

Multi-Family Affordable Rental Housing Project Info Session #1 Summary

Wednesday, April 24th, 5:30pm – 8:00pm at MIB Community Centre classrooms

Community attendees: 34 adults, 4 kids/babies

Staff presenting: Lorna Stewart, Housing Manager; Norman Point, Floor Manager of Lands, Capital & Housing; Denis Loeppky, Housing Consultant; Kim Guerin, A/Lands Manager; Dena Klashinsky, A/Lead, Policy & Planning; Larissa Grant, Referrals, Research & Engagement Coordinator; Courtenay Gibson, Floor Manager of Community Services; Jessica Carson, Community Planner; Tanja Oswald, UBC Planning student researcher, Lesli Boldt, Communications consultant

Session Overview

After a tasty meal of salad and shepherd's pie, the engagement team gave a presentation about how all development on MIB reserve lands is guided by objectives, policies, and procedures detailed in our Comprehensive Community and Land Use Plans, and governed by the Land Code. Musqueam's development permitting process was explained, and an overview of the proposed multi-family affordable rental project was provided. Please refer to the presentation materials in the MIB Member's Section of <https://www.musqueam.bc.ca/> for more information.

After the presentation, attendees were encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback. High-level notes from the discussion are summarized below, grouped into themes.

Details about Proposed Project

- MIB was successful in application to BC Housing for affordable rental housing project on IR #2 - the 1st time ever that such funding available for on reserve housing. MIB project is the highest-value on reserve project selected in first round.
- approx. 74 units proposed - all rental for MIB members and their families, 1-4 bedrooms, apartments and townhouses, on Crown Place.
- will include daycare facility that will accommodate TBD number of children.
- affordable rental housing funded by Province - as per BC Housing requirements, rent will be geared to income - based on 30% of gross household income; units will be determined by family size.

Q. When is the project supposed to start?

A. We hope to break ground by early 2020 but first, we're conducting due diligence and holding community engagements in May (summary of study findings/ soliciting community feedback) and June (conceptual designs), present reports and recommendations to Land Code Cttee and Chief & Council, seek project approval and, if approved, hold additional engagements to determine specifics around designs and operations.

Q. Will there be units for people with disabilities/ accessibility/ health needs and if so, how many? Will this be considered during the design of the units?

A. The proposed project will have at least 10% accessible units and other special needs will be examined, in collaboration with the Health Department, as part of review and design process.

Q. I have a 3 bedroom unit currently. Do we have options for more bedrooms than our family size, like for guests and kids visiting?

A. Unit sizes will be allocated based on sizes of families (e.g. 2 parents with one child would get a 2 bedroom unit). The intention is to alleviate current overcrowding and provide critically-needed affordable rental housing. In order to meet funding eligibility requirements, bedrooms will need to be utilized at all times.

Q. Who is the developer? Will the Band be involved in the development and will members be employed?

A. Aquilini was the successful bidder. We will use Musqueam tradespeople as much as possible - this is built into the agreement with the developer.

Q. I lived in Native housing, and I am wondering if we will be able to make the units in these buildings sound-proof?

A. Yes, sound-proofing will be considered in the design. We have funding available to build to high standards and will include such things as air conditioning, air filtration systems, and sound-proofing.

Q. Will there be secure parking?

A. Yes, there will be secure underground parking to meet the needs of all residents.

Management and Enforcement

Q. I live in BC Housing right now. Would I be able to move back to the community? What would be the process? Will I have to submit paperwork about income each year, as I do now?

A. The Musqueam Housing Authority (MHA) will manage the units. Applications for tenancy will be reviewed according to a clear and fair process established by the MHA, in alignment with BC Housing guidelines. Yes, tenants will have to submit paperwork to confirm income on an annual basis. If family circumstances change (e.g. job loss or gain), rental costs can be reassessed.

Q. Will it be the same rules as BC Housing re: tidiness, cleanliness, and derelict vehicles? What if people are parking all over the place? Will they send a notice and fine us if we don't obey rules? Would units be smoke-free and pet-free?

A. The rental housing will be managed by the Musqueam Housing Authority. The Authority will create rules and policies, based on BC Housing policies and customized to Musqueam. We want this to be a model project, so rules will be strictly and consistently enforced through warnings, fines, and if necessary, eviction.

Q. Is the Musqueam Housing Authority active now? If so, why is the Authority not enforcing bylaws in community now? E.g. tidiness, derelict vehicles and boats on the road, carving. Would they be Musqueam enforcement officers? Or BC Tenancy Act officers?

A. The Musqueam Housing Authority is in the process of being activated, and it will be mandated to manage this project, specifically. Rules and regulations will be built into the tenant agreements. BC

Housing will be assisting us in putting these policies and procedures in place, in line with the Musqueam Land Code. A building manager will be on site to collect rents and make sure everyone is following rules.

With regard to overall bylaw enforcement on the reserve, MIB doesn't currently have Bylaw enforcement officers but as we develop laws under the Land Code, enforcement will be a top priority.

Q. Can the Musqueam Housing Authority set up their own meetings with community so that they can hear our concerns?

A. Great idea.

Q. Who is part of the Housing Authority?

A. It's not active yet as a not-for-profit society but it will be activated soon and we will share more information as soon as it's available.

Site

Q. Are other sites being considered other than Crown site? What about the mal'ay foreshore lands, or Triangle lands? What about the Shalimar site? Could we split up the project?

A.

- Chief & Council approved the funding proposal which identifies Crown Place as the development site. We are now doing our due diligence studies for that location. We are conducting studies to examine other potential locations, in the event that the Crown Place site is unsuitable.
- Many sites are not viable for this project and/or within this time frame.
- The mal'ay lands (at Musqueam Av and Mali Ave) were designated for multi-family in the Land Use Plan but there are environmental/ flood mitigation considerations that need to be explored. Musqueam is on low-lying lands and sea levels are rising so we are doing studies to understand flood risks and water management considerations.
- According to the Land Use Plan, Parcel K (Triangle Lands) requires a comprehensive planning process and consideration of mixed-use options. There's a creek which requires a buffer, so available lands are not as big as you'd think. When bringing community members home, we talk about bringing them back into the heart of the community, and Parcel K is away from where everybody else lives.
- We have legal agreements with leaseholders, so all leased lands are tied up until the leases expire.

Q. Isn't there a creek near Crown Place?

A. We're aware of the creek and have factored in a 'no development' buffer around the creek.

Q. Why do we want to densify one area and tear down the old gym, a landmark? Can't the gym be renovated?

A. We're at the very beginning of the process and are looking at all site and design options. We have a tiny land base and a young, growing population. We have a responsibility to maximize land use, to meet current and future needs. Because the old gym is in a major state of disrepair, renovations would not be viable or cost efficient, but we do plan to save the engraved beams and re-use them in some way.

Musqueam Housing

Q. When will there be homes or condos available for ownership on MIB lands? I don't want to rent. Many members living off-reserve are willing and can pay taxes and mortgages.

A. Right now, we have this opportunity for multi-family affordable rental housing. We currently do not have very much undeveloped on-reserve land. Logical next steps may include condominiums available for purchase but we don't know at the moment.

Q. How many people are on the priority housing list? How will this affect the waitlist? Why does a person move down on the housing priority list?

A. There are 300+ people on the list. If you are approved for a rental unit, your name will stay on the list. The priority list is based on date of application. A person's name cannot be moved up or down.

Q. I have a home on reserve and grown children with kids who do not have a home. I don't need a single-family home. Is there an opportunity to apply to be in a 1 bedroom apartment?

A. Yes, but you cannot apply for an affordable rental if you own a home/ land. You would have to transfer ownership of your home, perhaps to your kids, and then apply.

Community Member Attendee Statements

- I respect where concerns are coming from about density, but if you could see where I live off-reserve... very high density. I want to come home. I want my kids and grandchildren to come home.
- I think it's dangerous to be living in the city – shootings, drugs – we don't think about the safety of our community members, especially women. I feel for my nieces and nephews who live off-reserve.
- In the past, band members lived more spread out and agreed to return lands to the Band to create the first 40 homes.
- Lots of people here want to work and mentor others – carvers, security, etc.
- I'm a single father living in the Downtown Eastside with a lot of bad stuff going on around us – overdoses, drug use. I just want to come home and I want my kids to be here. I hope this development happens.
- My kids also live downtown. There are needles down there, it's not a safe place.
- There should be buy-ins like damage deposits for the project so that people are held accountable.
- We'd better start enforcing bylaws now. Need to ensure beautification and parking and traffic management.
- I think the Parcel K lands should be mixed use with Band member housing.
- I'm really proud of our staff and administration for thinking outside the box. I think the Housing Department should do a study to show us all the phases of housing on-reserve. Back in the day, we didn't plan for the growth in population. It's hard to find affordable housing now – my kids are paying a lot for rentals off-reserve. We need to start thinking into the future, change is inevitable.
- I'd be proud seeing a project like this with everyone living in a traditional style again, like in a longhouse.
- This is taking care of our community and giving people the opportunity to come home.