

INFORMATION SHEET - 675 EAST BROADWAY AVENUE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING AND YOUTH RESOURCE CENTRE

Background

This document is intended to provide local residents, businesses and other interested parties with background information about the proposed development of 675 E. Broadway and the two societies involved in its operations.

Overview

The City of Vancouver purchased the site for the purpose of providing supportive social housing in the Mount Pleasant area. Part of the site is presently leased by the City to the Broadway Youth Resource Centre.

The site was endorsed by City Council in December 2007 as one of the 12 sites located city-wide for supportive affordable housing as part of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and the Province. The partnership seeks to address the issue of homelessness by building permanent supportive housing options throughout the city.

For more information visit: www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/housing.

What is being proposed for the site?

The building is an 8 storey residential building on top of a 3 storey podium facing E. Broadway.

There are three main components to the project and an additional component that is being examined for financial feasibility and funding.

- 103 supportive studio housing units for individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to be operated by the Vancouver Native Housing Society (VNHS) of which 30 will be available for youth between 16-24 years of age.
- 14,000 square feet of space on the first and second floor of the podium for the continued operation of the Broadway Youth Resource Centre (BYRC).
- 10,000 square feet of ground floor retail space fronting on Broadway that will be owned and rented by the City of Vancouver with opportunities for various unit configurations.
- 24 units of rental housing located on the top 3 floors of the building are included as part of the current proposal. The funding source for this component is not confirmed. If this does not proceed the overall building height will be reduced by 3 storeys.

What is the approval process for the project?

A rezoning is required for this site.

- A rezoning application has been submitted.
- The City has sent a notification of the application to surrounding property owners and participants in the Mount Pleasant Community Planning process and is now seeking input.
- A community open house is scheduled to provide details of the proposal and provide an opportunity for residents to ask questions or provide comments to the Project Design Team, Vancouver Native Housing Society, Broadway Youth Resource Centre staff, City staff and BC Housing staff. Comments will be forwarded to City Council as part of their consideration of the rezoning application.
- Open House Date: January 20, 2010; Place: Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood House, 800 East Broadway; Time: 4pm - 8pm.

- City Council will make the ultimate decision regarding the project at a Public Hearing likely in late spring. Once a public hearing is scheduled, the City will notify and invite area residents to address Council regarding the rezoning.

What Supportive Housing Actions have led to this project?

June 2007: Council approved the Supportive Housing Strategy that included areas across the city that could be considered for supportive housing. The area around the site at 675 E. Broadway was identified as a potential location for supportive housing because the existing zoning permits apartments.

December 2007: The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Province and the City was approved by City Council for 12 city-owned sites to be used for supportive housing (including 675 E. Broadway) in partnership with BC Housing. This approval came after Council held several evenings of public meetings to hear delegations from across the city.

2009: City staff, the project design team and the non-profit organizations involved in the project, have held three specific meetings with participants from the Mount Pleasant Community Planning process about the proposal as it was being designed and attended several of the general meetings of the Mount Pleasant Community Planning process. The intent was to obtain community input during the early design stage.

August 2009: City staff sent out an early information sheet on the proposed development to all participants on the mailing and e-mail list of the Mount Pleasant Community Planning process.

Some of the key issues/design principles identified at these meetings included:

- **Provide a mix of units** to include family units along with the studio apartment units for single persons.
- **Provide service/retail** that would benefit and support the local economic re-development and provide support services to area residents. There was no consensus on smaller retail space versus larger anchor store space, but suggested uses included bank/credit union, medical walk-in clinic, drugstore.
- **Design a distinctive** and aesthetically pleasing building through detailing, materials and articulation of exterior walls.
- **Incorporate the possibility of a ‘green link’** to the park (north) and a ‘greening and activating’ of the lane.
- **Assess alternate building forms** and building heights, including the potential of a courtyard design. Provide this information to residents to help them understand the choices/trade offs made in coming to the preferred building form.
- **Keep the community informed** on both the design and operational aspects of the project, including any proposed community liaison.

Who will manage and operate the building?

- **The Vancouver Native Housing Society (VNHS)** will manage the residential units and provide support services to all tenants, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- **Broadway Youth Resource Centre (BYRC)**, which presently operates and manages a youth resource centre at the existing site, will provide support services to youth living in the building and will continue to operate their Resource Centre on the 1st and 2nd floors of the new building.

The Vancouver Native Housing Society was formed in 1984 and is a registered charity (www.vnhs.ca). VNHS provides social and supportive housing for a wide range of people with a special interest “to provide safe, secure, affordable housing for Aboriginal individuals and families living in the urban setting”.

VNHS currently owns and operates 15 housing complexes two of which are in the Mount Pleasant area and the remainder in other east side areas of Vancouver for both aboriginal and non-aboriginal residents. There are 10 family, 4 single and 1 Elders/Seniors buildings with a total of 570 housing units.

Broadway Youth Resource Centre (BYRC) is an award winning multi-partner, multi-agency, one-stop resource centre administered by the Pacific Community Resources Society (PCRS). BYRC has been providing youth programs and services from its current location at 691 East Broadway since 1999. (www.pcrs.ca and then click Youth Services)

BYRC serves homeless and at-risk youth primarily between 16-24 years of age with a variety of integrated services to meet their needs including: assistance to re-connect with their families, cultures and home communities, assistance to obtain safe, affordable housing, access to education programs and/or stable employment, access to medical, counselling, cultural and other support services. BYRC will continue to provide its services in the new building.

PCRS has 25 years of expertise in managing and operating residential programs for youth.

Program Goals for 675 E. Broadway

The VNHS and BYRC are committed to achieving the following goals for 675 E. Broadway:

- To provide supportive housing to individuals, including youth who live in the local neighbourhood and are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- To create a setting that assists tenants to live independently with the life-skills and supports they need to become active and integrated members of their community.
- To work collaboratively with local residents, businesses and other parties to ensure the programs provide safe and effective services, and that any issues or concerns that arise related to the site, residents or neighbourhood are dealt with in a timely and effective manner.
- To continue to operate a day/evening youth resource centre that provides a safe place where at-risk youth can receive counselling and support, health services, education, life skills training, employment opportunities, and other crucial services.

Programs & Services

Tenant Selection

- Tenant referrals to 675 E. Broadway will be coordinated through the BC Housing Supportive Housing Registration Service, which is also involved in tenant selection for all the new 12 supported housing sites. For 675 East Broadway, priority will be given for those living in shelters and SROs (single room occupancy), who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Mount Pleasant and the Broadway corridor area.
- The final approval for accepting new tenants will rest with the Vancouver Native Housing Society and Broadway Youth Resource Centre.
- The housing will accommodate individuals appropriately matched to the level of support services provided.

Services to be Provided On-Site

The Residential Floors - Vancouver Native Housing Society

- VNHS trained staff will work with tenants who need assistance to access any required community-based healthcare (mental and physical), employment / benefits, addictions services or other required community supports.
- Staff will provide group and individual support regarding a range of issues, including:
 - Household management and meal preparation (although regular meal programs will not be provided as residents will have their own in-unit kitchen facilities);
 - Budget management, employment, and money issues; and
 - Community living skills; and
 - Organized recreational and social events.
- Staff working in the residential portion of the building will, at all times, be connected to staff working in the Broadway Youth Resource Centre.
- BYRC staff and programs will be available to youth living in the building and are involved with BYRC.
- Trained resident support staff on-site at all times (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) to meet the support needs of residents. In addition throughout the day several operations staff responsible for management and maintenance of the building will be on-site.

Broadway Youth Resource Centre

Day and early evening resource programs are presently operating out of the existing BYRC at 691 E. Broadway. At any one time during operations there are at a minimum 8-12 staff at the Centre. They are also supplemented at various times by others such as Vancouver Coastal Health medical and mental health staff on Monday and Thursday afternoons, practicum students and volunteers.

The services and programs in the new building will replicate what presently exists, including:

- Counselling, support and medical services including those for individuals facing mental health and addiction challenges;
- Employment and training opportunities;
- Peer Support Services;
- Community/business partnerships, research and practicum programs;
- Learning Centre for Vancouver Community College, literacy, life skills training;
- Art/Music Studio; and
- Hot meals, showers, health services, library resources and laundry facilities.

Who will live in the building?

- The proposed building will provide 103 studio apartments for low-income individuals who, for the most part, are already living in the local neighbourhood and/or are homeless or at risk of being homeless. The agreement between the City and Province focuses on housing “core-need singles with a priority for those living in shelters and SROs (single room occupancy) in Mount Pleasant and the Broadway corridor”.
- Core-need singles are those individuals with an annual income under \$29,000, including the working poor, when renting a studio apartment.

- Of the 103 studio apartments, approximately 30 will be set-aside for youth between the ages of 16 and 24 years. The support staff and the programs at BYRC will be available to these youth.
- 24 additional rental housing units are being contemplated.

The Proposed Building

What is building design and design rationale? And were there alternate designs investigated?

The form of the building emerged after a careful study of massing options. Many forms were considered from a courtyard scheme to point towers. Due to the site's limited depth certain forms such as the courtyard scheme were not feasible.

Many of the other forms, for example two point towers, took up a significantly larger amount of neighbours' views and encroached closer to the residential buildings to the north. A long rectangular form produced fewer storeys however it dominated the entire length of the block, especially from a pedestrian perspective.

The analysis of these options and discussions with the Planning Department lead to the proposed massing of a slender building on a three storey podium. Unlike some of the other options explored, the current massing provides a slim profile when approached from the major east-west Broadway corridor, as well, minimizes the shadowing effect on the buildings to the north. The three storey podium is used to maintain a street-scale architecture for pedestrians.

The Residential component

- Total Dwelling Units - 103 supportive studio units
- Amenity Space: approximately 3,100 sq. ft., including:
 - Multi-purpose rooms to be used for a range of activities, including meetings, special events, workshops and tenant gatherings;
 - A kitchen in a common space;
 - Laundry room;
 - Two outside terraces and gardens; and
 - A meeting/counselling room for staff to meet privately with residents.

The Youth Service Component

- Social Services Space: approximately 14,000 sq. ft., including:
 - Multi-purpose rooms to be used for a range of activities, including special events, workshops, class rooms and social gatherings;
 - Computers with internet access;
 - A TV/media room;
 - Small conference room;
 - Laundry/showers/lockers;
 - Art/Studio workshop;
 - Youth medical clinic;
 - Office space, counselling and meeting space for staff to meet privately with youth; and
 - Meal program/Kitchen.

The City-owned Retail Space

- Approximately 10,000 sq. ft. to allow for large or smaller sized retail spaces and located along the entire Broadway frontage.

What security measures are being considered?

A range of protocols will be used that have been successfully implemented at other locations to provide safety and security for tenants, staff, and the community including:

- Tenancy agreements with special conditions;
- The experience of a 24 hour, 7 days a week staff monitoring activity in and around the building;
- A 24-hour contact person and immediate staff response to critical or serious situations;
- Moving tenants who might need greater levels of support to alternate housing;
- Security cameras;
- A continued strong liaison between BYRC and the Vancouver Police Department; the VPD currently participates in youth breakfasts twice a week.
- Coordination between staff of VNHS and BYRC on activities in and around the building;
- A commitment by VNHS and BYRC to a safe community for neighbours, tenants and youth.

Will there be special provisions in place to manage the interaction between the youth and adult populations?

Over the past 2 years, BYRC and VNHS have successfully partnered in a program that concurrently houses both youth and adult females in the same apartment building. This partnership has shown the value in supporting residents to build a meaningful, supportive and safe community. We will continue to build on this success in 675 E. Broadway by monitoring and facilitating social and recreational activities, workshops, meetings and other events that contribute to community building and integrating living. VNHS and BYRC have policies and procedures in place to appropriately manage conflict or concerns that may arise for any age group.

Will the community be involved once the building is occupied?

- VNHS and BYRC are presently active members of the Mount Pleasant community, involved in community activities and organizations.
- Both organizations want to deal with any issues or concerns in a timely, responsive and effective manner and as such will set up a community liaison process to resolve issues or concerns raised by neighbours, and provide feedback and information about corrective actions.

Next Steps

- Open House - January 20, 2010 at Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood House, 4-8 pm.
- Public Hearing - Late Spring 2010

Contacts

Further information can be obtained from the following sources:

Vancouver Native Housing Society

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Broadway Youth Resource Centre

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