

# Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Action Committee

## Monday October 17, 2022, 7 p.m.

Present: Staff and NAC 6

Presenters: 5

Community: 21

### 1. Welcome and Introductions, Territorial Acknowledgement

### 2. Approval of Agenda

- Approved

### 3. Approval of September Meeting Minutes

- Deferred until next NAC meeting

### 4. Presentation and Discussion of Evergreen Terrace Redevelopment

Guests: Thomas Bevan Project Manager (BC Housing); Franc D'Ambrosio and Julie Brown (D'Ambrosio Architecture and Urbanism); Jennifer Kay and Kathi Springer (TownSquare)

**See link in newsletter.**

- Still early in process, haven't yet approached City of Victoria; recognize urgent need for housing; want to establish community support for proposed development; large and high-priority project
- Largest piece of land in BC Housing portfolio
- Objectives include: 1) market and non-market housing; 2) financially sustainable; 3) collaboration with First Nations
- No existing tenants will lose their homes; all will be housed in the new buildings
- Neighbourhood Plan (and other plans) provides guidance; it identifies Evergreen Terrace as a Special Planning site and identifies policy goals: add affordable and mixed-income housing in a mix of building types, green spaces, and amenities; City of Victoria wants 400-500 new affordable units.
- Zoning allows Floor Space Ratio of 2.5:1 and higher with greater public benefits. Want to explore with community how to preserve green space etc. while increasing density.
- Summary of engagement input to date available on project website; includes input from existing tenants of Evergreen Terrace
- Currently 195 residences on the site; site can accommodate more density
- See presentation for some of the site opportunities (e.g., preserving mature trees and green space; daylighting creek) identified by the project team

*Discussion:*

- Q: Why and when?
- A: buildings constructed about 50 years ago; getting to end of its life. Need to plan for next 100 years. Site will remain public land. Project could take 10-20 years to complete. Timeline depends in part on level of community support. C: wood frame buildings have a life of about 70 years; need to plan ahead to replace them

- Q: a one-room/bachelor apartment is not an adequate size for a home.
- A: livability issue; BC Housing still has studio units; goal that long term units will be one-bedroom, not planning studio units; goal is that 50% of units are suitable for families (2 and 3-bedroom)
- Q: what building heights are proposed?
- A: key notion that ground level will be gracious and spacious, then see what density is possible. Requirement to increase number of units on the site. C: don't want to see a 'tower in the park' model
- Q: If proposing to build up to 700 units on 8 acres of land will this mean small units?
- A: BC Housing has standards for minimum unit sizes; units will be generous in size; will follow BC Housing design guidelines (which are better than those for market housing); different priorities than those of private developers
- Q: Will project engage the community in creating art etc.?
- A: Yes, want community to feel part of the new project.
- Q: What are minimum unit sizes?
- A: see BC Housing design guidelines on website; recognize that may need to accommodate large families, multi-generational families
- Q: clarification on density; FSR in LAP don't reflect community input.
- A: should we design to maximum or minimum number of units? Numbers don't tell us much. Want to build as many units as possible given parameters e.g., accessibility, livability, safety, landscaping. If land could support 1,000 units and meet these parameters would likely build them. Premature to commit now to specific quantity of units.
- Q: seeking clarification; is FSR 2.5:1 a minimum?
- A: not tied to a number at present. Need to gain significant public value from project, plan for the long term. City policy provides guidance. Site is unique (i.e., recognized as special planning area) and unlikely to become a precedent with respect to density. Plan to have market housing as well as 400-500 new affordable units
- Q: over 20 years government will change, if build up there is a risk that green space preserved will be built upon.
- A: BC Housing has legal means to prevent this from happening e.g., legal covenants; need to think about this. Community may want to negotiate this. Also, green space will be over parking, cannot easily develop it.
- Q: How to ensure quality of life with 700 families/2000 people on the site? How do you prevent another Blanshard Court? Protect families from drug dealers?
- A: Need guardian program, cultivate community pride and caring. It isn't numbers, but how people are living together. We now have more experience about how to integrate density with amenities. Design can create a setting that allows the establishment of community. Design is key to this.
- Q: Quadra Village Community Centre already struggling to meet needs; still have problems at one end of Evergreen Terrace; BC Housing has cancelled supportive programming due to funding cuts.  
A: Need to ensure increased amenities and programming go along with increased population.
- Q: great idea to put parking underground. What about green roofs? cooling stations? Solar panels? More trees?

- A: all good ideas; see design guidelines and City of Victoria requirements
- Q: Is proposal to daylight Rock Bay Creek?
- A: this could be part of the design; creek is currently in a culvert but has a right-of-way above it
- Q: what about housing for young people? Amenities for teens? A: teenagers are often ignored; need to think about their needs
- Q: Does BC Housing have principles regarding amenities? Who can use them? What types of amenities are possible?
- A: Quite open; related to total cost of project; want more density so to recognize need for more amenities; can have a mix of public, semi-private space. BC Housing mandate emphasizes tenant needs; those needs may involve become advocate for increasing amenities in broader neighbourhood
- Q: Has there been any progress in connecting with CRD regarding 950 Kings which is adjacent to Evergreen Terrace?
- A: Ideally development of these sites would be integrated; have spoken to CRD Health and invited them to join; no interest to date
- Q: why establish connections across busy streets to other sites?
- A: principle of urban design to establish connections; adjacent sites will also be developed in future
- Q: limited need for public green space on the site; is it expensive to build green space above ground level?
- A: ground level green space can be gated for tenant use only
- Q: Quadra Village Community Centre currently inadequate; would need to expand if population of ET increases; difficult to make underground parking 'safe space'.
- R: 950 Kings appears to be a good site for an expanded community centre; if not available, could it be built into ET? Square footage for a public amenity on site might mean more density; is that acceptable to the community?