

MY PLACE TRANSITIONAL SHELTER



Former Boys and Girls Club on Yates eyed as shelter for homeless

RICHARD WATTS / TIMES COLONIST
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Notice Of Community Meeting

City Property at 1240 Yates Street to be
used for Short-term Emergency Shelter

Community Meeting

Wednesday, December 30, 2015
at 7:50 p.m.
1240 Yates Street, Gymnasium

Please note that the City of Victoria plans to lease a vacant City property located at 1240 Yates Street to BC Housing and Our Place to operate an emergency winter shelter, for four months. Work is underway to open the shelter for the first week of January.

Our Place will operate the shelter to offer 24/7 support services, storage, laundry and daily meals, to 40 people without homes, until April 30, 2016. BC Housing has allocated \$400,000 in funding for a new temporary shelter for the cold winter months. In addition, the United Way of Greater Victoria is contributing \$25,000, and the City will invest up to \$45,000 to upgrade the facility for its temporary use.

The City expects the shelter operator to work closely with all neighboring properties, residents and the City, to listen to concerns, and mitigate impacts to the neighbourhood. This community meeting will provide an opportunity for residents and neighbours to learn more about the shelter operation and share thoughts or concerns so they can be addressed. Representatives from the City of Victoria, BC Housing, and Our Place will be present. A neighbourhood agreement and committee will be established based on the ideas and input of the neighbours and operators on how the temporary shelter can be provided while minimizing impacts to the neighbourhood.

Earlier in the fall, the City of Victoria consulted the community about how best to create shelter for those without homes. The majority of respondents to an online survey and attendees at a "sheltering solutions" workshop supported expanding existing shelters, or using existing vacant buildings for temporary shelters, over expanding options for sheltering in City parks.

The shelter is temporary, for up to four months. The long-term future of the property at 1240 Yates Street is actively being explored and is being considered as part of the City's real estate strategy moving forward.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
City of Victoria
T: 250.386.5711

5 CENTENNIAL SQUARE, VICTORIA, BC V8W 1Y6 | www.victoria.ca



1240 YATES STREET TEMPORARY SHELTER NEIGHBOURHOOD AGREEMENT

VISION

Neighbours of the 1200 block of Yates Street, including existing residents, students and parents, teachers and fire fighters and other workers, and ~~new~~ shelter residents, will be welcome and may enjoy comfort and safety in their neighbourhood.

GOAL OF THE AGREEMENT

To provide a means for everyone to work effectively together to achieve the vision.

PRINCIPLES

- Communicate clearly and honestly,
- Work together to address concerns and solve problems in a positive and timely manner,
- Be respectful of Shelter residents and engage them in resolving issues, and
- Commit to following through on agreed upon actions.

1. WERE THE MEETINGS USEFUL AND IF SO WHY?

I think that in circumstances such as this, it was critical to mitigating the impacts to neighbours to the degree possible. Issues got dealt with in a timely manner.

The meetings were very useful! They created a sense of community and opportunities to be heard & to hear updates and others issues! The meetings were short, direct and comprehensive.

1. WERE THE MEETINGS USEFUL AND IF SO WHY?

Useful because more information = less rumour and invention. Also useful to hear other perspectives different from my own - good to know whats "out there" and what the community fears are from some people. I became aware that there is major and astonishing ignorance of the realities of poverty and homelessness and addiction on the part of some community members = need for much more education and opportunities to learn.

2. HOW DID YOU THINK THINGS WENT? WHAT WERE THE POSITIVES AND WHAT WERE THE NEGATIVES?

Obviously, putting such a shelter right up against another residential property is not a choice that anyone would make, other than in an emergency, such as this project. On the plus side, it was encouraging to see Central School students gain an understanding of the situation, and support it in their way. Of course, having a roof over the residents' heads was a positive. The negative was clearly the impact on the adjoining residential property.



3. IF THIS WERE DONE AGAIN IN YOURS OR ANY OTHER NEIGHBOURHOOD, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE THE CITY/BC HOUSING?

I don't think a low-barrier facility to transition people from the street is ever going to be a "good-neighbour" situation for existing adjoining residential properties. Plan ahead so that we can take the time, in future, to find an area where that impact will be mitigated.

The school experience started out badly because of the timing but it all worked out, largely because of the opportunities for meetings, and because of the excellent responses to community needs by My Place staff.

4. DID YOU LEARN ANYTHING FROM THE EXPERIENCE? IF SO, WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

Yes - that pockets of major ignorance, fear and prejudice still exist. I learned more about the need to listen in difficult situations and about process of sometimes challenging meeting dynamics.

We still have a long way to go to educate people against prejudice/stigma of mental health & addiction. That with compassion, effort and time we can get some people off the street. That the City cares about us.

Transitional shelter became lifesaver

Former tent city campers found hope at My Place

SARAH PETRESCU
Times Colonist

Douglas McLean said moving from the since-dismantled tent city on the courthouse lawn into the My Place shelter on Yates Street 18 months ago likely saved his life. "I was one of the first people picked to be in here and I stayed until the end," said McLean, a.k.a. Poet, at a farewell barbecue for shelter residents and staff on Friday afternoon.

The transitional shelter, in the former Boys and Girls Club, will close next week and the final four residents sleeping in tents in the gym will be moved to other



ART SHOW

The Transitionz

Art Exhibition

MARCH 24TH 6 – 9PM

MARCH 25TH 12 – 6PM

512 YATES ST. VICTORIA

Admission by Donation

All Art Available for Purchase









