

PeaceArch news

VOICE OF WHITE ROCK AND SOUTH SURREY
www.peacearchnews.com

Black Press
Tuesday

April 15, 2014 (Vol. 39 No. 30)

Helping hand:
Eversafe Ranch founders are asking for the community's help to bring in much-needed household items for families transitioning from Surrey shelters.

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Signing bonus

Former Vancouver Canucks captain Trevor Linden, who was named the team's new president of hockey operations last week, signs a jersey for Cloverdale's Jeeya Sharma, 2, and her mother, Kavita, during the pre-opening of Orangetheory Fitness at Peninsula Village in South Surrey April 13. Linden is part-owner of the business.

Boaz Joseph photo



Eight-storey care facility approved by White Rock council in February

Court asked to topple seniors project

Tracy Holmes
Staff Reporter

Residents of a White Rock condo complex unhappy with council's recent go-ahead for an eight-storey care facility immediately south of their building are asking the courts to quash the bylaw amendment that cleared the way.

In a petition filed in B.C. Supreme Court in New Westminster, Belaire strata president Dennis Andrew Lypka and neighbour George William Holmes also ask for costs, and for a declaration that the developer of the 199-bed project at 1550 Oxford St. – Evergreen Baptist Care Society – be required to apply for a major-development permit. Belaire residents questioned the lack of such a permit from the get-go.

According to the petition, council

violated the city's Official Community Plan and its procedures bylaw in not requiring the major-development permit.

"It is not within the jurisdiction

of council to enact a bylaw which is inconsistent with the relevant Official Community Plan," it states.

The Evergreen project – located immediately north of a site being

eyed for two residential highrises (see sidebar) – has been the subject of much angst since it was announced by Fraser Health last October. Evergreen's executive

director Stephen Bennet confirmed in February that the plan had been the subject of confidential discussions for about six months prior.

Following a public hearing that stretched over two evenings, council voted 4-2 on Feb. 24 to give third and final readings to zoning amendment bylaw No. 2045.

Couns. Helen Fathers and Al Campbell voted against the amendment, with Campbell stating he had concerns with the process that was followed. He agreed with opponents that the development will be detrimental to its neighbours.

City manager Dan Bottrill said Monday he is unable to comment on the petition, given it is a legal matter. He did say it didn't come as a surprise, and that the city would be filing its response this week.

Towers plan becomes hot topic

Tracy Holmes
Staff Reporter

An idea to build two highrises near the top of White Rock's Oxford Street got mixed, sometimes-heated, reaction Wednesday during a public-information meeting hosted at First United Church.

Those in favour of the project – suggested as 21- and 24-storey buildings with nearly an acre of

preserved green space – cited the need to build higher given the limited land in White Rock; a desire to see positive change in the city; and the benefit to the city's tax base.

Opponents – the majority of those who spoke – expressed concern with traffic impact; that it doesn't fit with the city's Official Community Plan; and that it is too high.



Tracy Holmes photo

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Two sides heard at public meeting.

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perspectives

...on the Semiahmoo Peninsula

Eversafe Ranch asks for more items to help families leaving shelters

Spring appeal for household items

Jennifer Lang
Black Press

An organization that helps some of Surrey's most vulnerable residents start new lives is now reaching out for help.

With spring-cleaning season in full swing, Eversafe Ranch has launched an urgent appeal for donations of gently-used items that will help women and children leaving shelters furnish their new homes.

"We need furniture, small appliances, tea kettles, coffee makers, microwaves - things that are in good working condition," said Judy Daser, who founded Eversafe Ranch with her husband, Alan, in 2008.

The charity provides free furniture and household items to families making the transition from shelters and secondary housing - mostly women and children fleeing abuse.

They move two to three families in Surrey, White Rock, Langley and Delta, each week, at no charge.

The people are referrals from Atira Women's Resource Society, the Surrey Association for Community Living, Metis Family Services, Work BC, local churches and word of mouth.

"We're not even touching the need," Judy said, adding they get calls from as far away as New Westminster and Vancouver. "We don't go that far. There's nobody else doing this."

Alan Daser, who works full time, drives the truck (itself a donation from Union Gospel Mission) and delivers the furniture and goods, along with a volunteer. Judy joined them on a recent job helping a mother and her son move into a new residence.

"It was an empty apartment," Judy said. "She had nothing. She was starting with nothing."

Their mission has grown from



Judy and Alan Daser say there's an urgent need for household items for families leaving Surrey shelters.

hosting informal barbecues in a neighbourhood alleyway in North Surrey, where they gave away clothing and household items, into a registered charity that operates a thriving Cloverdale thrift shop at 5641 176A St. to support initiatives.

Items are priced to remain within reach to people on fixed incomes, such as seniors and the working poor. It's a hive of activity that attracts regulars of every

description.

"You get to talk, and you hear their life stories," Judy said, describing a wide-ranging clientele that includes single parents, savvy bargain hunters, homeless people, and Cloverdale residents on fixed incomes.

"They don't have a lot of money. It's tough for them. I hear it a lot," she said. "People who are homeless - we just give them what they need."

The store doesn't make much money, once the rent and bills are

paid. "It just helps us reach more people."

A crowd-funding web page (www.gofundme.com/eversafe) has been set up to help Eversafe reach its goals. Big ticket items are a 22-seat bus to transport families to their dinners and community events, such as the Christmas dinner that hosted more than 100 people, and a new sign for the thrift store.

The expansive Surrey property they were leasing is being redeveloped, so Eversafe is looking

for space elsewhere to host its picnics and family fun days and re-open Doolittle's Animal Rescue.

On a smaller scale, the Dasers are also hoping to send at least 30 children who are currently living in shelters or secondary housing to recreation programs this summer.

"You would be surprised to see just how many children are living in shelters in Surrey," Judy said.

Heather Woolley of Atira Women's Resources Society said the Dasers provide a unique service to the clients and to social service agencies like Atira which operates transition houses and secondary housing complexes, including six in Surrey.

"We don't have facilities or trucks or storage, so [Eversafe] does all that for us," Woolley said. "When someone's leaving one of our shelters, they provide them with furniture, household goods, food, clothing - everything they need to set up their home."

The need is vast. "We had 8,000 women and children through our program last year," she said.

Last year the charity provided Christmas hampers and gifts for the kids and some of the moms, in addition to hosting an evening with Santa and a Thanksgiving dinner - helping spread good cheer to people who wouldn't qualify for other programs because they lacked an address, Woolley added.

"We are so grateful for Alan and Judy and their group for what they do for our women."

Items needed include:

Small household appliances such as toasters, microwaves and coffee makers

Gently-used furniture (couches, tables, bed frames, lamps)

Linens, towels, dishes and cleaning supplies

Non-perishable food items for welcome baskets

Women's business attire

Gently-used children's bikes

Volunteers are also needed: call 604-341-1503 for more information.

"People who are homeless - we just give them what they need."

Judy Daser
co-founder

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