



## FERNWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

July 25, 2022

Attention: [developmentservices@victoria.ca](mailto:developmentservices@victoria.ca)

Regarding: 1450 Elford Avenue  
Temporary Use Permit Application: Community Feedback

Dear Mayor and Council;

As you know, Beacon Community Services has requested a Temporary Use Permit to operate the Out of the Rain Youth Shelter at 1450 Elford Avenue between October and April. The Fernwood Community Association Land Use Committee (LUC) had an opportunity to discuss this variance application in order to represent questions and concerns from Fernwood residents.

We understand that a neighbour living in the area contacted the City of Victoria with concerns about the shelter and registered a bylaw complaint; however, no members of the Fernwood community have contacted our LUC directly to express concerns about the shelter. Although our outreach in the immediate neighbourhood is limited, we were able to speak to a small number of residents living nearby and these residents reported to us that they have not had any issues with disturbances related to the shelter. In addition these residents voiced their support for the shelter, citing that at-risk youth are under-served and in great need of the services Out of the Rain Youth Shelter provides.

A shelter specifically for youth reduces risk in two ways. First, youth shelters provide a much safer environment than the alternative of sleeping outdoors or staying in an adult-oriented shelter. Second, the provision of youth sheltering services also provides valuable opportunities for youth to connect with other supportive services that can further improve their circumstances, including counselling and finding permanent housing. The LUC would add that the very existence of the shelter is based on broad support from community agencies, faith-based organizations, the business community, and volunteers from neighbourhoods throughout Victoria.

We reached out to Beacon Community Services and requested, received, and have reviewed their policies for maintaining safety and security, and are satisfied that these procedures protect the peace and safety of the neighbours. Beacon noted that due to the strength of these policies, neighbour complaints are very rare. Such policies include:

- Care of the physical space including keeping the yard clean, keeping the building in good repair, and maintaining the landscaping
- Processes for bringing youth in and out of the space that ensures they are not congregating in the front yard or on the street
- Clearly defined incident response protocols and incident review processes
- A contact person to whom neighbours can report concerns
- 24/7 monitoring for noise and behaviour and enforcement of quiet times

Accessibility and affordability are two considerations that our community has identified as important for us to assess for every land use application. In this case we want to highlight the essential nature of this particular shelter. The shelter ensures that a small portion of the current population of vulnerable and marginalized youth have a safe place to sleep and have a meal during inclement weather. In summary, the shelter offers support to at-risk youth while fulfilling the community-based goals of affordability and accessibility and maintaining a strong set of policy and procedures for safety and security for residents and neighbours, while offering much needed support to at-risk youth.

Should you wish to discuss these comments further, please contact Kristin or Soma at [fernwoodlanduse@gmail.com](mailto:fernwoodlanduse@gmail.com).

Yours sincerely,  
Kristin Atwood and Soma Morse, Co-Chairs  
Fernwood Community Association Land Use Committee

/send to [caluc@victoria.ca](mailto:caluc@victoria.ca)