



**Temporary Modular Housing
New Beginnings at Heather Lands
Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting Notes**

March 7, 2019, 5:30 to 6:20pm | VPL Terry Salman Branch

1. Welcome and Introductions

- a) The Facilitator welcomed CAC members and led a brief round of introductions.

2. Review Action Items from Last Meeting

- a) Action Item 1: The Facilitator and the City of Vancouver will ensure that the contact number for the building is on the City's website and is circulated with the meeting notes.
- The Facilitator confirmed that the building contact number has been circulated and is on the City's website on the New Beginnings page.
- b) Action Item 2: The City will determine whether a site tour can be arranged for a temporary modular housing (TMH) site that had not yet been tenanted. This tour would be geared to people who did not have the opportunity to take the tour of New Beginnings.
- **Response from City of Vancouver**: There was a public event last Sunday to celebrate the completion and permitting of the final TMH site at Union and Gore. The event was an hour-long celebration that included a building tour. Unfortunately, the opportunity for a TMH site tour has passed.
 - **Comment from Lu'ma Native Housing Society**: We are going to host a community event when the weather is better. However, in order to preserve tenant privacy there will not be a tour during this event.
- c) Action Item 3: CAC members will exchange contact information amongst themselves to coordinate and communicate about topics such as donations and welcoming initiatives.
- The Facilitator confirmed with community members that they had exchanged contact information after the last CAC meeting.

- **Comment from Community Member:** L'école Jules-Verne has been participating and Eric Hamber Secondary has been collecting donations for coats, etc. and cash donations.
- d) Action Item 4: The City will report back on consultation activities for the schools and confirm whether they had been notified prior to the construction of the TMH site.
- **Comment from City of Vancouver:** City of Vancouver staff confirmed that they met with the school principals and PACs around the site. In addition, the TMH fact sheet was translated into French and sent to principals to distribute to parents. The translated fact sheet is available on the City's website. This was the engagement process for all schools located near TMH sites based on advice from the Vancouver School Board.
 - **Comment from PAC Member:** The principal of our school changed over the summer and this is my first year as president, so some information about the project may have been lost in the shuffle.
 - **Comment from the City of Vancouver:** If the new principal has questions, they can connect with the City of Vancouver CAC representative for New Beginnings and we can arrange a phone call.

3. Updates and Discussion

a) Lu'ma Native Housing Society

- Lu'ma reported that New Beginnings is almost fully occupied. The tenants and staff are getting along well.
- The co-ed building is running culturally-based programs such as dreamcatcher making and circle groups. They are also offering a facial mask workshop. The co-ed side will provide sign-up sheets to the women's building so that they can join in on the activities.
- The women's building has started to set up group activities for tenants.
- There have been no calls to the co-ed building from the community.
- A community member contacted the women's building with concerns about a tenant in distress. The staff responded promptly to address the concern and worked with the individual to address the situation and the tenant is okay now.
- **Question from Community Member:** Will programs for New Beginnings tenants be available to people who do not live in the building?
 - **Response from Lu'ma:** This is a possibility in the future. The women's building is starting a 16 Steps for Recovery and Empowerment group through Atira Women's Resource Society. We usually open this program to the community. In this case, the program would only be open to women since it is a women-only building.

- **Additional update from Lu'ma:** New Beginnings is working on a health collaboration that would bring in primary care, nurse practitioners, wound care and assistance, counselling and Raven Song Community Health Centre group healing work. There will be additional cultural and recreational activities added and GPs will be coming on site as well.

b) BC Housing

- BC Housing reported that things are going well with the tenanting process for New Beginnings. BC Housing is working with the New Beginnings Building Managers toward getting tenants settled in successfully.
- **Question from Community Member:** Do people apply to live in TMH and is there a waiting list?
 - **Response from BC Housing:** People can apply for TMH at Orange Hall (the BC Housing office located at East Hastings Street and Gore Avenue). Their applications go into a database with thousands of applicants. When selecting tenants for New Beginnings, we start by offering housing to Indigenous people who are homeless and live close to the site. We then work out in circles. Project partners review and discuss potential applicants around a tenanting table.
- **Question from Community Member:** Should TMH affect the upcoming homeless count?
 - **Response from BC Housing:** We hope so. Homeless counts have been rising and we think that TMH is wise practice for reducing homelessness. Our hope is that tenants stay longer than six months and get the stability and safety that they deserve.
- **Question from Community Member:** Does BC Housing allow pets?
 - **Response from BC Housing:** Most buildings allow pets. It depends on the breed, size and number of pets. There are some restrictions that depend on the policies of each individual building.
 - **Question from Community Member:** Are there a lot of pets coming into the building?
 - **Response from Lu'ma:** In the co-ed building there is one dog and maybe two cats.

c) City of Vancouver

- The Union and Gore TMH site (Nora Hendrix Place) is getting ready to open and will be final building for this phase of the project. This will bring us to 606 TMH units in the City of Vancouver.

- The City of Vancouver has been in touch with a teacher from Eric Hamber Secondary and Lu'ma Native Housing Society.
 - **ACTION ITEM 1:** The City of Vancouver will connect with Eric Hamber teacher to explore an opportunity for a presentation to students to provide more info on the stigma of homelessness.
 - **Question from Community Member:** Once you have presentation ready from the City, would you consider one for Sir Winston Churchill Secondary?
 - **Response from City of Vancouver:** There is a CAC for every TMH site. The operator and staff might be slightly different. We want to be conscious of staff time. If the presentation is successful at Eric Hamber, it could go out as a suggestion. There is a research study about TMH being conducted by BC Housing in consultation with the City. This study will explore the impact of TMH on the tenants. The final report will be available to the public.

- The City received an email from an alternate CAC member from Riley Park who wanted to know how to contact Lu'ma with some information regarding a grant. This inquiry may have referred to a proposed connection between New Beginnings and Riley Park Community Garden.
 - **Response from Lu'ma:** We have already applied for the Homelessness Action Week (HAW) grant to hold a barbecue and celebration.

d) Vancouver Coastal Health

- The Vancouver Coastal Health representative was absent.

e) Vancouver Police Department

- The Vancouver Police Department reported that there have been no major incidents at the building. There were a few calls to police from New Beginnings staff to report missing persons. These reports are common to all sites, as tenants are not used to having a place where they are permanently housed and will sometimes go off site for a few days. The VPD's Analyst pulled numbers from the areas surrounding the building and found that there was no statistical change in crime.

- **Question from Facilitator:** Lu'ma, can you speak to the policy around missing persons reports?
 - **Response from Lu'ma:** If a tenant does not show up at the building for a couple of days, staff will make a missing persons report to police in

order to support their wellbeing, as this is their last known address. If we have not seen a tenant in 16 hours we do a health check and after 48 hours we file a missing persons report. Tenants are aware of this process.

- **Comment from Vancouver Police Department:** These are standard policies across all sites. It lets us know to keep an eye out for tenants.
- **Comment from Lu'ma:** If you are homeless, there are not a lot of people looking for you.
- **Comment from Vancouver Police Department:** To my knowledge, everyone has been accounted for.

- **Question from Community Member:** Have there been police reports for resuscitation from opioid overdose?
 - **Response from Vancouver Police Department:** The VPD does not track or respond to these things. Responses to overdose come from the paramedics, and the VPD would not get involved unless paramedics feel unsafe. We are usually just there to keep the peace.
 - **Comment from Community Member:** I just hope everyone feels safe.

f) Community Members

- **Comment from Community Member:** I sent some information about the Vancouver Foundation's Neighbourhood Small Grants to Lu'ma in case any of the New Beginnings staff or tenants are interested in hosting community initiatives. The deadline is April 9th. If anyone from the building, community or schools needs flyers to promote the Neighbourhood Small Grants, I have some here. This is a good way for people to be empowered and inclusive if they want to be. I have been involved with Neighbourhood Small Grants for the last few years and 80-85% of people who apply will get something. If anyone needs help or a co-applicant, let me know and I can be a resource.

- **Comment from PAC Member:** To follow up on the discussion from last meeting, a community member was requesting whether students could make some cards for the tenants. I thought that was a great idea and I followed up with the principal of my school, who also thought it was great. However, the school had a measles outbreak and the plans to make cards went sideways.

- **Response from Community Member:** A teacher at Hamber has taken care of this request. There are now an additional 60 cards for tenants.

- **Comment from PAC Member:** Our school was also subject to this outbreak. We have donated some money and are doing a drive to collect coats. We have a teacher who wants to get involved with the TMH project. I will talk to her and get back to the group.

- **Comment and Question from Community Member:** I am also involved with Neighbourhood Small Grants. They offer \$500. Most, if not all applicants, receive a grant. What is the capacity of the New Beginnings site?
 - **Response from Lu'ma:** 98 people.
 - **Question from Community Member:** Is this the largest TMH site in the city?
 - **Responses around the table:** Larwill Place (610 and 620 Cambie Street) is the same size as New Beginnings. The capacity of the Reiderman Residence (7430 and 7460 Heather Street) is 78 people.

- **Comment and Question from Community Member:** I am very interested in the results of homeless counts in various communities across BC. I hope that we are housing and giving appropriate healthcare to people so that all citizens have the opportunity to live their lives to the fullest. I am glad that pets are allowed. Sometimes companions are the most important part. Are there units for couples?
 - **Response from BC Housing:** All TMH units are for single occupancy. Sometimes we offer couples units that are side by side.
 - **Question from Community Member:** To clarify, does New Beginnings have a women's and a men's building?
 - **Response from Lu'ma:** There is a co-ed building and a women's building.
 - **Comment from BC Housing:** We believe that the results of the study will demonstrate that the health outcomes of tenants are improving. We also hope that adhering to best practices and policies will demonstrate that projects like these are a wise investment for our communities.
 - **Comment from City of Vancouver:** In a way, housing is healthcare.

4. Action Items and Next Meeting

- a) The Facilitator checked in with CAC members to determine the frequency of meetings moving forward. After some discussion, the Facilitator proposed a bi-monthly meeting schedule, with the assurance that the group could convene prior to the set meeting date if any important issues were to arise. CAC members were in favour of the shift to a bi-monthly meeting schedule.

b) **ACTION ITEM 2**: The next meeting will be set for May. An invitation will be sent out to CAC members once the date and meeting space have been confirmed.

c) Summary of action items:

Action Items	Responsible
1. The City of Vancouver will connect with Eric Hamber teacher to explore an opportunity for a presentation to students to provide more info on the stigma of homelessness.	City of Vancouver
2. The next meeting will be set for May. An invitation will be sent out to CAC members once the date and meeting space have been confirmed.	Lu'ma Native Housing Society