

1.3 Proposal

The proposal involves the removal of five existing seniors' rental buildings that have reached the end of their useful lifespan and their replacement with two modern wood-frame buildings of four and five storeys in height with underground parking. Given the site location, its gentle grade, and its proximity to a range of seniors support services, as well as the Society's present resources and strong capacity for seniors housing management, this is a valuable opportunity to optimize the site's density and unit provision.

1.4 Process

In the early 2000s, the District of West Vancouver and the Society agreed to "master plan" the Kiwanis site. The 2006 completion of Kiwanis Manor represented the first step in actualizing this vision, and the two proposed new buildings on the north side of the site will complete the site work as it was then conceived. The Society is looking to ensure that it can act upon this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to replenish its stock of affordable seniors housing in West Vancouver, while planning for the growing demands of the future and remaining responsive to the sensibilities of urban growth within the District of West Vancouver.

Kiwanis Seniors Housing Society of West Vancouver is submitting a Development Application which includes a request for an OCP amendment and rezoning. The OCP amendment pertains to the introduction of a five-storey building which was not envisaged in the original OCP, but has been provided for under a BC Building Code change within the last two years. The rezoning requests an increase in density from 1.15 FSR to 1.5 FSR in order to optimize the site's potential to deliver affordable seniors' rental units on a centrally located site, while remaining in accordance with the 1.5 FSR already allotted to the immediately adjacent site owned by Vancouver Coastal Health.

From the earliest stages of the latest design, several meetings have been held with District staff to identify potential issues and opportunities that might impact the completion of the Master Plan. On March 4th, 2011, the submission was reviewed and discussed in detail, with the District issuing a detailed schedule outlining the requirements to be fulfilled by the Society. The proposal was in front of the Design Review Panel on March 31, and has successfully undergone an Accessibility Design Review on June 30. At the District-sponsored community consultation (April 27), as previously undertaken during the Manor process, the Society communicated its proposed redevelopment plans for to its neighbors and other community stakeholders. The project will go before Council on July 25, 2011, followed by an appearance before the DRC in September.

The Society has informed all of its tenants of the proposed plan to complete the site redevelopment. The tenants currently residing in the housing to be replaced will be the Society's first priority when seeking new tenants for Kiwanis Court, Kiwanis Manor, and the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority buildings managed by Kiwanis at 2154-2156 and 2175 Haywood Avenue. Tenants who must temporarily move as a result of the redevelopment have also been informed that the Society will pay their moving costs and reconnection fees both upon departing and upon returning to the Kiwanis site.

It is most cost effective for the Society to build both of the proposed new buildings at the same time. It would also benefit the tenants if the construction process were consolidated, reducing the timeline during which disruptions could be expected on the Kiwanis site. However, depending on circumstances the Society may be obliged to construct one building at a time; although this would not be the best option, it remains achievable.

The Society hopes that Council and staff may be able to assist in expediting the approval process in order to take advantage of the current low costs for lending, labour, and materials. It is anticipated it will take three to four months to prepare the Building Permit drawings and specifications, and to get approval of the Building Permit from the District. Based on an estimated 16- to 18-month construction period, the Society hopes to open its new stock of affordable housing to the District of West Vancouver's low-income seniors sometime in the spring or summer of 2013.

