



**2132 Ash Street  
(formerly 599 and 595 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave)  
Temporary Modular Housing  
Community Advisory Committee  
Thursday, June 28, 2018  
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

**1) Welcome and introductions:**

- a) At 4:01 p.m. the meeting began with a review of the agenda and a round of introductions.
- b) Committee members were asked to say who they are, what their role is on the Committee, and what they hope to get out of being on the Committee. The key points of interest were:
  - How the residents and staff will work with and in the community
  - How the programming works generally
  - How long “temporary” is intended for this housing – what is the end goal for the residents
  - Concern for community safety - needles, crime, violent crime
  - How to support the project and the residents

**2) Opening – project updates and responding to questions:**

- a) BC Housing (BCH) stated that the development is on track and early September is still the target date for occupancy.
- b) PHS commented that the occupancy date may be pushed back. The roof is being put on today. There will be an industrial kitchen for the PHS’s food program (food services for tenants of PHS buildings) and peer employment, as an example of PHS programming. Internally hiring is rolling out; anticipating a lot of senior staff applications. The building will have two staff 24/7. Monday – Friday there will be a day shift coordinator, Mental Health Worker (MHW) and an onsite manager. The home support position is incredibly important for life training/support. It is a role that is paramount to building the skills that the tenants need to be independent community members.

**3) Questions from the Community Action Committee members:**

- i. *Question: What other kinds of programs are there besides food:*  
*Answer:* (PHS) Pre-employment training/peer employment will be built out. Bee hives and bee keeping with Hives for Humanity, as well as harvesting honey and making candles. A “clean team” will be based out of the building to go out in to the community sweeping twice a day (for needles and debris). This leads to

social and community inclusion. We will also look at the organic nature of what this specific community of residents needs and build those pieces in.

ii. *Question: What does a food support worker do?*

*Answer:* (PHS) They make two warm meals a day served to residents. The use of the community kitchen is to help set the notion of what a meal is and one that folks want to share, then help them to cook and serve. Some want support in grocery shopping. As much as possible we get a group together and go together. Meeting them where they're at. Letting them identify their needs and coming up to support that.

iii. *Question: For the Clean Team, the old rail line area attracts people who are homeless. The City upgraded the service and cleaning to be more often, but it would be a great advantage to the neighbourhood if we could convince the City to take down all the blackberries and make it a useful green space for the area.*

*Answer:* (CoV) I have made a note to follow up on the rail line and the thicket.

Comment from CAC member: Seeing people sleeping in the bushes, there is a very real need for housing. Agree that blackberries need to be cut but don't want to bar it from being possibly used as light rail in the future.

Action: City of Vancouver representative will inquire with the appropriate department about whether the thicket can be removed.

iv. *Question: Is there a list of tenants yet and when you do, are these folks going to be displaced from where they are? Will they be travelling back to the DTES or staying in their new neighbourhood?*

*Answer:* (PHS) We do not yet have a list of tenants. Our method is to identify and prioritize local homeless. Then we look at local shelters, then individuals who stabilized well in SROs to move in if they want to. Some do go back and forth. For many folks moving inside for the first time is intense. People will come and go like any apartment building.

v. *Question: How do you select the tenants? Do they apply or do you go find them? Are there criminal elements in these tenants or do you screen them out? Violent crime? Will I be safe?*

*Answer:* (PHS) The initial work is done by Carnegie Outreach teams across the city. The outreach team's senior leader has been coming here over a month to identify people who are street homeless and under-sheltered. There is a Rapid Housing application form tied to this site that individuals can fill out. The tenants were similarly identified with the Sugar Mountain folks for Chartrand Place. Those interested in getting into the housing are filling out the forms. We don't screen out for criminal history. The population who will be tenanted already live in the community. The same population will be moving in the building. If you feel safe now, you should feel safe once tenanted.

- vi. *Question: what is the long-term plan? 10 years? Do you want them (residents) to become independent? What is the ultimate goal?*  
*Answer:* We want them to be able to move indoors for health, food security, and physical security. Once stable, allow them to identify for themselves what “well” looks like and how they want to achieve this with the team. One of the outcomes is moving way out of the spectrum. For some, sustaining housing is the goal.  
*CAC Response: this is aiming too low*  
*PHS Response:* We work with what the client needs from us. Physical health, mental health – we want to see sustained healthy outcomes and being removed from the real trauma of street entrenched homelessness. Medical team access is another benefit of being housed.
- vii. *Comment: would have been good to know before about the relationship and plans with Hives for Humanity (HFH) and the food program. Isn't the community benefiting as a whole (people feeling stable) a goal? I encourage this messaging to be highlighted.*
- viii. *Question: How do we deal with TMH on a permanent level?*  
*Answer:* (PHS) TMH programs are considered a stop-gap; a quick attempt to get folks off the street. Moving hundreds off the street is the start, not the end state. With the recently announced National Housing strategy, some of that funding will go to building permanent housing for these people. Permanent buildings take longer while we wait for agreements to be signed, funding in etc. We are all very hopeful that there will be permanent facilities to which these folks will move in to before the leases are up.  
*CAC response: I raised this concern with CoV – how is the TMH part of the beginning of a new neighbourhood plan? Neighbourhood planning is in parallel. This area is scheduled to have permanent housing. What we were told is that once all the rezoning has happened and the money exists, the TMH would be moved and those folks moved in to permanent housing for this population and other affordable housing range.*
- ix. *Question: How has it been going at the Terminal and Marpole projects? Answer:* (PHS) PHS does not operate those buildings. We have Chartrand Place at 1131 Franklin St. off the overpass. That process rolled out smoothly and was fully tenanted in three weeks. There was no major pushback and we had community members over for a BBQ which was hugely successful. As for the people who moved in, it's really the first time they can exhale in 15 years.
- x. *Question: Can we have contact lists for the Marpole and Terminal building CAC members? Would like to speak to them directly (other CAC participants).*  
*Answer:* (Facilitator) The minutes are online and the City is there. I would direct you to Community Builders Group for their CAC.

*xi. Question: What is the legal perspective in terms of risk for new process (of temporary modular housing). If it doesn't go well, then what happens? What are the legal risks and concerns?*

*Answer: (PHS) We signed an operating agreement as we always do. Our own lawyer looked at it, but this is customary for us. This kind of housing is something we've been doing for 25 years. New style of building but same operating style. (CoV) We own the land and have partners in the field. Our lawyers also review everything.*

*xii. Question: Are there any concerns of risk for violence, impact on the community, policy push to make these decisions. I don't know much about risks but figured someone thought there might be. For example, my child was pushed over by a homeless person. Are there not inherent risks? You cannot make people take their meds etc. Can the legal review of this program be shared with us?*

*Answer: The concern always happens, there is this momentum or sense that the housing is problematic; that we are taking something broken and fixing it, but that is not how it happens. Imagine you're moving in to a building all the responsibilities and accountabilities. It is the same for these residents. If there were an incident, we'd go through the police. Our commitment is to be extremely attentive. Anyone can call the Clean Team and we will respond in a very timely fashion. If something happened and it was connected to this building, you would be able to get ahold of the manager quickly and we would work with you, police, and community to resolve the issue.*

*CAC response (1): CoV operates housing now, so this isn't new.*

*CAC response (2): I think it is new. I think the City has thought of legal consequences and spoken to lawyers and I'm wondering if the operators and CoV can share this information with us.*

*CAC Comment: It is important to remember that CoV owns all the lands in False Creek and that's 33% social housing.*

*CAC Response (1): Does it pose a problem, I don't think it will, but why not ask what the legal review says?*

*CAC Response (2): I don't understand. If I go punch my neighbor, the strata can't be held accountable.*

*Response: (Facilitator) I think it would be helpful for the City and PHS to speak to what supportive housing is. The City has 14 supportive housing sites across the city that they can speak to. We can arrange for someone from that department to speak to us.*

*CAC Response (1): I just want to see the legal risk of this particular site. Was there a legal review done on TMH?*

*Response: (CoV) I will check and let you know.*

Action: City of Vancouver representative to verify whether a legal review of TMH was completed and if so, can it be shared with the CAC.

*xiii. Question: I know the Operating Agreement is on the website but could you please share it with us via email?*

*Answer:* (Facilitator) Absolutely.

(BCH) Our Operations Management Plans are always made public for the open houses.

Action: PHS to distribute the Operations Management Plan to the CAC members by email.

#### **4) Updates from City of Vancouver (CoV)**

- a) A notice about an online survey was sent to local residents in the mail. The intention is to carry out research about the program, see what has changed in the community, not to do consultation on the project. One of the things this research will look at is community response before and after a building opens.
- b) When we sent out the survey some people copied the link into the Google search engine and this took them to the wrong page. People need to copy the link directly into the address bar of their browser to get to the online survey.
- c) Full link provided to participants at the end of the meeting for those who haven't yet received it. Deadline is tomorrow.

*Question: I'm assuming the other TMH buildings are going well because there is nothing about it in the press.*

*Answer:* Yes, I'm hearing from colleagues that it is all going well.

#### **5) Updates from Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH)**

- a) We are staying connected on the project developments; we have a long history with social housing operators. We are aware VCH needs to be connected to these operators and tenants.
- b) There are some supportive housing buildings in Vancouver with health-focused supports, disability, substance use and severe mental health, providing clinical and social service supports. Additionally, we are the administrators of publicly funded health care in the province. More specialized care – home support and the like – have a huge demand across the city, but very connected to these projects and this population. There is a long track record. Our teams are making sure care is in place.
  - i. *Question: Are the mental health workers in the building staff of PHS or VCH?*  
*Answer:* (PHS) They are PHS staff, but they work with VCH for additionally required care. For example a homecare nurse twice a week. Some come for specific supports.
  - ii. *Question: Will VCH be willing to provide medicine that isn't covered to the residents of these buildings? Some medicines aren't covered. The building only has 50 people. Can you top up the funding if needed?*  
*Answer:* (VCH) There are already a lot of supports available and the staff will help the residents access them. We can look at specific circumstances and a good point to make sure their needs are met and people receive their meds.

- iii. *Question: Is substance abuse support available to them? I am 100% supportive of an overdose prevention site (OPS) or substance addiction support.*  
*Answer: (VCH) We already do this work, it is a priority. Housing project can support with access and stability.*

## 6) Updates from PHS

**Facilitator:** With no other questions, perhaps this is a good time for PHS to explain what supportive housing is for us.

**PHS:** So, what is supportive housing? The explicit role is working closely with VCH and BCH to connect to this population and having programs accessible within the communities to figure out what works best for each individual. Home support only works if the person is always there. Sometimes it works better when we have programming internally to provide services.

For example, if we have an appointment and can't get there, we have friends and family. In PHS, we have a staff team to help the residents get to their appointments. Or, if someone lives in isolation, staff build relationships to support them where and how the individual can handle it. The goal is to help them achieve a form of stability that the individual feels good about.

No matter what we do around this table, people are really low income and you're going to see that. We work with people to create homes as much as we can, but we are not family. A lot of people live in isolation and we do our best to make that function.

Every operator does it a little bit differently. That's important to keep in mind if going to connect with other CAC groups.

- a) *Comment: (PHS) Some folks have been asking about Roger, a homeless individual in the area. There was a Rapid Housing Assessment form filled out for him and he will be prioritized.*
- b) *Comment: (CAC) The person who left Marpole – they were from the DTES. People who are already living here and want to stay and stabilize. It is important to recognize this.*
- i. *Question: (CAC) If there is a couple living on the street, how is it going to work?*  
*Answer: (PHS) The units have single beds.*  
(PHS) There are a couple of formats. What is optimum is that they each get a unit. Or that one is a permanent guest over time if contract given to one of them. If they wanted to do this. For example, one couple I know, they each got their own room knowing they had some conflict history. Two units close together but not side by side and not on top of each other. Why is this important? So they cannot annoy each other. If they come in as a couple we produce the lease in the woman's name and over time the male partner becomes a permanent guest.

(PHS) We house approximately 40-60 women. There are two women-only TMH sites but they are operated by another service provider. The temporary modular building is an impressively quiet structure with external siding on each room which keeps noise to a minimum.

ii. *Question: (CAC) Will it be mostly men at the Ash St building?*

*Answer: (PHS) We don't know yet.*

iii. *Question: (CAC) Is the building made out of shipping containers?*

*Answer: (PHS) They are about the size and shape of shipping container, but are a pre-fab home. Fancied up version of a foreman's trailer, but more eye-pleasing. (Circulated a photo of the room interior from Chartrand Place TMH.)*

*Comment: (COV) On the CoV website we have a time-lapse of Marpole building going in and photos of the interiors.*

## **7) Wrap up and Closing Questions**

**Facilitator:** I want to note that the VPD didn't attend, he had to send his regrets but will be at the September meeting.

Are there any other questions from Community members?

i. *Question: (CAC) I thought I read something about volunteers in the building?*

*Answer: (PHS) We don't have volunteers for a myriad of reasons. Some tenants are ok with it. Some find it disruptive.*

ii. *Question: (CAC) What about community involvement?*

*Answer: (PHS) As we get closer to tenanting we can coordinate something.*

*There was a special gift to Chartrand.*

*(PHS) We will have a BBQ, big fete, or something like that. We had neighbours from all over at Chartrand Place's "welcome" event. It was a lovely moment of inclusion.*

iii. *Question: (CAC): I'm wondering whether PHS is interested in a project for the neighbourhood association to create welcome baskets. They will jump on it. The more specific your recommendations the better. What has worked well in other housing? I'm not talking about collecting other people's castoffs, new household items – toiletries, towels.*

*Answer: (PHS) The rooms come furnished with a kitchen set. I will connect with you about this. Thank you.*

**Facilitator:** To the VSB/PAC reps any other comments/questions?

**VSB/PAC Representatives:** No other comments.

**Facilitator:** We will pause over the summer, and reconvene in September. We plan to have a tour and have the meeting in the amenities space.

iv. *Question: (CAC) Is it up to me to contact the alternates? Evan would likely act as an alternate for other community rep.*

*(CAC) Are each of us responsible for ours?*

*Answer: (Facilitator) If there is one, yes. Please note the terms of reference specifies the process for inviting guests to the meeting.*

**Meeting Concluded:** 5:24 p.m.

Action Items:

1. Action: City of Vancouver representative will inquire with the appropriate department about whether the thicket can be removed.
2. Action: City of Vancouver representative to verify whether a legal review of TMH was completed and if so, can it be shared with the CAC.
3. Action: PHS to distribute the Operations Management Plan to the CAC members by email.