follow the 3Ps:



POST IT

Go to talkvancouver.com/housing and post the title and a brief description of the Talk Housing Unconference Discussion Topic you plan to lead at the event. Don't worry if you miss this step, you can still lead a session at the unconference.



PREP IT

On the day of the unconference, people will be asked to announce their discussion topic, post it onto the agenda in one of the available 45-minute time slots and invite people to attend their session.



PRESENT IT

Welcome fellow participants and get started. Each discussion space will have a note-taker ready to capture the conversation and your ideas. Everyone will be invited to share their experiences with the group at the end of the day.

Join us at the
Talk Housing with Us
Unconference: **Saturday, June 4, 2011**



Empire Landmark Hotel
1400 Robson Street, Vancouver, BC V6G 1B9

SPACE IS LIMITED.

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talkvancouver.com



Let's talk housing!

Join us at the Talk Housing with Us Unconference:
Saturday, June 4, 2011 10am - 5pm

SPACE IS LIMITED

RSVP for the unconference on the Talk Housing with Us website at talkvancouver.com/housing or by calling 604-673-8285 by June 2, 2011.



Sharing ideas

The goal was to get people talking about housing before the Unconference so we asked people to share ideas ahead of time in the Talk Housing with Us online forum at talkvancouver.com/housing.



[HOME](#) | [HELP](#) [LOGIN](#) or [SIGN UP TO HAVE YOUR SAY](#)

Talk Housing with Us

[Subscribe](#) | [Share](#)   



The City of Vancouver and its partners are working to end street homelessness by 2015 and increase housing for low and modest income households.

To overcome the challenges of homelessness and lack of affordable housing choices, the City is working with its partners and the citizens of Vancouver to develop the City's **Housing and Homelessness Strategy**.

Join the conversation below, attend our **unconference** or attend an event in your community to **learn about the issues**, share ideas, and take action toward achieving our goals. Have your say in the discussion forum.

[Sign up](#) or [Log In](#)

For More Information:
Visit vancouver.ca or call: [311](tel:604-681-3111)

Hỏi chi tiết **Obtenga Información**
資料查詢 **सहायता लीजें** [311](tel:604-681-3111)



e-mail: housing.policy@vancouver.ca

  64 people like this. Be the first of your friends.

SIGN UP to have your say in the forums
It's free, quick and anonymous...



Everyone deserves a home.

**ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM**


Housing and Homelessness Strategy

ONLINE FORUMS BISTERO ROUNDTABLES

Strategy Implementation:
• END STREET HOMELESSNESS BY 2015
• INCREASE HOUSING FOR LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSEHOLDS



At the Unconference

Building the agenda

As participants arrived they were greeted by the Unconference facilitators Diana Bulley and Jon Schmid from Context Research. At 10:30 a.m. they took their seats, set in concentric circles in the main ballroom.



In the circle centre, former City of Vancouver Mayor and BC Premier Mike Harcourt kicked off the day with inspiring words about finding solutions to Vancouver's housing issues. He was followed by City Counsellor Kerry Jang, who thanked participants for taking time out of their schedules to participate.

Participants were then asked to share with the group one word to describe how they were feeling about the day ahead. "Hopeful," "curious," and "excited" were common refrains.

The facilitators described the Unconference format, explaining how anyone wanting to lead a discussion session could come to the front, write it on a piece of paper and then announce their discussion topic to the group. They would then find a blank space on the agenda to post their topic in an available time and place. There were eight separate discussion spaces and one theatre, complete with popcorn, where people could present and watch videos supplied by other participants.

Over the next hour, participants designed their agenda and by the time lunch was served, nearly every spot was filled.



Since there were more videos for viewing than times available in the theatre, participants worked together to make space for everyone's show.



“I loved the Unconference! I only wish that I could have participated in more discussions.”
—Unconference participant

Seeing it through

It was now time for participants to plot out their afternoon.

The afternoon was divided into three 45-minute time slots, with eight topics running concurrently during each slot. For the next three hours, the participants moved from one breakout group to another, sharing ideas, asking questions and exploring solutions.

A successful Unconference follows the Law of 2 feet and observes a few Guiding Principles. The law and principles ensure the day runs smoothly, participants get the most out of their day and encourages cross pollination of ideas. Facilitators presented these to participants in the morning and posted them in each discussion space as reminders.

Following the discussion sessions, participants reconvened in the main circle. The microphone was passed around and people were invited to share their experiences and discuss what they had taken from the day.

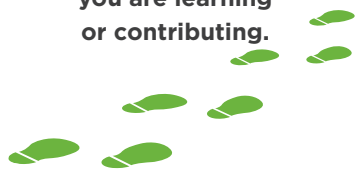


Finally, to close the Unconference, City Councillor Andrea Reimer thanked participants for coming and sharing their ideas. She highlighted some of the conversations that had taken place during the day, and explained how the City of Vancouver will incorporate ideas and feedback from the day into the development of the Housing and Homelessness Strategy.



The Law of 2 Feet

If you are neither learning nor contributing it is your responsibility to respectfully use **your own 2 feet** to find some place you are learning or contributing.



Principles of Open Space

- Whoever comes are the right people
- Whatever happens is what happens
- Whenever it starts is the right time
- When it is over, it is over



“I’ve never done such a free-form conference before, but it makes sure everyone gets heard, unlike regular conferences with set agendas.”
—Unconference participant



Getting down to business

With eight different discussion spaces and three available time slots, a total of 21 sessions took place in the afternoon.

The notes for each of these sessions are included in this booklet (see page 15 for the session content listing). “Word Clouds” were also created for each of these sessions.



What can we do to ensure everyone has a home?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12:00 - 12:45 A	SET UP A RENT BANK PROGRAM FOR VANCOUVER (Rental assistance) Sharon Baskin	AFFORDABLE HOME OWNERSHIP Tim Wake	How to Solve the Problem of SUPPLY Roy Langston	HOPEFULNESS - CHALLENGING A SUSTAINABLE - RAISE THE BAR ON EXPECTATIONS WOODWARD JAMES RICHARD	SOCIAL ATTITUDES - Respectful and Professional attitudes - Good landlord-tenant relationships - Living Responsibly			
1:00 - 1:45 B	TRAVELER'S PLACES TRANSFORMING VACANT TRAVELER'S RESIDENCES INTO AFFORDABLE HOUSING SHARON BASKIN	RS-1 ZONING? The neighborhood made a decision, but the city is not following through.	Plan for 1050 Equi-Build 2000 1050 with 1000 units Lillian and David	Combining Housing with Transportation along the Metrolink, Pacific, Main Transit, and the new railway corridor from Fraser Park to West Clark and North to Powell St at Bayview St.	Coldwater Land Cooperatives and water at coldwater de crêpe the development as a cooperative, informal like a street.			
2:00 - 2:45 C	WOMEN AND HOUSING Why they are trying to keep this issue as the priority. Around the house, I learned about the house.	Target XL of housing appts for rentals (50%) to the median income of the surrounding community. Christine Ackermann	Renters' Goods The new rental or expensive and unstable	"GRASSROOTS" OWNER-BUILT HOUSING BUILDING SMALL HOUSES INCREASINGLY TO CREATE POCKET NEIGHBORHOODS	PRISONERS: NEWLY RELEASED ALMOST ALWAYS INTO HOMELESSNESS COSTS TAKE PROPORTION AS HOMELESSNESS GROWS HIGH RECIDIVISM RATES VANCOUVER - PRISON AUTHORITY - PRISONER LIVES OUTSIDE, etc.			



WORKING TOGETHER

Organizations who participated at the Unconference included:

Apex Information
BC Housing Vancouver Coastal
BC Non-Profit Housing Association
BTA
Carnegie Community Action Project
CCAP
Central City Foundation
City of Vancouver
Fraser Valley Housing Network
handsandpurrs.ca
Lower Mainland Network for Affordable Housing
Metro Vancouver
MXD Development Strategies Ltd.
Positive Living BC
RainCity Housing
Seawall
Seniors Advisory Committee
Simon Fraser University
solutions4community llc
Terra Housing Consultants Ltd.
TRAC Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre
UBC
Vancity
Vancouver Citizen's Voice
Vancouver Coastal Health
Vancouver Native Housing Society
Vancouver School Board
West End Residents Association
Woodwynn Farms
Yurbanism

Greening the Unconference

The City of Vancouver is recognized as a leading Canadian city on the environmental front and was one of Canada's greenest cities by Corporate Knights magazine in February 2011. The City prides itself applying the principles of sustainability at all of its events and works closely with vendors and suppliers to achieve and maintain the highest standard possible.



Conference organizers ensured a greener event by:

- Hiring a waste recycling company to manage the organic waste from the preparation of food and beverage for the event. All of the food waste from the Unconference was diverted from the main waste stream and sent for composting, along with additional organic waste created from the Empire Landmark's other food services. Two 65 gallon totes were sent for composting.
- Arranging for Community Angel Food Runners to pick up leftover food. Community Angel Food Runners is a program of the Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society that recovers prepared and perishable food donated by caterers, restaurants, hotels and culinary institutions. Through this program, wholesome surplus food is delivered directly from donor organizations to meal-providing agencies supported by the GVFB. Four large roasting pan sized aluminum containers were filled with surplus food that was never served during the event. Empire Landmark staff generously added to the Unconference leftovers, knowing it would be delivered to people in need of a meal.
- Ensuring all stationery used at the Unconference contained recycled paper content, recycled plastic content, and was no-odour, refillable and/or was recyclable.
- Providing a stainless steel bucket and compostable/biodegradable bag for tea bags and napkin collection at the coffee station which then went into the organic waste bins.
- Using paper versus foil single serve bags for the popcorn in the Theatre.
- Requiring only bulk serving methods for coffee and tea cream and milk in pitchers, instead of single serve plastic containers.
- Requiring tap water be served in pitchers and refusing bottled water.

The total general waste generated at the event was one-and-one-half office desk garbage cans.



Show us what “home” means to you

not to be
afraid of a changing
neighbourhood

a place that has
enough peace of mind
to care for what (who)
around me.

A place & community where everyone feels, works & helps each other... like a big family good & for not. Where you feel secure in your surrounding community as much as you do your home... A sense of trust, belonging & hope for the future.

A place of comfort:
to relax, cook, think + draw

MICRO-UNIT HOUSING

Where your
SAFETY
SECURITY
COMFORT
PEACE
IS

Where your neighbours know you by sight ~~for~~ by name!

ANY PLACE ^{your home... A} ^{belonging to you} WHERE YOU KNOW ^{you} ARE LOVED!

Safe, secure
sanctuary.

January.

RIGHT NOW
IS A FLOODING
OF LUXURY UNITS + PLACES
NEED OPTIONS FOR
VINCUNOVER MATTEAS
LOWER-END PLACES TO RENT
FINISHES → THIS SHOULD MAKE
EX-PLANSING PLACES TO RENT
+ FINISHES → THIS SHOULD MAKE
EX-PLANSING PLACES TO RENT

I can't find a piece of crap apartment in this City even in the downtown eastside. There is subsidized housing in this area OR \$1200/month or rent. I don't qualify for being subsidized, but can't afford the baseline rent where is the option for "oh, here is

AFFORDABLE

Security of tenure

Average Income levels don't reflect the cost of living in Vancouver or the Lower mainland. Private Sector employers are able to get away with paying employees with below baseline salaries because of the divide.

a safe place to live,
not a financial investment

ALL I WANT IS A ROOM SOMEWHERE
FAR AWAY FROM THE COLD NIGHT AIR
WITH ONE ENORMOUS CHAIR

A place to open the door,
come in,
and feel "Hah,
I'm so lucky!"

CHARACTER
UNITS

a door I can lock
to keep me safe

2. A place to be
safe, to sleep,
to dream, alone,
behind a door
that locks

We NEED available, affordable spaces
we GET a few luxury developments
we will vote with our feet

home should be a safe place. Putting mental health / forewarned individuals / handovers in big infested CRUs and filthy buildings ~~is~~ is not a solution. Wouldn't send my worst enemies there.

A EOF ABOVE YOU
WAB IS A BASE
THE STE

SECURITY
CULTION OUT OF HOUSING

for people who want to own, who are homeowners, I ~~spend~~ freezing the property tax, and other housing related expenses basically housing for the

Everyone was invited to share their thoughts and ideas throughout the event.



"I really appreciated hearing all the different points of view"

– Unconference participant

Talk Housing Unconference Sessions

What can we do to ensure everyone has a home?

12:00 - 12:45	<div>A 1</div> <div>Rent Banks - Rental Assistance Program</div> <div>page 16</div>	<div>A 2</div> <div>Affordable Home Ownership</div> <div>page 18</div>	<div>A 3</div> <div>Low-Cost Senior Housing</div> <div>page 20</div>	<div>A 4</div> <div>Tenants Assistance</div> <div>Worker Staffed by City to Help Renters Navigate RTB Dispute Resolution Process</div> <div>page 22</div>	<div>A 5</div> <div>How to Solve the Problem of Supply</div> <div>page 24</div>	<div>A 6</div> <div>Home Fullness</div> <div>Woodwynn Farms</div> <div>page 28</div>	<div>A 7</div> <div>Make ex-homeless people tenant-ready</div> <div>Teaching basic domestic skills</div> <div>no notes</div>	<div>A 8</div> <div>Social Attitudes</div> <div>page 30</div>	THEATRE	
1:00 - 1:45	<div>B 1</div> <div>Strengthening Tenants Rights and Forming a Tenancy Association</div> <div>page 32</div>	<div>B 2</div> <div>Working Families, Homelessness</div> <div>page 34</div>	<div>B 3</div> <div>RS-1 Zoning?</div> <div>page 36</div>	<div>B 4</div> <div>Development in the Neighborhood of Expo Blvd, Pacific Blvd, & Cambie Bridge</div> <div>page 38</div>	<div>B 5</div> <div>Affordable Housing Trust</div> <div>page 39</div>	<div>B 6</div> <div>Combining Housing and Transportation</div> <div>page 42</div>	<div>B 7</div> <div>Cul-De-Sac Land Co-Operative</div> <div>-Land owners decide the development -Investment as a co-op-like strata</div> <div>page 46</div>	<div>B 8</div> <div>Design</div> <div>page 48</div>		VIDEOS: Seniors' Housing Micro-housing Renting in Vancouver Little Mountain: A Fight for Social Housing Homeless Voices page 60
2:00 - 2:45	<div>C 1</div> <div>How housing has always been labeled a women's issue</div> <div>Women and Housing</div> <div>page 49</div>	<div>C 2</div> <div>Rezoning</div> <div>page 50</div>	<div>C 3</div>	<div>C 4</div> <div>Property Endowment Fund</div> <div>page 51</div>	<div>C 5</div> <div>Rented Condos</div> <div>The new rental OR expensive & unstable</div>	<div>C 6</div> <div>Grassroots Housing Process</div> <div>page 54</div>	<div>C 7</div> <div>Prisoners</div> <div>Newly-released almost always into homelessness Costs to taxpayers, as homelessness creates high recidivism rates</div>	<div>C 8</div> <div>Housing and Transportation Affordability</div> <div>page 58</div>		

These notes were captured by note takers at each of the discussion sessions and attempt to express the views and opinions of participants at the Unconference.

SESSION

A 1

Rent Banks – Rental Assistance Program

Discussion Leader:
Sharon

Notetaker:
Moiria Cotter

Participants explored a rent bank concept and discussed how rent banks could provide rental assistance to people in distress. Discussions highlighted the successful implementation in five municipalities and how the City of Vancouver could work with community groups to develop a Rent Bank for Vancouver.

- Rent Banks exist in Surrey and Prince George, not in Vancouver yet.
- Interested in portable housing.
- Interested in practical ideas.
- Interested in rental programs for mentally ill and addicted people.
- Rental housing issues in West End in Vancouver.
- Rent Bank idea is to bridge and prevent homelessness by providing rental assistance for people who are likely to be victims of not paying rent.
- People pay back rent loan in small increments.
- It's a rapid response service, not an ongoing subsidy program.
- Looking for community stakeholders in Vancouver, beginning of discussions.
- Meetings with stakeholders already happening, looking to branch out further.
- Surrey Rent Bank repaying rent is pretty good; people do pay it back and makes an impact on people's lives.
- In discussion to apply for 3 years of core funding for Vancouver.
- Concept of Rent Bank is to provide a cushion for people who face eviction.
- Rent Banks are already set up in five municipalities in a 2 year pilot program, five communities each have a community service agent which have portals through which applicants apply for rental assistance. Have been up and running for 6 months, funding was 1/4 million administered by MCC, grants through Service Canada, organizers have identified some surprising features of applicants – many are disabled, some with no heat and no light. No communication between hydro and community services.
- Transition of homelessness between basic housing = many people on the edge.
- We want an evaluative system to compare apples with apples, the early results in the Fraser Valley are noticing that people are paying back quite faithfully but slowly, noticing people are being put into services that they didn't always have because they are now coming to the attention of the right services, its about homelessness avoidance, people are coming forward and getting the help they need, the administrator is doing all they can to keep up with the load.
- Toronto Rent Bank in early 2000, had a few years of Conservative Government that withdrew housing funding and employment insurance, lots of lost jobs and poor economic times, it was proposed that increase of homelessness was due to 1 – 2 months of rent not being able to be paid, key to success of Rent Bank in Toronto was that it was run by community service who were more closely aligned with people in need, big increase on waiting list for housing including single mums, people out of work, immigrants who didn't understand the system due to communication problems. City came up with 4 prong strategy. Rent Bank was one strategy. Tenant defense fund was another to help lower rents or make rental payments over time. Rent Bank was one important piece to help stem homelessness, needed other prongs to help stem the flow. Payback for Rent Bank was 75% in first year, 90% in second year. Payback worked better if it reflected the tenant's personal situation rather than being city directed. City was concerned about rent being paid back but it was paid back so there was increase in funding after the first two years. City Endowment Fund is a good source for funding in BC, especially after the recent election. Request to Minister Coleman would be a good idea.
- Toronto had in-kind support for staff that was just off the tax base. \$300,000 and then up to \$500,000 was the contribution that the city of Toronto made.
- 4 prongs in Toronto = Tenant Defense, Advocacy Work, Rent Bank, In-kind Support of City staff.
- Not many tenancy groups in Vancouver compared to Toronto.

CONTINUED

- delivery.

- Equity is held in real estate in Vancouver. How can we include renters so they have some equity in the community?
- These are micro credit loans but perhaps the Grameen Banking Model is a way of cultivating an economy, we need to look beyond crisis prevention, we need to provide credit to people to start up their own businesses and educate them to becoming self sustaining.
- We need to start with literacy before lending.
- We don't want predatory creditors.
- The challenge for renters includes being so dissatisfied with BC housing so when I advocate for people I direct people to Jim Greene's cell number so issues get handled faster.
- Rent Bank is not associated with BC housing.
- We keep talking to BC housing about creating some affordable for purchase for housing, Van City used to have a program that if you had subsidized housing and you had good rent record that you can potentially purchase your home.
- There is no communication in BC Housing amongst the people involved, I get really frustrated so eventually I gave up.
- Are Rent Bank applicants also BC Housing renters?
- Rent Bank is not related to BC Housing subsidies but the grant aspect has come into play for those on income assistance.
- In Toronto was initially available to anyone who needed it but the take-up was so high that they changed it so the community housing had an internal Rent Bank.



SESSION

A 2

Affordable Home Ownership

Discussion Leader:
Tim Wake

Notetaker:
Nicola Carsons

Participants discussed the difference between affordable ownership and social housing. It was suggested the City of Vancouver could create a non-profit organization in partnership with developers. Participants also explored ways to create affordable home ownership through this organization, and whether the organization could use its non-profit equity to create more affordable housing.

- Works with communities in BC, problem in province, initially in Whistler, problem with housing. Secondary suites programme there. Houses increased rapidly, \$1.5 million is a decent house in Whistler. Started working with this problem using tools which are available to Vancouver, wants to discuss using those tools. Building equity, one of the challenges. They choose rental and are happy with that rental, biggest equity is in your home in Canada but can't build that equity if not in the market. So working on making this affordable. Talking about income levels, 40K-100K but may still not be able to purchase in Vancouver the kind of house you'd like. Talking about ideas to help this.
- Affordable ownership is not social housing, we need social housing, work with government funding for social housing. It's not rental housing, its building homes and own equity. Private sector creates ownership. 30 years ago average income could afford houses but not anymore.
- Need to continually solve the problem. Thinks can be solved through re-owning – key tool. Assign value to a project. City of Vancouver can take cash and build housing but won't be able to build enough, has to find some way to have the value inputted at an affordable level. For-profit housing is needed to make this work. Developer gets a parcel of land, whatever it was before, and using it and rezoning to increase what can be built on that site. Not about replacing single homes with apartment buildings. Can build and sell at what it cost to build, part of it anyway. Suggesting we need to create 3 way partnership, nonprofit organization (do rental housing), needs to have a new department, a new responsibility, to administer some kind of protection from price increase. Developer, city and nonprofit.
- Why nonprofit? The way the regular market works, there is an incentive for developer to build because it makes a profit. Not helping middle sector people. Nonprofit provides the push.
- If developer builds 12 and 8 come buy like normal, the other 4 come from a waiting list of people who want to buy an affordable house. There is qualification for this list. In Vancouver you may have to have lived in that neighbourhood for last 15 years or income testing maybe. Understanding that this is not a way to riches, the nonprofit will resell it. Provide you with a nest not a nest egg. Get a person a home and build equity and a modest value. Once paid off the mortgage, in say 20 years, it won't go up in the same manner the normal market does.
- Rezoning – many areas fighting rezoning because decreases value. Renters get pushed out because they can't afford to rent. If we buy more smaller units, going to be more affordable but those people in the affordable housing frees up rental homes.
- Non profit owns the difference between what sold at and what market value is. There is a potential to create affordable home ownership and to use nonprofit equity to create more.
- Wants to keep the model simple. A more diverse neighbourhood is a stronger healthier neighbourhood.
- 8 market units that pay for land value and other development costs except vertical construction cost.
- Developer isn't putting anything in. Developer pays something for the land. Developer makes it more complicated. Money comes in through increased rezoning.
- We need to change process so developer has opportunity to give back, not by reducing profit. We say we're going to help you get this rezoning and that will give you this profit and we'd like you to create extra units and only charge construction costs for these. Not messing with for-profit.
- Developer still making the same profit.

CONTINUED

- Strata. Only time City gets involved is when there's a change.

- In Whistler it's working, increases by CPI. Hopefully a proxy for people's income. Inflation controlled by how much we buy which is controlled by how much we earn.
- Incredibly long waiting lists because when looking at economy distribution there is going to be a clash.
- Market is out there building all these units, the available affordable housing, it is going to become less.
- Like the idea of building equity but going to perpetuate the situation.
- Co-op model – pooling mortgages and pay for a unit built for them. This model is another way to do this and need nonprofit to do this.
- Co-op not promoted. They do work well and significantly cheaper. Why aren't we building more?
- The city is throwing in more density and that puts more value into the project. Asking to carve off that and provide that for people who can't afford it.
- Should be green space restrictions not height restrictions.
- Relies on strong market push.
- People don't have a problem with living mixed income people. Find commonality. Suddenly diverse and harmonious.



SESSION

A 3

Low-Cost Senior Housing

Discussion Leader:
Terry Simmons

Notetaker:
Garth Spencer

Participants discussed how rental rates in Vancouver no longer follow the old “30% of income” rule of thumb, stating that today rates are closer to 50% or more. For many seniors, OAPP and CPP do not cover rent or limits their choice of housing. Discussions explored aspects of what makes housing affordable. Many participants felt paying more attention to design would solve a lot of the problems associated with small spaces.

- Terry began by introducing himself, and describing the topic, emphasizing a free-form discussion on low-cost senior housing. He tries to combine several different ideas to produce a pattern of workable ideas for a different kind of senior housing. He has seen in various places a variety of conventional ideas; his concern is to maintain or improve what is normal housing. A typical example is a widow with 2,400 square feet and two bedrooms, has someone boarding with her to help her out; this is workable until there is a crisis, e.g. medical. For instance, a daughter comes in, says she can't live there, there's an argument and the widow ends up alone.
 - A participant asked for a definition of low-cost. Affordable – within what someone can pay for.
 - One participant has worked with people who deal in highly-subsidized senior housing; what we would call here a junior one-bedroom, 400 sq ft, living area plus kitchen and a wall separating the bedroom. He does not advocate subsidized housing. He is thinking of space for those with a \$1000/month income, paying maybe \$250 per month for a space valued at \$750, up to \$5000/month income; the seniors who can't buy their retirement home, but have some resources.
 - A participant found that OAP and CPP comes to something less than her \$1400 rent, but she can't afford to move.
 - A participant mentioned the old rule of thumb that rent should be 30% of income, which obviously is not some people's situation. Many people in Vancouver are paying 50% or more.
 - A participant described the situation where she has to work to cover rent, but merely disqualifies herself from financial assistance. She's talking about tenancy.
 - A participant described a situation where a renter does not control what the rent will rise to tomorrow, due to inevitable rises in costs, as opposed to having a mortgage whose future you know. Ownership tends to stabilize cost of housing.
- A participant mentioned that now, with the new volatility in interest rates, mortgages can expire and rise unexpectedly in as little as 6 months.
 - A participant described trying to reduce the cost, as by observing that many rentals are isolated boxes. Are ownership, tenancy, management the same thing? He mentioned the cooperative housing model, and the self-management aspect. There really is no solution for the lack of money, ultimately.
 - A participant mentioned that the lack of affordable vacancies could be remedied. When there are vacancies, there is more flexibility for renters.
 - A participant mentioned that the housing market is a volatile thing. Some landlords cannot raise rents. Buyers are giving up on the downtown core, some of them giving up on Vancouver entirely.



Low-Cost Senior Housing

CONTINUED

- A participant was interested in design, and a mix of characteristics, not just financial. A common experience is the apartment. If we want to go beyond that, and stabilize or reduce costs, we need to look at other models and designs. The single-family dwelling doesn't work, over time, unless you can pay off the mortgage. On the other end are retirement communities, which cost a lot of money but shouldn't, as they address a variety of situations for senior citizens. We know that we are dealing with people who don't have \$3000 or \$5000 a month to put into a place. Can we create a retirement community that has its sense of purpose; combine that with the sense of a university dormitory, and create a design that is more efficient, reducing the per capita cost? He described an old-fashioned dormitory versus a more apartment-style contemporary style.
- A participant spoke about "finishes", which jack up the cost of housing – counter tops, cabinet material, MDF vs. real wood, plywood vs. hardwood, etc. In the case of dormitories (he worked on co-housing for his graduate thesis), students get a break on housing as long as they provide e.g. transportation assistance to seniors, and seniors can prepare food for students in a kitchenette; in the design of the suites, you stay away from the dormitory model. As long as the bedroom can take a queen-sized bed, the rest of the suite is available. Other options involve segregating student vs. senior housing, or focusing on family housing, and including finishes just higher than "builder's grade", and endure for ca. 25 years.
- A participant described dormitory units such as 5 bedrooms around a shared bedroom.
- A participant asked about the object of the exercise – to facilitate multi-generational people having affordable housing, or incorporating elements to make housing affordable? Greg figured the second.
- A participant pointed out that people don't want to share something they own. Eric pointed out there are customers willing to accept higher living space density.
- A participant stated there were ways to design more compact living spaces, as evidenced by ship and RV design.
- A participant asked again about multi-generational, and affordable housing options; can we work backwards logistically from the desired end product?
- A participant mentioned "design solves the problem". What the other participant is describing is a village, combining a worship centre and school and places of business within walking distance of home; all places accessible e.g. by ramps, etc.
- A participant mentioned that difficulties for innovations can be presented by the standard building code.

SESSION

A 4

Tenants Assistance

Worker Staffed by
City to Help Renters
Navigate RTB
Dispute Resolution
Process

Discussion Leader:
Christine Ackerman -
West End Residency
Association

Notetaker:
Leoni Ostermann

Participants discussed
the lack of an official
advocate for renters
in Vancouver. It was
suggested that the City
of Vancouver create
and fund a community-
based advocate
to assist renters.

Discussions explored
possible responsibilities
associated with this
position, including
education and
community outreach.

- There are no advocates for renters – let's get the City to provide someone to assist renters.
- City staffer - similar to what TRAC (Tenants Resource and Advisory Center) used to be, but they can't advocate against City. Proposal to have a community based – an advocate hired by the City whose time is spent in the community. Tenants can communicate with the advocate at the designated location.
- Dispute Resolution Process - No consistency – TRAC does not tell you these issues because they are not in the community.
- How does the City pay for the advocate, who will work in the community?
- The City claims there is not enough money for housing issues to be addressed.
- Is there money in affordable housing?
- How can an organization with the funding of the City of Vancouver not have access to the \$50,000 to put this to action?
- Education component – aside from setting up at community centers/ around the City, there would be another aspect such as "Renter's Education", to educate renters.
- There are lots of volunteers with several organizations to help with this.
- Eviction notices are very stressful, so you need to become pro-active and educate yourself. I was wrongfully/illegally evicted and I had to contact Human Rights to stop harassment even after eviction date. I was looking for a pro-bono organization to help me and required a lot of assistance to resolve the issue. This kind of support system would be very helpful. If you apply for an apartment, I hope that the advocate will be informed with information about landlords and available rental units.
- What was the outcome of this dispute?
- I'm still in the unit and have the right to contact the organization I worked with if those who harassed me, step into my unit.
- We need people who are competent and determined to use official venues to guide those who are less experienced and in danger of being exploited.
- Landlords feed on tenants who are not informed. I didn't know enough to act in a timely fashion and the house I rented was torn down.
- Someone who can connect tenants to other tenants who have had similar experiences. This is about connections.
- Why is information not made clear at RTV? As I listen, my concern is that personal advocacy takes too much time.
- The proposal is to base the advocate at locations around the city, making it easier for tenants to find assistance. The education is the key component. We need build the number of advocates.
- Is there a limit to the area in which these advocates will be located?
- This would be for the West End.
- How does the City fund this position? Ideas?
- I looked on Craigslist yesterday and searched for people with income assistance (shelter allocation about \$375). I pay \$300 on income assistance in a house, because I signed a contract with the renters above us. Including all utilities, the total rent is \$1800. This is a little out of the Downtown east side, which I can easily access with transit. When people on welfare go to landlords, and ask to rent their suite the landlord will usually turn you down (even if there are a number of renters) because they do not want to rent to people on welfare.

Tenants Assistance

Worker Staffed by
City to Help Renters
Navigate RTB
Dispute Resolution
Process
CONTINUED

- Do you qualify for income insurance?
- My landlord doesn't know that I'm on income assistance. If you have someone who can represent renters on income assistance...
- Maybe 2 tenant advocate positions – one for renters on income assistance, and one for renters with other income?
- We want there to be the mediator between the landlord and the tenant on income assistance.
- Back to how to pay for the position: what if we asked the City to require a landlord to have a business license for a unit they are making rental income from. The money raised from this can be used towards the advocate position.
- In San Francisco we have this annual fee that landlords are required to pay. I think we should also include a planning fee, for construction. My concern in that these ideas will not be put to motion.
- We have the informative groups, but you can't be the voice of the renter if you are getting funding from the government.
- We've been finding very hard to get this in motion and have been getting lots of requests for help with the type of issues we want to address.
- If there was someone in charge on a provincial level, this may not accomplish what we want it to. We need someone in charge in every municipality!
- We need to survive no matter which government is in place, but we need to keep their feet to the fire because they are responsible and getting our tax dollars.
- It seems that in Harper's mind, prisons are considered public housing. Why put money into building more prisons?
- There are people who do need shelters to provide useful preparations to becoming renters, but some people need other types of housing. Some people never want to leave shelters, because they shrivel. Other people will come apart in shelters.
- Shelters are not homes, they are old and rotting, in this city. These are not homes.
- I talked to people who are upscale who are very close to being in a drastic situation because of what they pay for housing.
- My rent has gone up a lot more than normal but I choose to live there because I love the area. My lifestyle has changed because I can no longer afford certain things I used to do.
- I am being threatened to get kicked out of my apartment because of my age. One of my neighbors had a similar issue, and she is no longer in the building. I need level access for a walker, but don't want to live in a senior's residence at 40.
- Wouldn't it be great to be able to call someone for information on this? To educate yourself on the particular issue you're dealing with. If there was a process to help you find a new home?
- The mass majority of singles housing is for seniors. There is no range of housing for singles who need special building access. There is very little in the way for younger adults with disabilities.
- If we had somebody to talk to, so small difficulties don't end up in eviction. My problems are simple compared to some of my neighbors' difficulties.
- The tenant's assistant worker could walk you through these types of issues.
- This is very much needed and funding could be provided by business licensing for landlords, or some funding from foreign property owners/tourists.

SESSION

A 5

How to Solve the Problem of Supply

Discussion Leader:
Roy Langston

Notetaker:
Beth Busby

Participants discussed the problem of supply of affordable housing in Vancouver and explored ways in which the City of Vancouver could encourage and develop affordable housing while still making money. Participants suggested the City needs to incorporate longer term vision planning in to current planning processes.

My is Roy Langston. I've worked with economists at the UN to solve problems in third world countries. I've had a long interest in this kind of issue – how to use economics for the justice of people.

I have a description here of a plan whereby the City can encourage and compel development of housing while making money. A lot of the solutions that are offered involve the City spending money. Offering a solution where the City makes money, increases the incentives.

The City planning department has gradually developed an unhealthy culture. They listen to the developers instead of the people. The developer's incentive becomes maximizing the land value because of rezoning.

My question is how can we get that money to increase in value back to the people. Where is the money? Where did all that money go?

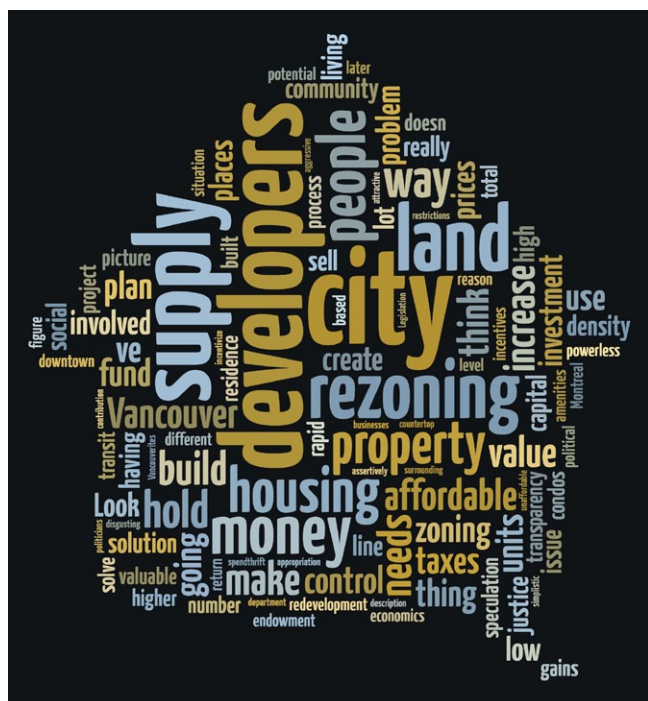
- I was living in the city after Expo '86. Potentially valuable land was sold off to Li Cash Ing. Hundreds of acres were rezoned for towers, giving away publicly developed land instead of giving it to the City. The City should use the property development fund to buy land near the rapid transit stations and use it for high-density housing. Buy the low density land to develop it, rezone it for high density development.
- There's no ex-appropriation involved. The more valuable the land is, the higher the property taxes.
- It's all capital gains.
- Not really. If it's your principal residence, there's no capital gains.
- If you do this rezoning – there's a political problem. It's tempting for politicians to create money by rezoning. One may rezone it one way and another a different way. Within a certain distance of a rapid transit centre, zone it this way otherwise there will be hold-outs.
- I don't think the hold-out problem needs to be solved. As the land value increases, the property taxes will

increase. Only rezone when the City takes control of the land.

- That means the only way to get the land rezoned is to sell it to the City, that won't work.
- That's social justice.
- The only way to get land rezoned is to sell it to the City, so the City must own the land.
- That's called justice.
- We've had a whole bunch of experience with the City acting as the developer.
- That's not what I'm proposing. The City buys the low-density zones, rezones it and repackages it and sells it to the developers.
- How does the City solve the housing problem?
- The only thing is the City has gained a fair bit, but the developers may not build affordable enough
- The City would have fund to do with whatever they want.
- When you add supply at the top, it affects everything down the line because people are selling. You're adding to the total supply because you're adding to the bottom.
- We have to cut out speculation.
- This plan totally cuts out the speculation, the something for nothing payment.
- Doesn't reduce the margin, ensuring this will be high-end housing units. The system sounds like a trickle-down system.
- Right now rezoning has a community amenities contribution. How much does this play into the affordability challenge?
- The reason why housing is unaffordable is that the City has been choking off supply for decades. The system

But as the developer, what's stopping me from holding onto the land?

From the City, it does some of this stuff now – property endowment funds are used to purchase land seen as good for the City – it's a clean operation with the City as the middleman. There's a legitimate debate about using the fund more assertively. Should we be looking to invest in the sites that show the most potential? We don't see any developers holding land to develop later. We see a development community being very aggressive in building – it's a small part of a big picture. The idea of having the public involved. Now we would be getting the City involved in possibly rezoning to a



- The planners should be planning based on what's best for the City.
- So the developers can hold onto the land and resell it later.
- Social justice should be number one, to the people who've paid taxes here. The owners and developers are running the show.
- One thing is redevelopment zoning. The City has a political interest not to do rapid rezoning. The second thing is we do have an issue about how big a package is needed for rezoning – how do we address hold-outs.
- The property taxes will go up.
- The other thing is, when you talk about zoning, what kind of zoning? If you want access to transit, some places say height restrictions make no sense. So are holdouts bought because the land cannot be rezoned without them.
- Should we use the property endowment funds to purchase land as a return on investment.
- It's almost irresponsible to have the City so spendthrift with the fund.
- The return of investment would be the security of the people.
- It could provide more supply of the types that are really needed.
- I think your idea is really intriguing. It's part of the solution, but it's overly simplistic to think that the problem is just supply. Housing is constantly built in Vancouver, but it's not affordable. Real estate is about living somewhere, not investment. The City should get involved with people would own property in Vancouver but it's not their primary residence – have them heavily

A5

CONTINUED

SESSION

A 5

How to Solve the Problem of Supply

CONTINUED

taxed. 5-8% of condos are occupied in Vancouver. I do think the idea needs to have a diverse approach.

- If you create a situation where speculators are not having their land increase in money, they will give it up. If they can make money by holding vacant properties, the City is powerless.
- Legislation makes it so that you can only own one property downtown in other places.
- We need to stop the price from going up by increasing the supply
- But we'll always have people out of Vancouver being able to afford the residences who don't live in Vancouver.
- We always have a bit a slack between if it's owned and not rented.
- The house prices are higher than anywhere else in Canada.
- Within that group, we've always had people out of Vancouver holding homes.
- Control is also an issue, and the city needs to have a new way of thinking of it. The first pass is the UDI. By the time the citizens find out, the property has been bought and sold. Transparency is an issue. Unless we control our land base, we are powerless. Until there is a lot more transparency in the City development banks, there's not a chance to catch up with the developers. The City has the opportunity to rethink supply and control. Where's the comprehensive plan?
- The whole think with UDI is predicated on the zoning windfall. Remove it and everything changes. The only way for them to make money would be to build.
- There needs to be genuine community control. Where's the social capital? The social capital that we've all created – should we start attaching numbers to that? I urge people to rethink it at the fundamental level.

- What is the desirable long-term plan? If we have a picture down the line, how to we get there? How do we get to the next generation?
- You said that the developers build condos it creates supply because people move to the new places, but it doesn't necessarily create supply in Vancouver. If they move from other places.
- It doesn't matter – wherever they are coming from, they are moving from one unit to another – it adds to the total supply. When you add supply, it makes it more affordable down the line.
- Do we really have low supply?
- It's obvious economics, you cannot have these kind of prices without low supply.
- If we did have an excess of supply, we would see a decrease in prices.
- We have a low supply of rental.
- We have a lack of supply in some areas. We're missing some big things within the housing spectrum. We have seen from the supply side about 5,000 units built per year. It's been pretty constant. Will the private sector build much more, which I don't think will happen. If we have supply constraints, it has an impact on affordability. Look at San Francisco. Look at Montreal – it's such an old city, it always has had a lot of supply.
- But Montreal has had an exodus of a lot of people.
- Supply has to be part of the big picture.
- Rezoning is going to be factored into the entire process. The developer may walk away if they're going to lose money at Little Mountain. Even though it's a secret deal, they're going to try to figure out what each unit is worth before it's going to be built.
- That's ridiculous.
- At the end of the day – can we figure out what the property is going to be after it's developed? City is

The developers may say that this wasn't as good a deal as we first thought.

It such be that a certain percentage is affordable housing. Not like Olympic Village.

Back to the supply question – the luxury aspect of units. Changing what's included in the units. If there's a large supply of choices, Vancouverites may choose the lower end of the spectrum.

When you have land value sky high, they have to spend for the granite countertop to account for the expense of the place.

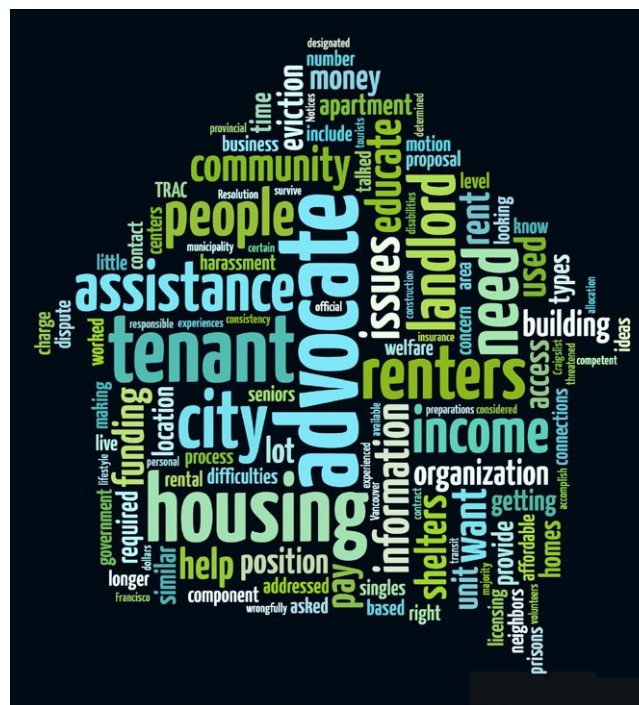
I live in the West End. It's a very well-built area – similar materials were available for building a number of houses. Those houses are still there. If you put quality in upfront, you're not having to pay for it down the line.

We see people doing anything to increase the value of the house to account for the value of the land. Until the supply situation is looked after, there's no way to make the investment valuable.

In conclusion, we should have a more transparent process so that we have control over the money and it will be a more democratic process.

If you take money out of a project, you take out value from that project.

But the surrounding area may become more attractive. You're both onto something here. When you design things for maximum profit, we need to find ways to incentivize different types of development.



- The only reason the condos on Cordova exist is that they look good on paper. That project should happen outside of the downtown core.
- I find it disgusting that London Drugs etc. got tax breaks for development, because they are building community. You could have found local businesses to fill those spaces. It's shameful.

A5

CONTINUED

SESSION

A 6

Home Fullness at Woodwynn Farms

Discussion Leader:
Richard Leblanc

Notetaker:
Rhonda Wallbank

Participants learned about the highly structured Homefullness program at Woodwynn Farms to successfully transition homeless people back into the community. Participants felt this program was an easy and successful template the City of Vancouver could adopt to address some of the homelessness issues in Vancouver.

- Solving issues
- Raising the bar of expectations
- Worked with homeless 76% of homeless people aren't what they appear
- Met families
- 76% found self reliance, dignity and self respect through
- San Padriano model
- 72% clean and sober
- 12 step have less than 7% success rate
- What does it take to be successful in this program?
- High functioning person has a difficult time, hard to foist on homeless person
- Highly structured program
- Walk early in the morning
- Connecting with sounds, nature, sunrise, fresh air, helps the mind, gentle walk
- The Last Child in the Woods - book
- Group mission statement - commitment to change ourselves and our environment
- Go around the room and ask person to say in two words how they are in this moment
- Mental exercise, past is gone, concentrate on the future
- Four participants
- 96 people in program, but only 4 right now
- Doctor will prescribe healthy lifestyle, exercise, eating right
- Dinner at 5:30
- Caring community
- Life on street is loneliest existence possible
- People avert eyes with homeless people
- From homelessness to community
- Must be out in morning for 6 am walk
- On a farm
- 6 days a week, they have Sundays off
- Get to know them very well
- Average time spent on the farm is 4 yrs
- Varies in time, some take 4, some take 9
- They assess mental health, if there is one, they try to help with medications
- Almost all had flu, ear infections, ill, after 4 - 6 weeks, they start to get better
- Two word check in
- News report of the day
- Grateful for, what are they grateful for?
- One value a day at a time
- First days, relationship with self, others
- 11 core values
- 33 days back to the beginning
- Talk about what they have learned, values
- How to stay respectful,
- Have the option of doing 12 step
- Stabilization
- Deepening values
- Reintegration
- Security?
- Stage by stage reintegration
- Phased in slowly
- Resistance in city?
- On a farm
- Homeless, imagery of downtown eastside
- Crime, drop in real estate values
- Issue is how to deal with this most effectively
- Zoned four unrelated people in the program
- Two single family dwellings
- Farm 200 acres
- 1-1/4 acres per person
- Police each other more effectively than staff, good community
- First time in 150 years fruits and vegetables
- Many volunteers
- Orchard, huge celebration
- 2 acres mixed vegetables
- Planted sunflowers, in the shape of logo
- Replicated on 5 acres, sunflowers, slogan believe in people
- Can see from google earth
- Youtube video, rented a plane, did flight pass, shot it at 500, 1000 and 1500 ft
- Big celebration last August, 7789 West Saanich Road
- Never gone out looking for volunteers, hearsay, word of mouth
- Resistance has also created

Home Fullness

CONTINUED

support, more opposition created more support

- People show up to help
- Favourite days 86 Girl Guides came out to help
- Planted vegetable beds
- Interesting approach, likes that program good to give people a chance
- Driving motivation, social work background, business degree, contractor, someone approached him re: social program
- 2001, HRDC tightened up money
- Once he lost career, he crashed, decided to help people in 2007
- Drive, motivation, stubbornness
- Title to farm is privately funded by philanthropists, 3 couples wrote enormous cheques
- Community support, campaign he calls \$099 cents per day
- Self reliant facility, over 600 acres, wind powered electricity, sell electricity
- 3 meals a day
- Largest facility
- Housing facility
- Studies on their work are fascinating
- 3 – 4 yr program
- 72% stay clean and sober after the program
- Are people right off the streets
- These people are hardcore right off the streets
- Socialization is a huge factor
- Success rate taken a range of

candidates, looking for willingness to change

- Awareness of where they are at
- One person hadn't seen family in 3 yrs, was a carpenter, volunteers help him to realization, create awareness
- Most people relapse from rehab centres
- Statistics show rates
- Non-smoking facility
- Weaning them off caffeine
- They don't deal with methadone
- 26% first nations, 9% general population
- Some cooperative, some not
- Work groups from elementary, high school
- Partnerships with penitentiary
- Lumber mill
- Not comfortable yet with work parties
- Local grocery chain, Fairway
- Composting
- Livestock
- Concentration of services, where is competition from?
- 13 municipalities in greater Victoria
- Asked them for support and rezoning
- Huge meetings, politicians, inappropriate to tell another municipality what to do
- Can be such a political issue
- Rezoning can split communities
- Information centre now
- Keep working at it, and people will

come around

- Tide will turn, majority on your side
- Community will get behind it and there will always be someone who resists it
- Neighbourhood support comes up in daily discussions
- Get referrals
- 30 yrs really small facility, so much support now compared to then
- Morning walk they try to keep them motivated
- Social interaction
- One person had a rough life and admires the work they do
- Speaker says they try to work with the people to change their lives



SESSION

A 8

Social Attitudes

Discussion Leader:
Leslie Stern

Notetaker:
Sage

Participants explored the key role the City of Vancouver can play in changing social attitudes around housing issues.

Three main relevant attitude dynamics were discussed: landlord/tenant relationships; housing as a basic need versus investment; and community ownership of issues.

- Example: Attitudes toward single moms have evolved over time, making it easier to provide help for them.
- Importance of analyzing social attitudes that resist progress.
- Three relevant attitude dynamics: 1 - Landlord/tenant relationship; 2 - Housing as a basic need vs. investment; 3 - Community ownership of issues.
- Fear and anger towards developments such as social housing.
- NIMBY attitudes
- Rather than embracing, waiting for something to go wrong, I told you so.
- What actions can affect attitudes?
- Neighbourhood planning: community meeting places; ongoing process involving communities; on the ground planning rather than outsider-driven planning.
- Advantage of time – moratorium allowed dialogue.
- Need for spread on information, also in different languages.
- Dialogue creates healthy relationship between community and social developments.
- Committees to manage challenges in community integration.
- Encourage renters as well as home-owners to participate in discussion about planning – obstacles to renters may be minimized with childcare help or financial incentives. Renters don't feel like stakeholders.
- Language used in planning can be exclusionary.
- Lower income residents can be the most present and involved in a community. Should be considered assets.
- Mental health and addiction issues as significant aspect of negative attitudes. Complexity of population with multiple/tiered disorders.
- How do you educate the community when even the medical industry doesn't seem to recognize the issues.
- Educating the public about mental health in a positive way – prevention and understanding that it needn't be seen as “other” – everybody is vulnerable, touched by it in some way.
- Fitting people into programs that aren't tailored to them leads to failure.
- Approaching younger people – college students etc. to address stigmas around mental health and addictions.
- Where on the continuum of health is a resident? How can the community tell?
- Training community members to run sessions around mental health and addiction education.
- Grassroots education efforts.
- Incentives for education. Capitalize on neighbourly relationships to educate.
- Need to connect different voices and resources to personalize the issues and give them faces.
- Roles of government – addiction services in Connecticut shifted agenda to focus on recovery.
- Facilitating connections between people who are different.
- Knowledge minimizes fear.
- Creating opportunities for different people to be together.
- Recognizing that not everyone can or will conform to mainstream ideas about work and lifestyle.
- Example of Shadows Calendar Program as a way to educate public, show perspective, and make underprivileged people seem more accessible.
- Significance of small social gestures. Overcoming isolation.

Social Attitudes

CONTINUED



- Commonality requires shared experiences – many experiences dependent on money.
- Locked doors have become standard – loss of community.
- Density can lead to isolation – condo neighbours are less accessible to each other compared to detached house residents.
- Eye contact and social niceties less common in Vancouver compared to other areas.
- Technical communication taking over from face-to-face interactions.
- Using communities as a driving force behind attitudes of welcome.
- Community centre networks a resource that could be leveraged for programs that encourage integration.

- Developing programs that are specific to communities tailor them to area then expand to different centres.
- Good attitudes open up housing and services.
- Damaging trend towards subconscious expectation that hard work leads to accessibility of home ownership.
- Continual growth is not sustainable – equilibrium must be found. Appreciate different ideas of success and self-actualization.
- Impact of growth on environment isn't sustainable.
- West end still shows evidence of old “streetcar city”.
- Vehicles as factor in shifting community layouts.
- Culture expects instant gratification – pills for happiness. Need to recognize importance of social interaction in happiness. Movement towards genuine relationships.
- Housing is a fundamental need. People need to be respected and we need to provide for the housing needs of community members.
- Need for individual initiative but community co-operation. Finding mutual responsibility.

SESSION

B 1

Strengthening Tenants Rights and Forming a Tenancy Association

Discussion Leader:
Sharon Isaak

Notetaker:
Moiria Cotter

Participants discussed how even though 52% of Vancouverites rent, renters are a disjointed group. It was suggested the City of Vancouver's could form an official tenants' organization. Discussions explored the structure of this organization and the issues it could address.

Longtime advocate of tenants rights, Anne – when first arrived in Vancouver she lived in rooming house as did many tenants. Lived in Kitsilano where problems with older people and their landlords started to appear. At that time we started the Tenants' Rights Board with volunteers and eventually got tenants rights with the government after lobbying in Victoria. Unfortunately not every government believes in the rights of tenants, they get watered down over time. Tenants had more and more feelings of insecurity. We need to get the security back and strengthen tenant's rights and if needed form a tenants association so the tenants have a voice. We should have an equal voice as the tenants are financing the whole thing. At the moment the voice is only on the side of the developers. Tenants should have an equal voice. When we enter a tenancy agreement we should immediately become members of the tenant's organization. The money should come from the tenant's deposit and given from the landlord to the tenancy association.

- UBC has a student association, we should do the same for a tenant's association.
- There are two ideas here, we need a renter's union, but how is it funded? What services do you want out of it?
- Get educated about your rights, and all the help you need on the ground.
- An idea of tenants' association has been brewing for a long time, we need ideas about how to get it started, renters are quite disjointed, we need to focus the discussion about how to make it happen.
- We need a shift in attitude, tenants need to be respected.
- Tenants need to be treated better, there needs to be better mediation.
- Being a day late with rent, you used to be able to be 5 days late, need more flexibility.
- An education piece is needed.
- Landlords need to be more sensitive and seeing their tenants as assets.
- Tenants don't want to be treated as second class citizens.
- We need official recognition in the process between landlords, tenants and governments.
- We need an official organization, not a voluntary organization, we need a signed agreement.
- There are two functions – policy and advocacy.
- It needs to be an independent voice.
- Tenants association needs to be a steady organization no influence from changing government.
- How does the body form? How do you get renters to pay a fee towards an organization like that?
- Propose a meeting to create a tenants' association.
- Concern about a lack of ethnic mix in the meetings, all minorities need to be represented, meetings are too hurried, no listens to each other in such a short timeframe, these meetings are bit too middle class.
- We need views from substantial different locations; we are way behind in this location.
- We aren't behind, we are fractured.
- Rent bank idea or some sort of mutual protection might be better than taking a portion of our rent out for a tenants association.
- We need a sustainable model, we need the support of a bigger group.
- We need to share our contact details for a further meeting.
- We need to create a association, will it be an umbrella association with the rent bank underneath it? TRAC got sidetracked with the funds from the government. Where do I stand now? If we are going to create a renters union it needs to be independent and not rely on government intervention. The RTA is supposed to protect the people but how do we keep that protection and security? We need to keep a renters union separate, if we get funds from different locations it defeats the purpose of the union.
- The membership fee would make you feel empowered. Every landlord would know that there is that organizations, you are not one by yourself; there is a big group of you.
- Union is a tarnished word, association is a better word to use.
- Association may be too weak a word, the right terminology is important.
- The only voice for tenants is currently TRAC, but they are funded by the government.
- We don't want to replace TRAC we want to fill the hole left by TRAC.



Strengthening Tenants Rights and Forming a Tenancy Association

CONTINUED

- Would people be willing to pay \$5 a month to a renters association?
- Is there really a need for this association? What are the percentages of renters with issues compared to the total number of renters? What you really need an advocate for a gap in policy.
- There are constant emails and referrals to volunteer community advocates who are referred to them from TRAC. The volunteers are not equipped to deal with these issues on a full time basis.
- There is an absolute need for this type of association, owners should want this to happen as well so it's an equal voice for owners compared to developers as well. Developers are giving some owners a bad.
- We need mutual respect so tenants need a well respected organization behind them.
- These associations can help tenants know what their responsibilities are as well. Some new tenants have no clue about running a safe place to live.
- The San Francisco housing tenancy was associated with the larger union, check out the San Francisco union website and tenants' voice monthly website.
- There are 52% renters in Vancouver.
- We need to keep it independent and have more meetings.
- People here are committed to this.
- In San Francisco they had a Eviction Defense Collaborative.
- If you make the owners pay an extra fee they will pass it onto the renters.

- Class and BC PEAC and UBC law students may assist with tenants facing eviction, they are very hard to find and when you are in crisis it's a very difficult network to connect with.
- Social credit back in the early 80's, one month of rent as a tax credit, used to help the poor renters.
- To prevent polarization we need to help the poor who cant afford rent and it can avoid underground renting.
- Germany manages the housing problem very well and bases the rent increase around the rate of inflation.
- Germany buys the land and they build on the land, we don't do that here, we sell the land.
- The government should use every opportunity to buy the land and control the land not the developers.
- We need more of a social conscience here; we need to know who the developers are. The book "New Landlords" explains what has been happening in Canada in the last 20 years.
- We need to change the whole focus of land and buildings and recognize that renters do contribute to the community.
- Now is the time to act, finally there is more recognition, renters are tuning in. People are realizing they can't afford to buy so the need to protect their rights.
- If the tenant is not in a panic to buy if he is not in a rush to buy then he feels secure.
- Strategically and tactically unfortunately biases do creep in.

We need to include everyone as a potential member of this union. A lot of tenants are former members of unions. In San Francisco the only way you can be evicted forcibly is by the sheriff's department.

- Same thing in Vancouver, a bailiff forcibly evicts you.
- We need to de-charge all the language, an eviction notice is a notice; people need to understand how the process works. Its in the wording, we need to reach people so they understand what's happening.
- The message has to be we have a strong organization and they will speak to me and their rules will protect me and I as a tenant will be secure.
- I suggest we call it renters anonymous but functionally it's still a union.
- Post going up on Western Renters website about upcoming meetings www.wera.bc.ca
- Renters at Risk have started doing some of this work also.
- Richard wants to make a donation of \$250 towards the first renters convention in Vancouver
- Let's make the meeting ASAP so the energy doesn't dissipate.
- The tenants union in San Fran is very politically coveted; when you have a city that is 52% tenancy based you can use the formation of a tenancy union to attract other groups.
- The other groups have the money but we have the numbers.

SESSION

B 2

Working Families, Homelessness

Discussion Leader:
Michael Hng

Notetaker:
Nicola Carsons

Participants discussed the current realities facing lower-wage workers and the difficulties they incur trying to find affordable housing. Discussions explored ways the City of Vancouver could help control rising costs of family unit rentals.

- Using example of himself, never certain of income. He scrapes by. He does own his own home. Works 4 days, 11.5 hrs and Fridays finishes at 3:00 and that's how he copes and knows how to budget but a lot of people can't do that.
- Low income workers have to do multiple jobs. Transport costs are more.
- Lower wage workers are pushed to outskirts of the city and have to pay to transport in.
- Government needs to make vertical not horizontal.
- City should set up a plan and make it affordable. What alternatives are there to make it affordable?
- They cut the number of social units.
- Property owned by the council. Money poured into homeless and nothing coming back.
- Downtown neighbourhood council fighting to provide for East Side. Organization pushing for homeless to have help. Government doesn't like to give money away.
- People need to lobby in front of the council to push for their things.
- If council builds high rise family units and rents to families according to income.
- BC Housing responsible for social housing. There are programmes for renters. If you are a working family who earns a certain income, BC Housing will supplement rent so only pay 30% of income.
- If BC housing builds the units and allows family to pay percentage of income.
- Subsidized housing is 30%, who makes up the other money? BC housing puts in that money. Some property is owned by external companies, not BC housing.
- Not enough programmes to help and waiting list is huge. 8 years in the West End. Clearly not a priority of the City.
- This land belongs to the City and should make it a livable community, nice neighbourhoods. Tell the developer, this is going to be the rezoning and you can build higher but this is what you are going to build. Places that people can afford to live in. Person should sell their land to developers to get what they want. Focus should be on the people.
- BC Housing has to develop it because if it's a free enterprise control will shift.
- Doesn't matter if government or privately owned, have to make the people the priority.
- Nobody listens, even as a group.
- If BC owns the land and builds...how do you convince them?
- Not enough regulation in place.
- Message should be that there should be affordable housing in everything's that built. It must be included. Affordable housing should be a right of people.
- As long as there is a private model, you can't push for more. If housing is government owned we don't have a problem.
- Private owners can increase rent and change things. Government owning will keep it more controlled.
- BC Government owns a building and decides rent is affordable to lower income people, in theory, why can this not be possible?
- BC hire contractors to put up buildings.
- High rise is an enormous task for government.
- BC Housing should have control.
- Nonprofit organizations provide property management and provinces help fund the building. 100% subsidized.
- Has to be more subsidized housing.

SESSION

B 3

RS-1 Zoning?

Discussion Leader:
Mike Harcourt

Notetaker:
Garth Spencer

Participants discussed
the history of RS-1
Zoning and its relevance
in Vancouver's current
housing reality.

Discussions examined
various zoning initiatives
and the importance
of incorporating more
transportation into city
planning.



- Mike Harcourt talked about RS-1 zoning; for a long time, from 1932, you could not build housing in Vancouver.
- There are two approaches to RS-1 zoning: sneaky, and open.
- When he chaired the Housing Commission, Mike Harcourt advocated what he calls the sneaky approach, mixed-residential apartments.
- The second approach would be rezoning.
- When service stations started closing down, some proposed condo developments, others micro-lot housing.
- A policy on secondary suites came up, to which was applied a policy of “benign hypocrisy”.
- Another RS-1 form was the “Vancouver Special” houses.
- New Canadians have turned homes into multi-generational rooming houses.
- Now, a more open approach is advocated, e.g. five unrelated people sharing a house.
- At some pain and suffering to council we allow secondary suites.
- Depending on lot size, we could accommodate duplexes or triplexes, be more flexible with RS-1 zoning.
- Dunbar and West Point Grey resist densification, high-rises, etc.
- Mike Harcourt advocates more efficient housing units over the next 20-30 years.
- Vancouver is fortunately built on a streetcar grid – max 3-6 blocks to services, public transportation.
- Transportation has to be linked to land use and buildings, and energy strategy as well (QUEST program).
- Mike Harcourt advocates an extension of the Millennium Line, to connect with Canada Line.
- A participant mentioned walkability, which is also a zoning issue.
- Mike Harcourt added bikeability, and promotes

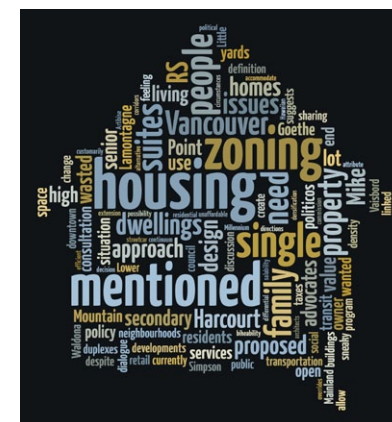
integration of these tasks.

- Mike Harcourt proposes that single-family dwellings are on the way out, higher-density green dwellings in e.g. 1500 sq ft homes near bikable, public transit distance to work and services, tied into zero-waste program.
- A participant mentioned that in Okanagan, single-family dwellings – property values, really – are a sacred cow; even mandatory house design to enable secondary suites are too radical, there.
- Mike Harcourt foresees a dialogue with the terrified, about the density issue, presenting several architects' alternative design.
- A participant expanded on the noise issues arising out of secondary suites.
- A participant wondered if sometimes political salability overrides other issues; are politicians in Vancouver brave enough to say “Tough, we’re telling you what needs to be done, not consulting you”. Despite that people mistake consultation for politicians asking their directions, we in the Lower Mainland need to move faster than we customarily do.
- Mike Harcourt discoursed on the consultation process (for which some politicians showed contempt). For example, it was a policy that all neighborhoods have their share of social housing. There was zero social housing in significant stretches of Vancouver, and in fact the residents were quite upset when some was proposed. Somebody will always disagree with any decision, and some people will not recognize when discussion is over, under any circumstances.
- A participant spoke to the situation of a senior living alone in a single-family dwelling, refusing to move despite needing help, until a daughter tricks her into a senior’s home. Mr. Simpson suggests being mindful of the life history of residents – their needs change throughout life, and we’re going to see a lot more seniors who want to be independent, as opposed to those who need assisted living. There is a continuum of needs to address. Also, on transit corridors, we have done well to have a mix of housing and retail zones; but

CONTINUED

- Mike Harcourt replied that the problem is the high cost of properties. One of his neighbors is a widow in a five-bedroom house, so the situation is not unfamiliar.
- A participant mentioned property prices coming down.
- Mike Harcourt mentioned the possibility of house subletting or subdivision; transition housing, from one point to another; and single-family zoning and setbacks – front yards themselves are wasted space. Why? Why side yards? We force people to park in backyards. The zoning definition is wasteful. We need to revisit RS-1 zoning.
- A participant mentioned gardens.
- A participant was approached by people from Denver who wanted to link two houses and create co-housing, but it is not currently permissible, so they wanted her to push the proposal through council. She thought this change in zoning would open an option for those with monster houses.
- Mike Harcourt mentioned a similar proposal at Mackenzie and 33rd which drove the neighbours nuts – and they were astonished that Mike Harcourt approved of it. Apparently people have fears and images about impacts on property value.
- A participant mentioned that 99% of RS-1 zoned areas allow subsidiary suites.
- A participant pointed out that in the definition of single-family dwellings, there is “one” and only one owner. That’s Vancouver.
- Artibise mentioned being in Phoenix, neighbourhoods are defined as single-interest parties, and as “expert witnesses” rather than as “juries”. The properties that kept value were in the downtown core, and the ones that lost the most value were the largest single homes.
- Mike Harcourt suggests a dialogue over these issues over the next few years, and experiment in the willing suburbs, rather than ramming a plan down people’s throats.

- A participant mentioned that suddenly giving someone a full-time job caring for senior strangers will be a hard sell, to young people.
- Mike Harcourt mentioned that this is already happening, and it's becoming more and more typical.
- A participant mentioned that this is how the laneway situation is playing out in Vancouver.
- A participant mentioned that he is doing an online documentary about Arbutus and Little Mountain's redevelopment on a new paradigm – high-end, and low-end. (The Little Mountain Project: Search Vimeo & Vaisbord).
- A participant mentioned it's a misnomer to attribute the issue to single families, we need to look at duplex zones, lock-off suites.
- A participant mentioned that lock-off suites are considered/developed for SFU/Burnaby Mountain.
- Mike Harcourt mentioned that we could absorb another 300,000 people into the Lower Mainland without feeling it, partly because this is less one city than 22 neighbourhoods. You can get the feeling of living in a village of 22,000 cities – as a result of not living with freeways. The RS-1 zoning is dishonest designation; it is not, in fact, single-family dwelling but single-owner homes.
- A standard single-family lot could be used in several other ways, using the currently wasted yard space.
- If we vote on removing the RS-1 zoning designation, will the Downtown Eastside and Point Grey low-cost suites become unaffordable?
- Why do we have zoning at all?
- Who should lead to zone and design and create affordable housing? To use scarce urban land more intelligently? How do we go to the next stage?
- Discussion moved to property taxes, and differential rates for local, distant or foreign owners, e.g. under Hawaiian property tax legislation.



SESSION

B 4

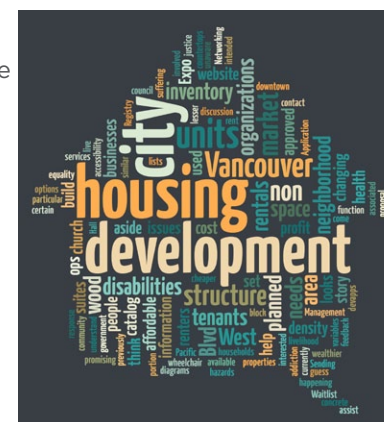
Development in the Neighborhood of Expo Blvd, Pacific Blvd, & Cambie Bridge

Discussion Leader:
Joe Thompson

Notetaker:
Leoni Ostermann

Participants discussed how certain communities have evolved over the past years. It was suggested the City of Vancouver become more involved in community planning to help ensure businesses and services to help bring communities together are included in all development plans.

- I keep an eye on the development process in the city, and there is a portion set aside for affordable housing that has not been used. It is in the area of Expo Blvd, Pacific Blvd and Cambie Bridge. Last year the approved development proposal was for a 9 story, concrete structure with 133 units. This has gone back for re-plan and has been changed to a 6 story, wood structure with 89 units. These units are intended for tenants suffering from mental health issues, addiction and other health issues.
- In the neighborhood, there is a lack of businesses/ services and does not have a near-by church or school. I think the neighborhood needs businesses and areas in which the community can come together. The block is under-developed.
- These condos will have more density for wealthier tenants, and less density for lesser income households. It would be great to have something like a church structure, which could also function as a class room or theatre, to bring some livelihood to the neighborhood.
- We need equality and justice for everyone. I don't understand why this is still happening.
- What was previously approved is now reduced to a wood structure with fewer units. I guess money is one of the variables as it's cheaper to build with wood. There are serious fire hazards involved, and it doesn't look promising.
- How do we push the government for better housing? I'm only one person.
- Networking with one another is only one step. Sending an email to the City and perhaps the housing society, can assist. Where I learn about this is the Vancouver City website - devapps (Developments Application) - which shows developments that are before City council for discussion. This one is currently on the page - "Expo Blvd". This is where you can see the plans and model diagrams, as well as information about the development. You can give feedback to those in charge of response to the particular development.
- If you're interested in non-market housing inventory you can find a catalog of these units on the website as well - the Vancouver City's Non-Marketing Housing Inventory.
- I've heard the co-op I live in, in West Vancouver, will raise our cost by \$400.
- Some co-ops are changing to regular market rentals - middle- to high-end market. We are losing affordable rental. If you contact the West Vancouver City Hall, they may have a similar inventory catalogue for West Vancouver.
- There are many properties in the city at which non-profit organizations can rent office space for a very low cost. These are owned by the City.
- I didn't know that these options are out there. I think a big problem is that people are unaware. This information needs to be more available.
- BC Housing Waitlist Registry is associated with non-profit organizations that can help. These organizations will use these lists to find housings for renters. There are a certain number of suites set aside for people with disabilities, which will help make the search easier for renters with disabilities. These suites will have shorter countertops and more space for wheelchair accessibility. There may also be studio space. Management sometimes looks for disabled tenants in order to build more of these units. It can take a very long time before you find housing but it's a start.
- There are many fresh rentals being built, and planned, in the downtown area.



SESSION

B 5

Affordable Housing Trust

Discussion Leader:
Dave Eddy

Notetaker:
Beth Busby

Participants explored how the City of Vancouver could support local housing communities through the creation of a Real Estate Investment Trust. How this trust would operate and how it would benefit communities, were some of the topics discussed.

- So Vancouver Native Housing society has the idea of creating a non-profit agency to create this housing trust. The idea is to raise a bunch of money on a project by project basis. That way it is built debt-free. We have a vehicle called I Invest in Housing. You can go on and register and play around in there. There are questions like: Would you be interested in being part this program? It would have the ability to issue a charitable receipt as a not-for-profit agency. If you can avoid the taxes by giving people charitable receipts, then you don't need to borrow the money. A corporation may even forgo the receipt, based on ethical principle.
- My son works in Ottawa and wants to come here. Two weeks he got a job and he's coming to Vancouver and they've sold the house in Ottawa for \$625,000 – three bedroom. They come to Vancouver – defined as the least affordable city in the world to buy a house – and they can't find a place under one million dollars. So they found a basement suite in North Vancouver that will have to work for them.
- The other piece for us is that anytime something happens, there's a trickle down or trickle up effect. We have a number of tenants that have an income that allows them to purchase housing at a reasonable expense. With a little help, like a mortgage and an affordable home that we would create through this process, they could get into home ownership.
- This needs to be driven by a charitable association.
- What do you need to do it?
- What we need is for it to go viral.
- Everyone to be talking about it.
- At the I Invest in Housing site, it asks you to tell your stories, but it has to click with people so that people can react to it. Get the internet to work for you. The other thing is if there's a large donation. I think that it gives regular people the power to make a small donation that has a large impact and that they've done

their part.

- The other thing is corporations will get money back with branding – look at CIBC and their charitable events.
- Another example is Telus – they're setting up in a place with no affordable housing. They should think of their workers.
- I live in New Westminster and I'd love to work and live on the West Side. Go to events, walk to work.
- Sounds really good.
- What would \$20 million build?
- About 60 units. You have to make market units. It needs to be enough units to make an impact.
- What about a co-op? And ownership co-op?
- But what Dave's model has is something that cycles.
- Back to the cost of money, we could probably save about 15% because it's done through charity. The idea is to get a lot of presales, but you have the money to build.
- How many of the units would need to be presold?
- About 50%.
- Will you hold an equity piece?
- We have several units that will go toward affordable rental. We would have the right to first refusal.
- If you bought it at 25% below market, you need to sell it at 25% below market. You can't increase that.
- Doesn't Whistler have that model.
- It's based more on Santa Clara. We did look at Whistler.
- There's a bunch of places with a similar model. Whistler goes by inflation rates, the CPI.
- No, not CPI. What's the cost of inflation? COLA.

SESSION

B 5

Affordable Housing Trust

CONTINUED

- So the cost of money is that you aren't losing anything or gaining anything.
- What's the difference in terms of what you get?
- Probably the height – we'd put a restriction on that.
- My friend just bought a place in Edinburgh. When they bought the place, they didn't need to pay for 30% but will need to pay it plus inflation when they sell. In the city of Toronto, it's a 50-page document that you need to wade through instead of the one or two pages in Ireland. You also need to look at the equity component that you want to keep, which is what Ireland has done.
- The money rotates as things are developed.
- What you're proposing is not a crazy idea.
- The new aspect is the charitable tax receipt.
- I like the idea. If I'm going to put into an RRSP and get a minimal return, I'd rather invest in housing.
- That's what we've seen.
- I'm a little confused if you're talking about gifts or an investment.
- We're more talking about a loan.
- If the person put in \$1000 and didn't want the 2% back, it can be donated.
- We also look at the timeframe – would they want to invest again?
- Like stock options.
- One of the costs of building is land. Are you making assumptions about land.
- Land from the City.
- How do you go about getting free land from the City?
- What do people think? Do you want to invest in housing? Do you want to make Vancouver a more affordable place to live?
- I'd do it.
- Go onto the website and take a look.
- I came into the conversation late. From what I understand is that you're creating a strategy that attempts to gather resources from a wider base of sources.
- I think that individuals and corporations are really feeling the crunch in the housing.
- It's the question do you want to make a difference.
- The login to the site is Friend and the password is Friend. There's also a tax calculator – how much you would get back if you invest so much money.
- We've also been talking about how to get people to invest in the projects. People are asking how do we get an investment in a particular project. This model is flexible.
- We have a vision down the road. We are looking at doing a project that is only 100% affordable. If the individual owns 75% and the society owns 25%, so the owner can only sell the 75%. We're looking at including rental units to this plan.
- Can we look at the condo market in a different way that will create the same features but not for a while building. Looking at sellers who would only sell to people who are looking to develop in a similar way.
- With the Canadian Living Society, there's a sticky situation where people living there are looking as tenants instead of owners. That's why there are restrictions on the number of rental units in a condo building.
- Why do people need to know that those units are rental.
- We had a Dragon's Den a month ago. We threw this concept out and had a great discussion. Two of the things Rennie said is how are people going to feel if they paid full market and these people paid half? I don't think there's going to be an issue. If they can afford the unit, they'll buy it.

Affordable Housing Trust

CONTINUED

- Every unit sells at a different price every day of the year. This is already happening.
- This is a new product. The key is to normalize it. People need to think that they aren't buying into a crackpot scheme.
- The Santa Clara housing trust took \$20.4 million and built several thousand units over ten years.
- Another thing Rennie said is why not sell it at 75%?
- There are other ways to reduce the cost. The forgiveness of the DCC on the units, work with a developer with a social conscience who may reduce their margin. The thing that fascinates me is what you can do on paper with money. Things that look impossible turn out possible.
- Real Estate investment trust is really what this is. Instead of a market return, they'll get a fixed return.
- When I look at the towers that are being proposed, if you have a young family, how do you watch your kid from 22 storeys up? Different kinds of housing needs to be available. That's one of the fears about some of the changes that are happening. The diversity of the community is becoming homogeneous. It's a huge issue.
- We're not only talking about high-rises. We can do it on the new 6-floor wood frame buildings. We are a housing society. One of our criticisms is that there is no family housing. We have to address that. There's no supply.
- How much space do families need?
- In not-for-profit housing, there's more amenity space than in high-end housing. For playgrounds. We build communities, we don't build buildings. We want to be able to have places for the kids and responsible landlords.
- A good example is what happens when you do something. The City used \$600,000 to build family housing. A lot of people wanted it to be sold off because they looked at the amount of money it was costing. But that money is the only way you can create

housing for families. But you get huge backlash from the people when you build family housing due to the cost.

- People don't understand the cost. Go after the business community. The cost to put the homeless into affordable housing, that's a business thing. Business people – you present them with a business case that makes sense, they will understand it and present it to other businesses.
- It hasn't worked for the Arts Community.
- We you could move people this way.
- I support local housing communities. Part of the reason people are reluctant for change is the lack of transparency. The UDI look at everything first, so by the time the citizens know that something has been sold, everything has been arranged. Local housing authorities should have first refusal for projects to create transparency, thereby allowing the people to have more control over land use. Meetings are currently held long after the important meetings have been done. The developers that we get stuck with are so lacking in imagination that they only think of building towers.
- There's problem with the price of housing in Vancouver. It's criminal.
- I have a question about the land trust idea. Is this something that you as an organization are going to champion?
- That's the plan. To have it as a separate arm of the current company.
- How else are you marketing this opportunity?
- We've postered UBC and downtown. We have two marketing people working on this.
- Are you working with groups to create a marketing plan?
- We have a consultant working on this.



SESSION

B 6

Combining Housing and Transportation

Discussion Leader:
Greg Pettipas

Notetaker:
Rhonda Wallbank

Participants expressed their wish to see an increase in both transportation options and the quality of transportation currently available outside the downtown core. It was suggested the City of Vancouver become more involved in ensuring accessibility between communities. Participants explored various transportation options, including bringing back streetcars.

- BC Electric is designed for electric
- Gridline extended all the way from Chilliwack to Steveston
- Pro-car
- Post 1946
- Best kept secrets, all people work with City of Vancouver, didn't want it permanently removed.
- Much easier to remove rails and pave over top.
- Ties for rail, underneath, Patrick Condon, streetcar lines underneath Broadway to 10th. Trolley cars can go, trolley buses to Stanley Park.
- Cost \$3.2 billion
- Volunteered for downtown historic railway, got opportunity to drive modern cars for Olympics.
- Worked and started to design things, put green roof on, can walk over top of streetcars.
- Put a walkway to Cambie, walk to Granville Island.
- Tracks go to VCC Park
- All track four siding tracks, one main track
- Used to come from US
- Siding tracks into Great Northern
- Go to Grandview
- Hastings is more for car traffic
- Go to Powell Street
- Go all the way to Waterfront
- Housing?
- Put housing all along there, no one put housing above a railway.
- Corner of Powell and Victoria, restaurant there, both building, old railway barracks.
- Track, huge locomotive went by, didn't feel it
- Idea to put housing above existing track from VCC Clark to Howe, connect to Beach
- Underside of Burrard bridge designed for streetcars to come off
- Removed trestle bridges in 1984
- Hydraulic bridge for traffic
- Bridge starts on land part, higher on south side than on north side
- Connect , has done figures, 250 million to go the whole loop
- Emily Carr to move there shortly.
- Eventual plan, can cross to Burrard Bridge.
- Housing above the railway, U shape?
- Skytrain, not actually part of building, not part of rail structure
- Still got the railway
- Victoria & Powell, no vibration in buildings
- Special way of separating by using gravel
- South on Howe, north on Seymour, onto Beach to Burrard Street Bridge
- Loop system
- Street car accessible, all routes
- Housing from Vanier Park
- Will approach Musqueam
- First nations, do they want first access, do they want to build it?
- Concrete construction, concrete lasts so much longer.
- Masonry does not conduct electricity, can have electricity underneath the concrete.

Combining Housing and Transportation

CONTINUED

- Cement pads building doesn't settle
- False creek used fill for
- Added parking to Granville Island
- Park goes right over top
- Corrects error for Starbucks
- Fits streetcars
- Grass like Europeans do
- City of Vancouver owns land from Granville Island to Main Street.
- City now owns all the land from the railway right of way from Granville Island to Cambie.
- Historic downtown railway office
- Community centre on top
- Restaurant on top
- Big 4' long by 2' by 2' can make all look like stone
- Cost 2 million
- Economical
- PCC Street cars
- Half as long as what the barn would be, put tracks on form to show what it would look like
- Housing on top, six stories, small entertainment part, green roofs, patios, community dinners, kitchen, separate storage area.
- 16 foot path for pedestrians
- Gardens
- Park setting
- Grow vegetables
- Like giant set of Lego blocks
- Can be moved if you want to
- 70' long platform
- \$35,000 cost, very inexpensive
- Put plexi down don't get rain
- Pattern for t-shirts, people get connected with their community
- Office space for doctor's offices, etc
- People need correlation
- This distance is 7 km from Vanier to VCC Clark to Powell.
- System except for Burrard Street Bridge, all of it for \$250 million dollars
- Go right to skytrain
- Clark is below, track runs right along there, CP goes right to rail yards
- East of Main St.
- All want streetcars back on Robson.
- From streetcar as it went down Robson down Davie, film in 1907.
- Four years ago, did same route filming, could see changes even five years ago.
- Was sitting in a warehouse in Australia, film
- Guy from Titanic took film, ended up in Australia
- National Film Board, sent copy and they figured out it was Vancouver.
- Don Luxton was his instructor
- 175 km of tracks in Vancouver
- Selected all routes to match it
- Based on historic size of streetcar
- Can't take Quebec to Waterfront, simply couldn't turn.
- Selected Seymour & Howe

SESSION

B 6

Combining Housing and Transportation

CONTINUED

- Broadway is narrower than most streets, 11 feet wide.
- Toronto getting wider version, we need narrower body
- Could make them shorter, currently carries 178 passengers
- Loop system using half the number of streetcars
- April 1955, last streetcar ran in Vancouver.
- Feb 1958, last streetcar in Steveston.
- Building at that level is important
- Parking—huge parking lot at Cambie, rent space or massive co-op parking.
- Personal choice, social responsibility
- Faster to drive, until they get a transit system that is better.
- Lose time taking transit
- Translink in Surrey
- Inter-urban, skytrain is a streetcar inter-urban service
- Skytrain is streetcar, Canada Line is heavy duty.
- When they're done well, you don't notice them
- Canada Line not enough platform space.
- Was reduced, bombardier technology
- If one breaks down, you're stuck
- Expo Line, was originally designed as 2 car, no room for expansion.
- Concerns about it
- Adjust the doors
- Needs a small extension
- Canada Line needs better signage to transfer to other lines.
- Integration of transit and housing
- Designed car barn
- Metal corrugated metal shed, someone else did that
- What makes station look good and what makes it nice?
- BC Electric has different philosophy, they want you to use their system.
- Translink is starting to change their attitude
- Translink station is designed like a prison
- Designed car barn
- Move Starbucks
- Cycling, walking, being fit
- Extend car barn to Cambie, walk to Granville Island.
- Designed to get people in and out
- Can have a path that you can walk/cycle
- Free land, put housing on top of it
- 2 stories for train, 6 stories with green roof.
- Homeowners park
- 32 feet, 16 ft modules
- 33 feet, can have small overhang
- Single low corridor
- Ability to have natural ventilation
- Open to environment
- Don't need air conditioning
- South facing
- Can put solar panels
- Company in US, they'll pay for it
- Building, garden, building, garden

CONTINUED

- [illegible]

SESSION

B 7

Cul-De-Sac Land Co-Operative

- Land owners decide the development
- Investment as a co-op-likestrata

Discussion Leader:
Tim Webster

Notetaker:
Julie McElhone

Participants discussed the advantages of creating Cul-de-Sac land co-operatives. Ways in which the City of Vancouver could work with land owners to ensure that development adhered to its policies were explored.

- How structures affect development, how land ownership affects law.
- Land cannot be developed into developments unless there are means to do so.
- Cul-de-sac owned by developers, it cannot be developed in high density.
- In Hong Kong government holds a lot of unused land.
- If government money is accounted from they can lower taxes elsewhere.
- Idea is cul-de-sac closer thing to transit but can't be redeveloped.
- If every owner of cul-de-sac is a shareholder of a co-op, if you want out of co-op you sell your house.
- How much power does the co-op have – the co-op could dictate policy but essentially have majority rule on the use of the cul-de-sac.
- A developer can pitch to the shareholders and vote on developing the land.
- If co-op owner doesn't want the development they can vote otherwise.
- How big should co-ops be? Use the same kind of reasoning for the whole city.
- In a co-op they can vote on the use of the entire land – in terms of a city the development is dependent on the immediate community, you can't develop a whole city, and it wouldn't work.
- Principles of a co-op decision can be made on a piece mail basis. Recognize that certain locations are important for certain things – where transit etc needs to be located.
- Co-op development doesn't prevent individual land usage or development. Can justify more amenities – have more green space requirements, must have enough density to justify them. Think about services needed during construction and not an afterthought.
- Reasons to expand – democratic process. A lot of grey areas – have to adapt planning process to the nature of the area – should encompass all blocks.
- Need to have blocks; cul-de-sac creates blocks.
- Co-op does not need additional power.
- Need process of planning for where everything goes.
- Small part of a bigger picture – there needs to be as structure, goes into hand of where we create the block.
- Vancouver – you could increase efficiency by creating blocks and create great amenities.
- Not just existing large blocks – e.g. China Town has prime access and high density. Hard thing is to decide where the logical blocks are. Determine blocks are a process by themselves.
- Blocks can be quite large, decide on amenities required to suit the area.
- Align interest to avoid conflicting economic interest, open up possibilities, and get rid of conflict over conflicting interest.
- Logical grouping of land – align individual economics with collective economics. Means of creating larger land plots so groups can decide how to develop their land. Anyone who owns the land – doesn't change land value, you can develop your own land, and nothing changes there.

CONTINUED



- Co-op collective can vote on their shareholder to develop or how to, they will structure the process to that. Idea is if you didn't have this – everyone wants their land development and share in the profit.
- What are the top benefits of participant in a cul-de-sac?
- Individual – benefit for more possibilities to develop, increase value of land than you would otherwise, type of development is not of great concern you still have benefits. Value of land is already determined by social value; make sense to function as a collective.
- What prevents group of people getting together and doing this?
- What kind of large developments to do is the decision?

- Has to go in hand with City and provincial policies, it may be abused.
- If it can be abused it will be.
- Logical land decisions become sales issues, community investment cooperative, always a national community and formalizing what is already there. Can't make it optional or it doesn't work.
- What large cul-de-sac development should be – they try to make as much money as possible. Constraints – large redevelopments must have criteria based on population of area. Depending on size of community, have different social needs and it's important to look at what needs the population needs e.g. park, access to medical services, grocery stores etc. Must meet these needs.
- Housing has to be the boarder social policy, if you try to sell to higher-end group, lower-end groups will never have access. Tailor process, mixed low entry housing could be smaller and unfinished no appliances etc. Buying into value growth potential, need to make low growth potential a restriction that they must be sold to low-entry tenants. Certain % must be low-entry and stay that way.
- Use land banks proactively. Have an idea of what density should be, and develop appropriately. Rezoning before acquiring land to avoid selling to high-entry.

SESSION

B 8

Design

Discussion Leader:
Freddie Hartline

Notetaker:
Sage

Participants discussed design options the City of Vancouver could consider when exploring alternatives to affordable housing.

- Micro-units such as container houses.
- Underground development such as retrofitting tunnels, Sweden (Stockholm) underground community Mirror City.
- Over water – floating housing or Abu-Dhabi style – House boats.
- Inflatable, portable tent homes.
- Secondary suites – detached rather than basements. Cottage style on alleys – alley communities.
- Garage conversion to rentable suites.
- West End leading the way in laneway housing.
- Build on top of smaller buildings vs. view obstacles.
- Many existing buildings are already ready to be built on – minimal retrofitting required.
- Appealing to families/owners of detached homes to use airspace above their property.
- Use parking spots as locations available for temporary housing.
- Parkade and warehouse footprints – upper levels used for residences.
- New York using warehouse housing – RVs.
- RVs used as residences – price of fuels driving need for RVs down – more available for housing?
- Stack RVs vertically.
- Parkade of RV residences – rental options – simple financial model.
- Need for green areas and community as well as bare-bones housing.
- Paris – top of old train trestle through city developed with greenery etc. – underneath are developments relating to arts. Looking for unused elements and finding ways to re-purpose them.



SESSION

C 2

Rezoning

- Developer comes in and tells a community how it is going to be. That is the problem with rezoning. Community wants to suggest something and see the developer create what they want, not the other way round.
- Problems are that federal government got out of housing in 1993.
- Why not have a housing authority for Vancouver?

Session ended.

Discussion Leader:
Christine Ackermann
WERA

Notetaker:
Nicola Carsons

Participants discussed
some of the problems
associated with current
rezoning practices.

Property Endowment Fund

Discussion Leader:
Jim

Notetaker:
Leoni Ostermann

Participants discussed how the City could use its Property Endowment Fund to create affordable housing. It was suggested the City of Vancouver could partner with non-profit organizations and co-ops on affordable housing projects. Discussions explored how the fund should be used to support other partners and how non-profits could bring their equity to the table.

- \$7 billion in Property Endowment Fund, and 75% is already used for long-term social housing. Create affordable housing by allowing groups (non-profit and co-ops) to partner with the City on affordable housing projects. The City has land and other financial tools that they could probably use in partnership with other organizations.
- A non-profit group was asked to partner and bring in \$1 million. The City wanted the group to put in the money, but wanted the land to remain city property. There should be a more open system, where these groups, the city, churches, etc... where the financial contribution goes hand in hand with the land.
- The City did not want to give partial ownership to the land, in exchange for the in \$1 million contribution. Is this a City policy that can't change?
- It is a City policy, but I think this should be able to change. If you're going to become a partner, then it should be financial.
- This should change to a shared equity stance?
- I don't believe the City is wrong to maintain ownership of land. Why was the non-profit organization not willing to provide funds?
- They do the same as the City. The non-profit groups are taking their equity position today, and leveraging it to create more affordable housing. The group used their money to fulfill the same mission, but not in Vancouver.
- Non-profits can make profit as long as the money is put back into society. We need to create housing through our own devices, and not continue to be less equal. We are better managers of our money/destiny than our politicians.
- This is a democracy, and if the non-profit organizations have more power, we have no say/no vote.
- There is an incredibly rich diversity of organizations that provide housing. In BC, the non-profit organizations provided housing when the government wasn't there.

I would like to see these organizations have more power. They are here for the long-term. In Ontario, I experienced the government coming in and out, but in BC the non-profit organizations have stayed around.

- What is the result? In BC we have a tremendous amount of housing, but where is it actually affordable? In Ontario, not BC! In BC it is less accessible.
- The City has the PEF and land is not being created anymore. From the owner of the land's point of view, we decided not to sell land, but leasing it is a good enough alternative to providing ownership. The City will often give money to non-profit organizations and not ask for assets back. It would be nice to see different kinds of partnerships with non-profits, who have their own kind of PEF's out there. To non-profit organizations: what are you doing to provide property before coming to the City for funding?
- There's a great temptation for non-profit organizations to gain a sense of proprietorship, which is very dangerous. Landowner attitude results in less affordable housing. I'm very much opposed to the City owned land having to give up equity stake in land in order to receive funding from the organizations.
- I want to return to the objective. Affordable housing is very little, is our goal to lower housing cost, or provide more housing at affordable cost? Your goal directs what you want from PEF.
- We want more housing for people who have less affordability than others. If in the process we can make housing cheaper, great!
- I agree that we should reduce the cost of housing overall so more people can afford the housing. A lot of people are still renting because they can't get into the first step.
- We need to clarify affordable, because it's on a spectrum. The non-profits are talking about the lower end of the spectrum. In terms of looking at what is out there for the renters, the rent is too high. The rent is too

SESSION

C 4

Property Endowment Fund

CONTINUED

high because there are not enough units. How do we house the 50% of the population who cannot afford to pay rent? This affects the school board (families moving to cheaper areas), transit, etc. Housing is too expensive.

- In a non-profit world, if you're paying more than 30% of your income on housing you're not in affordable housing. In Vancouver, most people pay around 50% of their income on housing. This is the least affordable city in the world.
- How do you create some of this? One of the groups I've worked with, have used all their profit in the last 6 years to buy 9 properties for rentals. They have changed the rent to 30% of the current tenants. This group's mission is to provide affordable housing for seniors. They take any surplus and use it as a social investment to buy other properties, and push no one out. As renters move out, they take in low-income renters.
- The effect of that is to take resources out of the market creating an even greater shortage in the market.
- The problem is that we don't have enough housing. How do we use the PEF plan to maximize housing?
- PEF - landholding endowment of the City - they own all land of the city - parks, streets, lands taken for taxes, etc)
- How can we use PEF to create housing?
- In some cases the non-profit organizations have land, but no funding to rebuild property on the land to use for affordable housing. The City, the PEF, the City's ability to have good rates in finance, should partner with these groups, to build, or rebuild this housing.
- How would you go about convincing City council to allow this kind of partnership? If this wasn't possible before, why would City agree now?
- If land costs more than a third of the building, then there should be enough money in the rental income to pay for the mortgage of the construction (for the non-profit organization).
- I'm currently doing a project in North Vancouver, which is a 76-unit seniors' project. The loan to cost ratio that makes it work is a 19% loan. 81% of the contribution has been put in by the non-profit group (the group owned the land previously). The rental works because of the 81% already put in by the group.
- Why does it cost so much money to build these units, when the rent is such low income for the?
- If they wanted to charge people market value, the loan would have been up to 30%.
- The economic problem is that when you build a new building there is a period of very rapid depreciation. You invest in the building but you're losing a lot of money in the first few years, due to depreciation.
- This example put in \$9.2 million (not in land value) into the project, and a third of an acre. Why hasn't there been rental in the last few years, but condos have been selling? Because you can sell a condo new, and get back more of the money you've invested. With a rental you cannot get as high of a loan to build. If there were no condos there would be no building. This is why people build condo vs. rental. You cannot get return in your rent unless you bring cash or land to the table. Some of the groups, especially the older ones, have land they can use to do this.
- In this example, the non-profit group has shown good tactics in solving the issue at hand. Because of this, maybe the City of Vancouver will cooperate and allow the partnership you've proposed?
- They work together, we need to work together. There are restrictions on the use of the building from the North Vancouver example - the group cannot decide to change the type of housing offered down the line.
- The idea of putting this up, is that if we don't all get together nothing will be solved. There is no point in saying the government should do it, or the non-profits should do it - work together! Someone needs to come up with the difference between the cost of building and



SESSION

Property Endowment Fund

- Partnerships should not be access to land (for organizations) but partial ownership of land. The younger organizations will not yet have equity, but the older groups could join together on an economic level because the older groups bring equity to the table. We need to be open to municipalities and community groups, etc, working together. We can no longer do it on our own.
- Cooperation in general is very helpful.
- Maybe non-profit groups should join together, rather than joining with the government. The City doesn't give up land, but the groups can use each other.
- There are properties that will come onto the scene (hospitals, RCMP) which are large pieces of land and affect the city in a huge way. How are we ever going to get more affordable housing if we can't use this land? Again, how do we approach the government/the City?
- Large pieces of land could potentially come back to the province (the developer may not be able to do it), and how do we work with these pieces of land if non-profits cannot access them. Property like St. Vincent's Hospital.
- Why pay for leasing land, rather than owning it in partnership, when the tax payers' money pays for that land anyway?



SESSION

C 6

Grassroots Housing Process

Discussion Leader:
Gail Franklin

Notetaker:
Rhonda Wallbank

Participants discussed alternative grassroots approaches to affordable housing. Ways in which the City of Vancouver could support some of these alternative solutions and initiatives were discussed.

- Interested for some time in idea affordability of housing.
- Paying so much mortgage.
- Building a little bit at a time.
- www.livingneighborhoods.org
- Grassroots housing process.
- Google grassroots housing process article.
- Affordable housing issues.
- Not a specialist or expert, but studying the issue.
- Wants to stop homelessness.
- Question from architect, dealing with housing issues, recently saw documentary, featured project in England, tenants were building their own housing, people were learning skills.
- Nicholas, also trying to understand the issue.
- Affordability issues.
- Intern from France, interested in housing, had experience with community building housing, likes the idea.
- A Project Manager also interested, why couldn't people pool their mortgages, concept of working together to build a community, basically a Co-Op.
- Peggy, personal interest.
- Steve, not an expert, helped parents build house, land is expensive, house can be built cheap.
- Speaker: cost needs to be addressed.
- We build the complete house, sell it and buyer has to take mortgage.
- Recycle capital.
- Two groups involved.
- Builder, foundation, nonprofit organization, government
- They design, supervise, control money, they help later on families
- Two entities: builder, other is cluster.
- Hold co-operatively.
- People would own for a monthly payment, equal to low income rent or mortgage.
- Low cost, simple materials.
- Start with something do-able for family.
- First year small space, 350 sq feet\each year allowed to build another additional sq feet.
- How to make it work for you?
- Where to put things?
- Building it incrementally
- Idea is that there would be money generated by the monthly rental fee, ownership fee, money generates money for new clusters on a delayed purchase plan.
- Materials are free, but costs are high in first year.
- Start to come down in following years.
- Encouragement to build slowly.
- 30- yrs later, if you work with idea of sponsorship, of revenue generated by cluster, allows more to be built.
- Year 1 getting rent adjusted to size.
- Annual fixed cost for land purchase.
- At year 10 paying annual maintenance.
- Cluster is cluster of 12 families.
- They all own their separate houses.
- Sponsor owns the land.
- Requires a fee.
- That revenue goes to each family to help them build.

Grassroots Housing Process

CONTINUED

- With each year revenue, family can build a little more.
- None of families are allowed to sell speculatively.
- Land is owned in trust.
- House worth what market price for house is.
- City is expanding program of building homes.
- Idea of forming a community has been tried all over, usually where land is cheap.
- Farm in Tennessee, for example.
- Some older co-ops in Vancouver need to be revamped.
- Parallels to co-ops here in Vancouver.
- Issue is building for a long period of time.
- People want to have it done immediately.
- Can live in 350 sq feet for young couple, can be a life cycle commitment.
- Movement for tiny houses, complete for families.
- Tumbleweed houses, tiny houses, laneway houses.
- Overall integrity of the house, must think of impact.
- Projects in Mexico were building in brick, in Vancouver, almost certainly wood.
- In South America, row houses, shanty construction.
- Use other types of models that you can add a room on at a time.
- Interesting from a design standpoint.
- Converting existing houses to multi-family houses, duplexes.
- Walls not very good soundproofing in some places.
- Speaker: idea of incrementally building—how do you feel about it?
- Person questions permits every time you need to build again.
- If City provides permits, it might help.
- Proposes that builder be one of the tenants.
- Will feel more of a sense of belonging.
- Tough in Vancouver due to high land prices.
- Acre of land went for \$1 million.
- Person thinks outside of Greater Vancouver is more feasible.
- Person thinks - Would have to build up, likes the idea but maybe not in downtown Vancouver.
- Architect thinks that a solution is a land subsidy—government lands, leases are coming due soon, could make the land available.
- Person - one possible scenario, to figure out what layout they want.
- People can be very efficient as to how they use the space.
- 150 sq feet, very modular.
- Co-Op needs rezoning.
- Speaker: compares to “Habitat for Humanity”.
- Encouraged to stay with the building and develop in a slow and thoughtful way.
- Person says his co-op was designed with many families in mind.
- Always more demand for co-op units.
- Rent is kept low due to tenants living in co-op and maintaining the grounds.
- Person questions how quickly to build.
- Architect, says if you’re building up, not much of an issue.
- Be able to take this to the City and ask for rezoning, to enable to build incrementally

SESSION

C 6

Grassroots Housing Process

CONTINUED

- Some very small houses such as laneways.
- Four “tiny houses” in a laneway.
- Residential with retail, shops underneath.
- Residential complexes being built with offices.
- Community for residential and office space, marketplaces, doctor office, dentist office, etc.
- Advertise the office space and the living space together.
- New urbanism, jobs and houses are close together.
- Neighbourhood doctors deliberately distributed among the neighbourhood.
- Self-contained, people don’t have to leave the premises.
- Awareness of opportunities and the barriers, i.e. rezoning.
- Either everyone owns or we give it up.
- New urbanism is interesting.
- This city is well on its way.
- 2/3 of cost is for mortgage, co-op ideas should be explored more.
- Co-op would go a long way to help people.



- Not a solution to put people in social housing, not supportive not a solution.
- Difficult to get clients into BC Public Housing, 3 year contracts mean only short term solution. Horrific living conditions and amenities. Responsibility to provide housing that is clean and safe and defines what this is. Can't apply for housing when you're in jail, if you're put on a supportive housing list can take five years to get a place to stay.
- Long list of applications. More difficult for people in prison to find social housing, 5% success rate. Higher % of re-offending due to the safety of having a roof and food and ability to survive in prison. Rates of HIV rising in jail due to lack of clean needles, access to condoms etc. No rooms in shelters, re-offend to go back to jail. Needs to be a better housing strategy than go back to jail. Strategies include community court, one chance, don't have community housing have a place to go but it's a one chance offer.
- Prisoners with health concerns are often refused by housing associations which increase difficulty of finding housing. National issue, Vancouver has its own specific situation, nothing like downtown city anywhere else.
- Strategy to make 450 additional housing units, how many applications do BC Housing receives – will this reduce housing, is it enough. Dunsmuir Housing needs work; additional resources need to be put in place.



SESSION

C 7

Prisoners

Newly-released
almost always into
homelessness

Costs to taxpayers,
as homelessness
creates high
recidivism rates

Discussion Leader:
Kathleen Cherrington

Note Taker:
Julie McElhone

Participants discussed the societal impact and the cost to taxpayers of newly-released prisoners failing to find affordable housing. Discussions examined discriminations and difficulties newly-released prisoners faced within the social housing system. It was suggested the City of Vancouver take a more proactive approach in assisting newly-released prisoners transitioning back into the community.

SESSION

C 8

Housing and Transportation Affordability

Discussion Leader:
Neil Lamontagne

Notetaker:
Sage

Participants discussed the need for increased co-operation and planning among those who determine land-use policies and those who plan transportation. It was suggested the City of Vancouver become more involved in community planning and educating the public on its land-use vision.

- Difficulty of getting development rights for process of building over rail lines.
- Need for co-operation between land-use and transportation planning.
- City and Translink co-operation needed.
- Policy goals aren't always shared between cooperating agencies
- Specific needs for seniors need to be addressed, especially in West End.
- Issues of comfort and security at some transit stops.
- What can we do to make a more affordable city, specifically with transportation?
- Transportation portion of household budget has major impact on housing choices.
- Balancing affordability and accessibility of housing.
- Marpole, Robson corridor, West End, weak areas for transportation.
- Transit not accessible for large dogs. Large dogs necessitate more car use.
- Thinking of transit as an extension of the sidewalk.
- Long commutes change urban landscape.
- Personal conflicts can lead to car use.
- Transit is public space condensed.
- Cars are more comfortable than transit.
- Poor signage discourages use.
- Dirty conditions in transit discourage use.
- Customer service approach to transit is needed.
- Balancing comfort of transit with cost of services.
- What is the transit experience for the customer?
- Do transit riders feel safe?
- C23 is painful for seniors – high steps for entry.
- Shuttle needs room for luggage to accommodate passengers going to the Canada Line for YVR
- Even assuming mobility, transit isn't convenient for people with baggage etc.
- Options other than taxis and car-sharing for transporting personal goods?
- Small-scale delivery for occasional use needed
- Even groceries can discourage transit use.
- Continuum of vehicle styles to accommodate different amounts of baggage.
- We have a supply issue with transit – more and more variety needed in Lower Mainland.
- Parking costs are a major factor in budgets.
- Reduction in parking requirements underway, but limited by demand.
- Density of housing on a lot limited by parking availability.
- How can we make it easier to let people live without cars?
- Balance between regularity of stops (e.g. B-Line) and speed of route.
- Broadway tube and downtown streetcar need public support
- Should expansion go towards servicing areas that already use transit or to introduce and normalize transit in outlying areas?
- Transit budgeting included in mortgaging calculations.
- Segmentation of messages – educating people about the interconnected issues of transportation, housing, zoning etc.
- Ignorance of taxation levels for projects, information should become increasingly available
- Smaller transit loops that run more frequently, more free-zones

CONTINUED

- Task force for re-zoning rail tracks?
- Zoning and utilities for rail tracks issues once ownership is resolved.
- Transportation zoning can't be gone back to. Dual-use zoning as a possibility.
- Sell air rights over tracks, – 30 feet up.
- Neighbourhood input on development over tracks.
- Provide a profit motivation for CN as co-developer – but they have a long view and will wait you out.
- Corporations becoming more cooperative for good public image.
- Transition streets into green walkways.
- Townhouses along greenways as new land-use vision – would allow safe and nice cycling and walking opportunities for residents.
- Traffic circle objections as example of local resident resistance to changes.
- Community involved planting initiatives, greenways, goal for future.
- Difficulty in getting consensus in neighbourhoods for shifting land use.
- Senior support for greenways.
- Pilot projects important for illustrating potential of projects to residents.
- Where can we block streets without impacting access?
- Alternating streets and greenways.
- Young City (Vancouver) has lots of potential for incremental progress, despite local expectation for instant progress.
- Portland bought corner stores, created hubs for FedEx etc. to create corner store based community to reduce traffic.
- Get better, more thoughtful developers interested in building over rail tracks.



SESSION

THEATRE

Seniors' Housing

Micro-housing

Renting in Vancouver

Edna Cho, Facilitator

Little Mountain: A Fight for Social Housing

by Christopher Bevacqua

Catherine Hembling, Facilitator

Homeless Voices

Judy Graves

- What are the lessons?
- The City should be a more creative agent of affordable housing- e.g., be willing to accept and work with BC Housing as a partner.
- The City's actual participation in the affordable housing was outlined with factual, detailed information.
- Appreciation of this unconference, its open format, and implicit recognition that the City knows that more needs to be done.
- e.g.: more small projects through City-run organizations like housing over the Library project in DTES.
- Small projects are good, especially as they can be easily supported by neighbourhoods.
- There needs to be more rent to own projects.
- Importance of Rate of Change regulations in retaining the existing rental stock in most apartment areas in the City.
- Many big sites (not controlled by the City) are coming up for re-development: Pearson Hospital, (57th and Cambie), St. Vincent Hospital (33rd and Heather, n side) RCMP , (33rd and Heather s side), Heather Place (Metro Vancouver owned, 14th Ave near Heather)
- Most of these sites will not suffer the vacant possession scenario of Little Mountain. However, Heather Place tenants are feeling pressure reminiscent of that applied to Little Mountain tenants and it is possible that their land will be sold to a developer as in Little Mountain's case.
- re. large non-city owned sites: It is difficult for citizens most affected to have input, especially as there is only a vague future prospect of a project. That means neighbourhood organizations become doubly important as watchdogs and activists in continuing to inform the general public.
- Neighbourhood organizations need to talk to each other.
- Tenant organizations need to talk to each other e.g. new Facebook page S.T.R.U.T. (Serious Tenants&Renters United Together)
- Empathetic processes need to be in place to look at longterm overall community needs. e.g.: Visions process, which needs to be honoured, in order not to undermine neighbourhood efforts, leading to citizen disillusionment, cynicism and non-participation. Stick to the process.
- Rate of Change Bylaw in place for the West End is good and might be considered for other areas. (1 to 1 replacement of rental units)
- Need to look at family units - not much rental supply for families



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