



MEETING REPORT

AUGUST 23, 2018 NEIGHBOURHOOD OPEN HOUSE

800 BLOCK HILLSIDE AVENUE, VICTORIA BC

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1/ PURPOSE

This report provides a record of the neighbourhood open house held by BC Housing and the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness on Thursday, August 23, 2018 to inform citizens and explore community interests on a proposal to develop further housing on the 800 block of Hillside Avenue, Victoria. We have submitted a development permit with variances to the City of Victoria, to build 21 new studio homes with supports for First Nations, Metis and Inuit women at the 800 block of Hillside Avenue. We anticipate that construction will start in Fall 2018, with the goal of opening in March 2019.

The neighbourhood open house record includes:

- A summary of the meeting;
- An analysis of the comment sheets; and
- A written discussion on how issues and concerns identified at the meeting are addressed in the project or will be addressed through changes to the proposal.

This report will be shared with the City of Victoria in advance of council consideration.

2/ BACKGROUND

The Proposal: The project at the 800 block of Hillside Avenue will provide 21 new modular homes with support services for Indigenous women in Victoria experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Each self-contained home will include a private bathroom and kitchen. Tenants will also have access to shared amenity space, a meal program, and support services.

The site at Hillside Avenue is centrally-located and currently vacant. The Rapid Response to Housing program uses modular units that require appropriate land and space to accommodate the faster delivery and installation times. Several factors are considered when identifying a site, including: land ownership, current land use/zoning, lease & legal considerations, access to transit, access to health services, and site access & servicing (utilities).

The need: The 2018 Greater Victoria Point-in-Time Homeless Count identified 1525 people experiencing homelessness, of those 33% identified as Indigenous. There is currently no culturally supportive housing in Victoria for Indigenous women, despite the data reflecting that 40% of indigenous people experiencing homelessness are women (in contrast to 30% of non-indigenous women.)

3/ NOTIFICATION

Letters were mailed to neighbours within 300 meters of the site on June 12, with a reminder letter sent on August 3, 2018.

The event was also publicized on the project website found here:

<https://www.bchousing.org/partner-services/public-engagement/projects/victoria-hillside-avenue>

A news release¹ announcing the development was posted on April 14, 2018.

¹ <https://www.bchousing.org/news?newsId=1479151228055>

4/ MEETING SUMMARY

The August 23 neighbourhood open house was held from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm at the Sandman Hotel Victoria at 2852 Douglas Street. A presentation was given with representatives of BC Housing and the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness presenting information on the proposal.

BC Housing and Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness also set up poster boards with key information on the development (**Appendix A**). Representatives from these organizations were available to talk with attendees, answer questions, and complete comment forms.

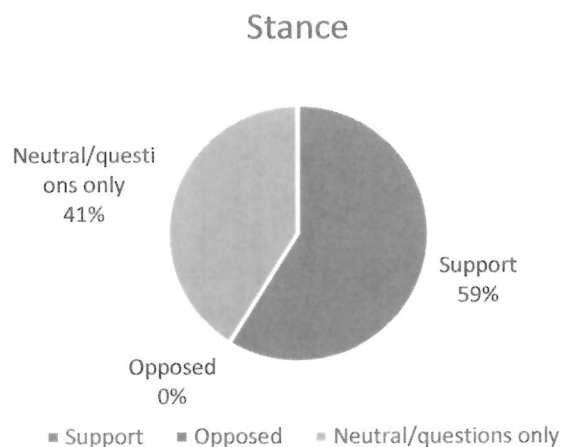
Appendix B presents the feedback received:

- Approximately 14 people attended the meeting.
- 3 comment forms were received
- A further 14 comments were sent via email to the BC Housing community relations email inbox

5/ SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED

In total, 17 comments have been received up to and including August 27, 2018 by form and by email. The breakdown of stance by method of submission is noted, with the caveat that some individuals may have submitted feedback through more than one source.

- 0 comments (0%) expressed opposition to the proposal;
- 10 comments (59%) expressed support of the proposal;
- 7 comments (41%) expressed a neutral or undecided view of proposal or sought information.



6/ WHAT WE HEARD

Most respondents indicated support for the development with comments that suggested that this development is important for Victoria and Indigenous women in the area. Below are common themes from the comment cards.

Theme	Specific Comments	Number of mentions
Agree with project	Need access to education opportunities	1
	Needed in Victoria	2
	Accommodation for pets needed	1

7 / HOW INTERESTS IDENTIFIED ARE ADDRESSED IN THE PROJECT

The key public interests identified in the open house are related:

- Tenant Selection; and
- Management of the housing;

Interest	Response
Tenant Selection	<p>All potential tenants will be required to complete a Supportive Housing Registration application to be considered for supportive housing. Tenants will be selected through a collaborative and thorough assessment process between BC Housing, the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness and local service providers to ensure the needs of a tenant match the culturally supportive services provided, such as life skills training, employment assistance, and help with accessing a range of social and health care services.</p> <p>The homes would be for Victoria women who identify as First Nations, Metis, or Inuit, are over the age of 19, currently experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and who need low-cost housing with a range of supports. Successful applicants will be people who have made a choice to work toward living a healthy and stable life. All tenants would pay rent for and sign a program agreement around expectations.</p> <p>People who apply to live at the proposed housing will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be over the age of 19 • Identify as an Indigenous woman • Be a Victoria resident* currently experiencing homelessness • Need additional support services to maintain housing • Pay rent • Sign a program agreement <p>The Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness is currently offering an Indigenous Women's Circle, providing life skills, cooking classes and cultural supports, to support women to maximize the potential of housing stability and success. It is anticipated that many of these women will apply.</p>

Interest	Response
Management	<p>The housing will be operated by the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness. The responsibilities of the operator will include property management, operations management, and tenant selection. Once tenants move in, staff will remain on-site 24/7 for support. The operator will be committed to be a good neighbour.</p> <p>The safety of our future tenants, staff and the surrounding community is a priority. There would be staff on site 24 hours a day, seven days a week to ensure that tenants are supported and that potential concerns are immediately addressed.</p> <p>Security features will optimize lighting, fencing, enable fob system for guests only, and create contained outdoor amenity space for smoking / dog walking.</p> <p>The responsibilities of the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness would include property management, operations management and tenant selection. Once tenants move in, staff would be on-site 24/7 to support tenants and make sure they have the best opportunities possible to move forward on the housing continuum and secure needed services. The operator would work with each tenant to: have an individualized support plan; be oriented to community and building expectations; and link to health and other social / employment services. Tenants would also be provided with basic custodial and maintenance services.</p> <p>A minimum of two staff will be on-site 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During the day, due to programming activities, there may be more than two staff on-site. Staff would be supported by a manager, who would be onsite Monday-Friday, in addition to various other staff that will be providing on-site services to the tenants.</p> <p>The Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness will ensure that all staff will have the appropriate training and skills necessary to support the clients. The required training, as required by BC Housing, includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis prevention training; • First Aid/CPR; • Indigenous awareness training; • Mental health first aid training; • Domestic violence and safety planning; • Substance use awareness and safety training; and • Trauma-informed training.

APPENDIX A: OPEN HOUSE BOARDS

Welcome

New Supportive Housing for Victoria

We acknowledge our work is taking place on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen-speaking people of the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.

Neighbourhood Open House

Thursday, August 23, 2018

7:00 pm

Doors open

7:30 pm

Presentation

Respectful Dialogue

- Ensure comments and discussions are respectful
- Recognize that the issues are complex and we need thoughtful discussion and how to meet community needs
- Share your thoughts – Fill out a comment form, join the conversation tonight or email communityrelations@bchousing.org.



Victoria

Community Need

According to the 2018 Victoria Homeless Count



1,525 people experiencing homelessness



33% identify as Indigenous



40.3% of Indigenous people experiencing homelessness identify as women

Housing and services* currently available to Indigenous women in Victoria:

*Funded through BC Housing

AVAILABLE TO WOMEN WHO ARE ELIGIBLE

- Transition houses
- Victoria Women's Transition House
- Oliver Women's Safe Home
- Cridge Transition House

- Second stage housing
- Margaret Laurence House
- Cridge Second Stage

SPECIFIC TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

- 34 housing units for people experiencing homelessness
- 30 rent supplements
- 87 units of housing for low-income families



New Supportive Housing Proposed for Victoria

Proposed Project:

21 self-contained culturally supportive studio homes

Proposed Location:

800 block of Hillside Avenue

Operated by:

Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness

Who is it for:

First Nations, Metis and Inuit women

Housing Type:

Safe, secure, self contained studio apartments with shared amenity space.

This site provides:

- Proximity to services and transit
- Currently vacant land owned by the Provincial Rental Housing Corporation
- A site that can be developed in a timely way



Housing Along the Spectrum

Highlights

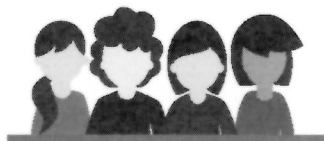
- Creation of 21 new homes for First Nation, Metis and Inuit women
- Provides stable and supportive housing
- Opportunity for women to move off the streets and out of precarious housing



Who would live in this housing?

Women who apply to live here will need to:

- Be a resident of Greater Victoria
- Identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit
- Be over the age of 19
- Be experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- Need additional support to maintain housing



Tenant Selection Process:

- Women must apply through the Supportive Housing Registry.
- Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness will work with BC Housing and local service providers to ensure the needs of a potential tenant are well matched to the types of support services provided.
- Women will be assessed using a thorough and thoughtful process to determine the support services they need to remain housed and live a more healthy, stable life, while ensuring a healthy tenant mix within a building.

What are some of the contributing factors to homelessness?

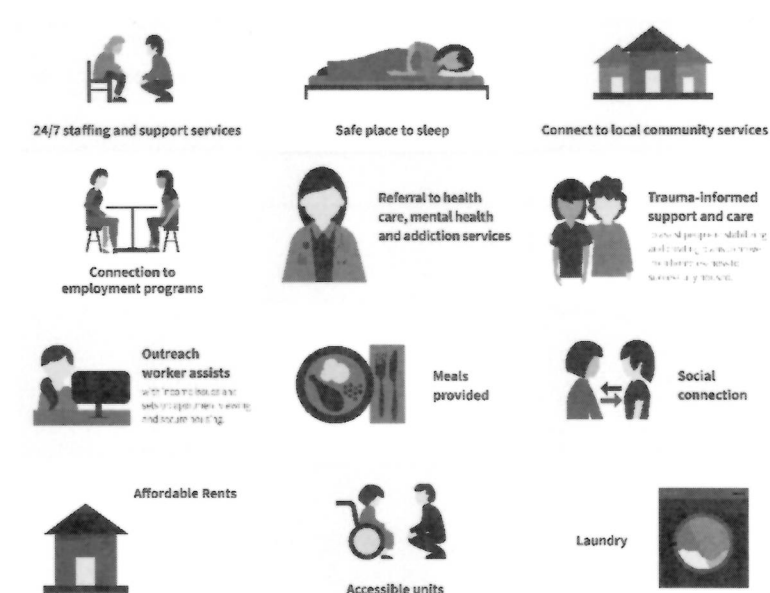
There are various factors which contribute to homelessness for Indigenous women such as:

- Inter-generational trauma
- Racial and cultural discrimination
- Lack of access to affordable housing
- Societal marginalization and poverty
- Domestic violence and violence against Indigenous women

All tenants would pay rent, sign a program agreement and make a choice to work toward living a healthy, stable life.

Services

All tenants would have access to a range of culturally supportive housing supports on-site.



Culturally Supportive Housing



- Indigenous-led organization that hires Indigenous staff, provides opportunities to connect with Indigenous culture and supports culturally responsive programs.
- Grounding services in ceremony and traditional teachings, providing access to Elders, and focusing on community healing rather than individual healing.
- Offers supports that address and engage issues relating to cultural identity and historical experience as part of the recovery process.
- Ensures health professionals who provide support services are culturally and linguistically competent.

Culturally Supportive Housing



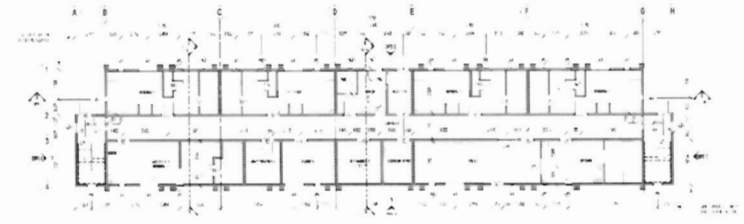
- Education, advocacy and programming around Indigenous issues and knowledge, and female empowerment.
- Peer support networks.
- Integrates family and community in the housing
- Encourages clients to preserve and practice their own Indigenous customs and traditions.
- Services are open, respectful and non-judgmental.
- An amenity space that offers opportunities for socialization, cultural events and ceremonies.

Renderings

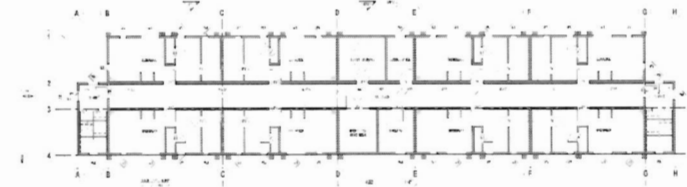


Disclaimer: These images are subject to adjustment as part of the municipal approval process.

Floor Plans



Level 1

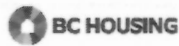


Level 2 & 3

Disclaimer: These plans are subject to adjustment as part of the municipal approval process.

Partners

We are committed to ensuring that everyone has a place to call home.



BC Housing works to provide capital, technical assistance, and support for the not-for-profit housing and service organizations providing affordable housing options.

BC Housing works in partnership with the private and non-profit sectors, provincial health authorities and ministries, other levels of government, and community groups in developing and housing options.



Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH) will provide the housing and provide a full range of services on culture and safety. ACEH works to build and deliver the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness to create a culturally-specific approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander homelessness on the traditional Coast Salish Nation. The ACEH provides a safe and secure place for all our people, on the ground, in the house, in the office. Some of our people are from our homes, feeling isolated, and experiencing homelessness. We stand together to end homelessness.

Variances

As part of the Development Permit application, BC Housing will be seeking the following variances*, which will require City of Victoria council approval:

1. Number of Buildings

The Evergreen Terrace site, which currently contains 21 buildings, was constructed prior to the current zoning bylaw implementation. This means that the site is currently legally non-conforming to the R3-2 zoning (1 building per site) that the City has designated for the area. BC Housing would like to add one additional building to the site for the proposed housing.

2. Minimum Unit Size

The City of Victoria has a minimum unit size requirement of 33 meters squared. Some units in the proposed development are under this minimum. BC Housing is requesting a variance, as these units are temporary in nature.

Timeline:

BC Housing anticipates starting construction Fall 2016 and opening the building for occupancy in spring 2019. This timeline is subject to the municipal approval process.

* Please note that all necessary variances will be confirmed by municipal staff. These are known variances at this time and are subject to change.



How Can I Provide Input?



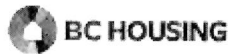
Email comments or questions to
communityrelations@bchousing.org



Fill out a comment form today.

All comments received by August 27 will be added to a summary report submitted to the City of Victoria.

APPENDIX B: FEEDBACK



Victoria Supportive Housing Neighbourhood Open House: Aug 23, 2018

Which of the following best identifies you?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hillside-Quadra Resident | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Victoria Resident |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hillside-Quadra Business Owner | <input type="checkbox"/> Victoria Business Owner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evergreen Terrace Tenant | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

How did you hear about this Open House?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invitation letter in the mail | <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook or Twitter posts |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper article | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Online | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Do you have any questions about this proposal that you would like addressed?

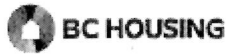
WHY IS REZONING REQUIRED TO
REPLACE 1 BUILDING WITH ANOTHER?
INTERESTING - ALON - CONFORMING

Any comments:

NEW HOUSING, ESPECIALLY THE AFFORDABLE
TYPE IS MOST WELCOME IN VICTORIA

Please put this form in a comment box or email: communityrelations@bchousing.org.
Comments received by August 27, 2018, will form part of a summary report submitted to the City of Victoria.

Please note: your comments will be shared with BC Housing, Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness & the City of Victoria.



Victoria Supportive Housing Neighbourhood Open House: Aug 23, 2018

Which of the following best identifies you?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hillside-Quadra Resident | <input type="checkbox"/> Victoria Resident |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hillside-Quadra Business Owner | <input type="checkbox"/> Victoria Business Owner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evergreen Terrace Tenant | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

How did you hear about this Open House?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invitation letter in the mail | <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook or Twitter posts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper article | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Online | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Do you have any questions about this proposal that you would like addressed?

access to education opportunities
ie. Dogwood Certificate.
RelV Seal

Any comments:

accommodation of pets.
ie some people already have a
pet and would need a place
that allows them to keep
their pet.

Please put this form in a comment box or email: communityrelations@bchousing.org.
Comments received by August 27, 2018, will form part of a summary report submitted to the City of Victoria.

Please note: your comments will be shared with BC Housing, Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness & the City of Victoria.



Victoria Supportive Housing Neighbourhood Open House: Aug 23, 2018

Which of the following best identifies you?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hillside-Quadra Resident | <input type="checkbox"/> Victoria Resident |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hillside-Quadra Business Owner | <input type="checkbox"/> Victoria Business Owner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evergreen Terrace Tenant | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

How did you hear about this Open House?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invitation letter in the mail | <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook or Twitter posts |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper article | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Online | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Do you have any questions about this proposal that you would like addressed?

Any comments:

Great project! Much needed.
I support it.

Please put this form in a comment box or email: communityrelations@bchousing.org.
Comments received by August 27, 2018, will form part of a summary report submitted to the City of Victoria.

Please note: your comments will be shared with BC Housing, Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness & the City of Victoria.

Email 1 Received 23 April 2018

Hi there,

I wanted to write a letter saying I am excited about the new supportive housing units at Evergreen Terrace. I live in the neighbourhood and am happy to see something being built in that space.

Email 2 Received 24 August 2018

hi did enjoy that meeting at Sandman
in that old field they are building for
homeless women, Aborigin women oak bay
lodge and Rockbay

Am I correct? when will they ever
start building the evergreen where the fire
was a long time ago.

Email 3 Received 1 May 2018

Hi there,

I am writing to inquire about the notice we received about 21 new units of housing with supports for Aboriginal women. I work in women's Supportive Recovery programming with Island Health in Victoria, and my clients often must find housing after they have graduated through our programs. I currently have one Aboriginal women in our program who has already submitted her BC Housing application, but has so far not had luck finding any affordable housing.

Is it possible to get some information on:

1. Who would be eligible for these new units?
2. How does one get their name on the list, if their BC Housing application has already been submitted?

Thanks in advance for any info you have to offer,

Email 4 Received 1 May 2018

I've heard from a local indigenous woman that the government doesn't want to support local indigenous women; so they often fund and support women who are indigenous to other places within the territory of the local indigenous. This disempowers local indigenous women. Someone who is indigenous to the east coast living on the west coast is supporting the colonial system if they aren't helping the local indigenous women.

Will this project empower more local indigenous women (Coast Salish) or more foreign indigenous women?

Email 5 Received 27 June 2018

Good morning - I would love to be notified of when the open house is rescheduled so that our staff may attend. So grateful to hear about this project happening so close to our office. We received the memo this morning in the mail and would like to be kept informed about this much needed project.

Email 6 Received 06 July 2018

Hello. Has a new date been set for the open house of the proposed Hillside supportive housing complex?

Can you please tell me what the policy is/will be for smoking at this and other BC Housing properties?

Email 7 Received 13 August 2018

Hi there,

I am a Masters of Indigenous Governance student at the University of Victoria and have been working on my Community Governance Project (it is essentially my final thesis of the program), that once completed I will be graduating. My project is on a written report that nuances the intersectionality of Indigenous disability, and looks particularly to the housing shortages in BC. It is argued in my final thesis that the lack of affordable housing for Indigenous disabled populations leads to homelessness, lack of food security, increased health issues, further marginalization, children entering care and abused partners being unable to leave toxic relationships because of lack of options/transportation/supports. These are a brief glimpse into some of the intersections that I explore as they get a lot further nuanced and comprehensively addressed.

Given this information, I would love to arrange an interview with BC Housing in regards to this new housing neighbourhood on Hillside Avenue that is specifically for Indigenous women. My hope is to include at the end of my paper some programs locally that provide options to those faced by the complex intersections of Indigenous disability. In this case I would like to highlight a glimmer of hope that this new housing unit will offer to Indigenous bodies in 2019 and the important work that both BC Housing and the Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness do.

Let me know what you think and if you would be interested in arranging an interview. I can also send some questions via email if that is an easier process as I am sure you have an extremely busy schedule.

Email 8 Received 04 May 2018

Indigenous housing ? ? ?

Indigenous in Victoria means Coast Salish. The Aboriginal organizations are fraudulently using the term to access funding and jobs. Have you seen the homes of the non Aboriginals and non Coast Salish working for those aboriginal organizations? They should not be permitted to work here if they are not coast salish. The First Nations agreement is that anything they take from our community they must pay back all times three plus. That could mean their organizations and their personal homes time three plus. Their spouses must pay equal amount owing also. I don't see why the Indigenous need to be counted as numbers to fund the white guys and friends regime any longer. The local Indigenous women would be great hosts for running aboriginal housing if the ideas of owning women and people were obliterated.

Email 9 Received 23 April 2018

Hi,

I just received your note informing me of the plan to build 21 units of housing with supports for Indigenous women at Evergreen Terrace. I just want to let you know that, as a small business in the neighbourhood, I support this 100% and am so pleased to see such concrete actions being taken to support these women in need. I look forward to watching the progress of these units and welcoming these women to our community.

Email 10 Received 26 June 2018

Good Evening,

I live in the neighbourhood and received one of the letters inviting me to your Open House regarding the Hillside Avenue Supportive Housing. (I have also CC'd my partner and a dear friend who also lives and works in the Hillside area).

I'd like to start by saying I am 100% supportive of supportive Housing for Indigenous Women and am looking forward to the rescheduled meeting. The idea of having a home filled with Indigenous Women makes me feel much safer in my neighborhood not to mention I understand the housing crisis all too well.

I do have a few questions:

Why is the Open House Post-Poned? How can I find out when the new date to attend the Open House will be? Are there ways for people who are unable to make the physical event to get more information and ask questions?

Lastly, I am interested in knowing what is going to happen at the Open House. Is it purely informational? Will there be an invitation for feedback/input? I do hope that this is not the kind of meeting that people can stop such an important project from happening by attending.

Email 11 Received 18 June 2018

Hello,

Thank you for the notice online and in my mailbox. [redacted due to personal information].

I am supportive of the plan to build additional housing on Evergreen Terrace land.

Are there any plans to include bike parking? I don't see any bike parking available. I've heard from the Community Center that bike theft is a big problem in Evergreen Terrace.

[redacted due to personal information]

I'm working in this neighbourhood to advocate for free bikes, bike kitchens (tools) and other cycling related amenities such as more bike racks throughout the neighbourhood. Used bikes are fairly easy to come by. This is a very cycling-friendly area and riding bikes is a great way to get around the city especially if you don't have much money.

There are hundreds of bikes at Pandora's Harris Green Park.

I looked at the proposed building plans and I see there is a some building storage which is good. I think there should be some dedicated bike parking with a security camera.

I understand residents will have special supports on site and a security camera would be such an easy thing to install in a new building.

Email 12 Received 16 April 2018

Hello, [redacted due to personal information] and I moved to Victoria close to six years ago and been homeless for close to half of that time. I just secured a one bedroom apartment that costs me my whole [redacted due to personal information]. I have no other income and rely heavily on the food banks. I am VERY interested in the project upcoming on hillside Rd. How would I apply? Show interest! Keep informed! I can't keep paying this much rent and live, it's imposible!

This housing is so needed!