

Public Hearing Correspondence Case

Case created: 2022-06-14, 10:14:00 PM

Channel: WEB

Incident Location

Address: 311 UNADDRESSED LOCATION, VANCOUVER, VAN 311

Address2:

Location name:

Original Address: 311 UNADDRESSED LOCATION

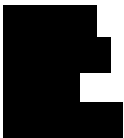
Request Details

- 1. Subject (address if applicable):**
1410 East King Edward Avenue
- 2. Position:**
Support
- 3. Comments:**
I'm strongly in support of this project. We need a lot more social housing in this city and this one is ideally located for allowing residents to improve their lives because of the close access to transit and nearby jobs and amenities. It's a great use of public land and shows great leadership from the province and city.
- 4. Neighbourhood:**
Downtown
- 5. Full name:**
Denis Trailin
- 7. Email:**
[REDACTED]
- 8. Subject classification:**
PH1 - 4. CD-1 Rezoning: 1406-1410 East King Edward Avenue

Additional Details

Contact Details

Name: Denis Trailin



Case Notes

Photo

- no picture -

Any web links (URLs) in this case have been altered so that they cannot be opened, as a security measure to protect against malicious links. If you believe a link to be safe please replace the "hxxp" at the beginning with "http" and open in a browser window. If you're unsure if the link is safe to open and you need to open it, please contact the Service Desk.

Good evening. My name is Kathleen Potter and I grew up in Vancouver. I've been a social worker for twelve years and am currently practicing on the downtown east side, although I've also had the opportunity to work in various communities throughout the Lower Mainland, Canada, and internationally. I'm here tonight to speak in support of the proposed supportive housing building at 1406 and 1410 King Edward Avenue. In my career I have witnessed firsthand the impact that a lack of safe and stable housing has on the most vulnerable and marginalized members of our society and, fortunately, I've also witnessed the positive impact supportive housing has had on both individuals and communities. You've heard and will continue to hear specific examples of the positive impact supportive housing has had, however I wanted to use my time to address some of the concerns identified by those living in neighbouring communities. Most people can agree that supportive housing is a positive thing for people experiencing homelessness, however the idea of these buildings going up in your neighbourhood can understandably cause some concern if you don't know the facts. I want to share with you some data on the impact of supportive housing and, particularly, the impact in the three main areas of concern for many people who oppose supportive housing in their neighbourhoods, which are: increased taxes and burden on the system, increased crime, and decreased property values.

According to the 2020 City of Vancouver homeless and supportive housing strategy, the average cost to the system in health and/or corrections services for an individual experiencing homelessness was \$55,000 per year, while the average cost to the system for an individual in supportive housing was \$37,000 per year, which is a decrease of \$18,000 per individual per year (<https://council.vancouver.ca/20201007/documents/pspc1presentation.pdf>). Similarly, a 2001 BC Study found that taxpayers saved \$12,000 per year for every homeless person moved into supportive housing (<https://www.bchousing.org/publications/SROI-Analysis-Dedicated-Site-Supportive-Housing.pdf>). The City of Vancouver has also identified that, after six months in supportive housing, 94% of individuals remained housed, 84% identified improved overall wellbeing, 54% had improved access to employment, and 39% identified improvement in their addictions. What we can gather from this data is that supportive housing actually has the potential to decrease taxes in both the short and long run (<https://council.vancouver.ca/20201007/documents/pspc1presentation.pdf>).

What I've heard from many people is a concern about increased crime in the areas surrounding a supportive housing building, however the evidence indicates that typically the opposite is true. In Toronto, over a ten-year period between 1997 and 2006 the neighbourhood surrounding a supportive housing facility experienced a 27% drop in 9-1-1 calls, a 32% decrease in sexual assaults, an 11.5% decrease in other assaults, and a general decline in breaking and entering and theft (https://uknowledge.uky.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1156&context=mpampp_etds). According to a 2018 longitudinal study of housing status and crime in a homeless population, recent crime was consistently higher in groups who were homeless relative

to groups who were housed, and crime rates fell after obtaining housing (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30372505/>). A 2013 study from Simon Fraser University on the impact of the Housing First model on criminal behaviour among formerly homeless adults with mental disorders where 67% of individuals had previous involvement with the justice system showed that “scattered site” housing first, which is to say low income or supportive housing in sites across a large geographic area, was associated with significantly lower numbers of sentences than if these individuals had remained homeless. The scattered site piece is particularly important, as congregate housing first was associated with only a marginally significant reduction in sentences (<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0072946>). What this tells us is that by spreading social and supportive housing across our communities we avoid ghettoization and foster diversity within all of our communities. Likewise it allows people experiencing homelessness to remain in the communities in which they already live.

The final area of concern I want to address is property values. In a 2018 BC study, professional appraisers tracked the impact of seven social housing projects across the lower mainland, Vancouver Island and the interior. In every case, neighbours opposed the projects because they feared their property values decline, thus threatening their investment. Over five years the appraisers tracked sale prices among nearby houses, and compared those to a control area. The study found house prices near the controversial projects increased as much or more than houses in the control area. In addition, there was no evidence of panic selling, or of houses taking extraordinarily long times to sell (<https://www.bchousing.org/publications/Property-Values-Case-Study-Overview-Report.pdf>). A study in Denver showed that the proximity of a single family home property to a subsidized housing site had an independent positive effect on the selling price (Santiago, Anna M., George C. Galster, and Peter Tatian. 2001. *Assessing the property value impacts of the dispersed housing subsidy program in Denver*. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 20 (1): 65-88., and in 31).

At the end of the day all of these studies indicate that supportive housing buildings are actually a positive for their immediate neighbourhoods and communities as well as the people living in them. Given this it's difficult not to think that opposition to supportive housing buildings comes from an emotional rather than rational place and I would encourage those of you who are here tonight to oppose this building to think about why you feel so strongly and whether any of the evidence I have presented to you might help ease some of your anxieties.