

Presentation to CRD/CRHD

Hospitals and Housing Committee:

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The Neighbourhood Association for Hillside-Quadra**

A Neighbourhood Driven Community Hub at 950 Kings is Essential to the Health of Hillside- Quadra and Area Residents

Background

Urban Renewal in Late 1960s

- Dozens of single family homes bulldozed
- Blanshard Street constructed/opens
- Construction and implementation of the Capital Region's largest concentrated low income housing project, Evergreen Terrace (formerly Blanshard Court) with over 200 units housing well over 500 people including many children, youth and families
- Blanshard Elementary Opens
- Blanshard Elementary opens and creates vibrant community hub on 7 acres

Neighbourhood Response Mid 70s to 2019

- 1976 Quadra Village Community Centre Opens to Work with the neighbourhood to address the significant poverty and social issues present in a newly displaced neighbourhood with concentrated low income housing.
- Quadra Village Community Centre allowed access starting in mid-70s to the Blanshard Elementary Gym to run proactive programs including healthy recreation

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for children and youth, primarily from disadvantaged backgrounds. Eventually QVCC starts operating Quadra Village Neighbourhood Gym.

- Ongoing neighbourhood association work through Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Action Committee and Downtown Blanshard Advisory to help work towards the healthiest community possible
- 1995 Neighbourhood Plan adopted by the City of Victoria in 1998 (School District said it had no plans to close the Blanshard School)
- Late 1990s early 2000s: Quadra Village renewal
- Early 2000s to present Quadra Village Day: Building and Celebrating Our Healthy Community
- Current: Busiest Community Centre in the City, Operating the Quadra Village Neighbourhood Gym.
- Current: Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Action Committee faces enormous pressures due to the pace of densification in the area
- 2018 to Present: Community Hub proposed for 950 Kings and work/consultation towards this begins
- City of Victoria Council support community amenities at 950 Kings with park like spaces in response to public pressure for a neighbourhood driven community hub at 950 Kings.

This Neighbourhood Has Taken on More Than Its Share of Regional Responsibility, Particularly in Bay/Hillside/Quadra/Blanshard

- Blanshard Street
- Blanshard Court/Evergreen Terrace 191 Units of Concentrated Low Income Housing with over 500 residents present day
- 320 Complex Care Hospital Beds (project rejected by Oak Bay)
- 21 Units Transitional Housing (2020 completion)

Health of the Neighbourhood Threatened

- Blanshard Elementary School Closes on 2nd attempt after School District 61 school boundaries redrawn to help justify the closure

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- School District 61 Sells 955 Hillside to the CRHD Without Notice. Summit at Quadra Village Will be Completed in 2020.
- School District 61 Negotiates to Sell 950 Kings to CRHD Without Notice. Short consultation happens after the sale in which neighbourhood expresses its disagreement. SD 61 response indicates no need to reopen Blanshard Elementary despite the belief of the neighbourhood and evidence to the contrary.
- 2017: CRHD Board Passes Motion for Planning Committee Related to 950 Kings, Evergreen Terrace and SJ Willis Grounds. Committee specifically is supposed to include Downtown Blanshard Advisory Committee (DBAC) but DBAC not included despite being the neighbourhood association for Hillside-Quadra.
- 2016-2019 CRD Staff state repeatedly that the CRD mandate is to build housing and the CRHD mandate is to build hospitals. The feedback is that there is no room for all or part of a community hub concept
- Combined Developed Goes to Hospitals and Housing Committee for 150 Unit Housing and 52 unit Hospital Development with Surface Parking.

Solutions

Why a Neighbourhood Driven Community Hub is the Answer

- A large percentage of children, youth and families cannot afford and cannot get to mainstream recreational opportunities that are not close by. Many families can't afford transportation and biking can be dangerous for children in the area. As a result if it isn't within a reasonable walk, children and families won't get there.
- 950 Kings has combined with the Community Centre to help reduce the pressure in this quadrant of the neighbourhood. Without this space the neighbourhood and its children will be at risk.
- The neighbourhood is already taking on increasing levels of densification, the Blanshard School site has the capacity to have new amenities like 60 daycare spaces, a water park, library, park like greenspace and other spaces relevant to the neighbourhood and surrounding community. As well neighbourhood spaces can be maintained.

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- Accomplishing these goals does not fit with the CRD/CRHD mandates, so the CRD/CRHD needs to renovate its mandates (unlikely due to legislative change needed) and sell 950 Kings to the City of Victoria so the community hub can be realized and the health of the neighbourhood can be maintained