

15 MILLION DOLLAR SHELTER & SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROPOSAL

UPDATE TO THE CITIZENS OF MAPLE RIDGE: ADVISORY COMMITTEE PRESENTS STATUS REPORT TO BING AND DALTON

MANDATE

The Citizens Advisory Committee has been tasked with recommending a site for a \$15M purpose built shelter and supportive housing facility to be built by BC housing in Maple Ridge. The group felt strongly that the “where” could not be determined without the “what” and therefore extended its mandate to provide strong recommendations about the operations and building structure itself.

We were instructed by our local MLAs to use as our guide, public input, as outlined below:

- Close to 16,000 signatures on two petitions against earlier shelter proposals.
- 800 people who attended a public rally against the Quality Inn.
- Several hundred emails and telephone calls that came into the two local constituency offices.
- Neighborhood canvassing conducted by MLAs Bing and Dalton.
- Advertised coffee meetings and meetings by appointment at the MLA offices.
- Comment cards filled out by 700 plus citizens at the MLA’s Have Your Say meeting.

LOCATION

The committee considered 15 sites in Maple Ridge. Using the criteria articulated in our report, we have forwarded a location recommendation to BC Housing.

WHERE WE STAND TODAY

The location recommendation is now in the hands of BC Housing. BC Housing will undertake due diligence and if the site is deemed acceptable, the location will move to the MLA’s for decision. If the recommended site moves forward it will trigger discussions with the City of Maple Ridge and other partners. If all approvals are forthcoming, the property will then be placed under contract.

PUBLIC INPUT WILL TAKE PLACE

Once the property is secured under interim agreement, it will become public. It will then proceed through the zoning process; where public input will take place.

Failure to properly address legal matters and announcing the property before it is under contract could kill the deal. It could also end up costing taxpayers significantly more money. Property prices can be inflated when sellers realize they are dealing with government.

If the location is not deemed satisfactory, we would expect this committee would be reconvened to bring forth another location. Please remember that a significant part of committee efforts have been directed, not only to location, but to a model that mitigates impact to the surrounding communities while meeting the needs of residents.

Recommendation highlights

- No low barrier shelter
- No downtown location
- No location on Lougheed Highway or Dewdney Trunk Road
- One shelter, one operator
- Site selected should be away from single-family residences
- Crime that supports addiction will not to be tolerated
- Curfews will be in place with no in/out privileges past certain hours
- Non-profit group to provide oversight
- Citizens group to liaise with neighborhood

For our shelter residents

Emphasis has been placed on provision of assessments, individual case management and a full suite of healthcare services designed to meet individual needs. Disability, mental illness and substance use disorders, in particular, should be managed in a manner befitting current evidence-based medical standards of care. Also...

- **Access to treatment on demand, based on community resources and availability.**
- **Path to life skills training and back to work programs, based on availability**
- **Access to public transportation, services and emergency services**

These highlights touch on the key points raised by citizens. Please see the full report online: www.MapleRidgeCitizensVoice.com.

Committee Members:

CHRISTINE BICKLE, CHAIR
DARIN FROESE
LISA SULLIVAN
SANDY MACDOUGALL

JESSE STRETCH
ROB THIESSEN
DR. PAUL BECKETT

Please visit:

www.MapleRidgeCitizensVoice.com

Read committee members’ full biographies and access the committee’s comprehensive report and status update regarding the proposed shelter recommendations.

You can email us with any questions you may have at: info@mapleridgecitizensvoice.com