

The facts on Turning Point’s affordable housing and residential recovery services proposal

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| <p>Myth</p> <p><i>There is no need for Turning Point’s services in Richmond</i></p> | <p>Fact</p> <p><i>This statement is incorrect. There is a great need for the affordable housing and residential recovery services that Turning Point is proposing in Richmond.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The May 2002 Richmond Homelessness Needs Assessment and Strategy, states that “Richmond has little housing and inadequate support for many of its most vulnerable citizens,” including individuals with addictions and mental health issues. The report states that “individuals and families have few alternatives except to search for accommodation in Vancouver, Surrey or further away.” • The Richmond Integrated & Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions System (RICAS) planning committee has identified a lack of supportive housing and the increase of individuals with mental health and addictions issues as the two most significant social issues affecting Richmond. A survey undertaken by the three largest providers of addictions services in Richmond registered over 120 requests for addictions housing from Richmond residents from July to October 2006. • The City of Richmond’s Official Community Plan (OCP) recognizes the need for a more diversified range of housing choices and the need for increased affordable housing and supportive housing in the City. • The City of Richmond’s 2007 Affordable Housing Strategy identified the City’s number one affordable housing priority as the need to develop 73 affordable "subsidized" housing units a year. Subsidized housing would be for “the homeless, people with addictions, the mentally challenged, single parents with limited income, seniors on fixed pensions, persons with disabilities, families requiring subsidies for specific reasons, etc.” • Vancouver Coastal Health has confirmed that affordable addictions housing is a very high priority in Richmond. Currently, there are 130 individuals waiting for these housing units in the City. |
| <p>Myth</p> <p><i>Turning Point’s proposal will negatively affect property values in the neighbourhood.</i></p> | <p>Fact</p> <p><i>This is not true. Turning Point’s residences in Richmond and Vancouver have not affected the values of adjacent residential properties.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turning Point’s experience supports the results of various studies that demonstrate that housing values do not decrease due to the siting of a support recovery residence or facility similar in nature to that being proposed by the Society. • A literature review by CARMHA (Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addiction) at SFU showed that property values have not declined in neighbourhoods with supportive housing. The report looked at 18 different studies and found there was no significant effect on either the sales price of homes in the neighbourhood or on the number of sales.ⁱ |

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| <p>Myth</p> <p>Turning Point’s proposal will negatively affect the safety of the neighbourhood</p> | <p>Fact</p> <p>This statement is false. It also wrongly implies that Turning Point’s residents are somehow dangerous.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turning Point has been operating in Richmond for more than 15 years and in Vancouver since 1982 without incident. No incident report has ever been filed against Turning Point with the City of Vancouver in our 25 years of operations. • A review of complaints filed with the City of Vancouver’s Licenses and Inspection Department and the Vancouver Police Department for existing addictions and mental health supported housing demonstrated that concerns about personal safety, increased property crime or drug activity have not been substantiated.ⁱⁱ • In 25 years of experience with affordable addictions housing in Vancouver, there is no evidence that there has been an increase in crime in areas around these buildings.ⁱⁱⁱ |
| <p>Myth</p> <p>Turning Point should not be located on Ash street because it is close to schools, parks, and a liquor stores etc.</p> | <p>Fact</p> <p>Again, this statement is inaccurate. These types of concerns are unsubstantiated. They also wrongly imply that Turning Point’s residents are somehow dangerous.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turning Point residents are voluntary and have made a choice to actively participate in our program, engage in recovery from their addiction and live in an environment free from alcohol or drugs. • A January 2007 literature survey conducted by the Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addiction at SFU concluded that, “proposals to establish supportive housing typically encounter some degree of neighbourhood resistance – often expressed as fears regarding increased crime or declining property values. The opinions of neighbours have, however, been reported to change over time, with initial opposition being replaced by the view that residents of community housing facilities are good neighbours. Community studies suggest that there is no negative impact on safety or property values. Most residents are unaware of the presence of community residences in their neighbourhood.^{iv} • The literature survey concluded that there was no statistically significant evidence that supportive housing led to increased crime rates. In fact, “despite the diversity across studies, there is consistent support for the positive impact of housing on health and social outcomes for people with substance use and mental disorders. Moreover, evidence suggests that this type of housing can have a minimal (or even positive) impact on the neighbourhoods in which they are sited.^v |

End Notes

ⁱ City of Vancouver, Housing Centre, *Frequently asked Questions, October 2007:*

(<http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/housing/supportivehousingstrategy/faq.htm>)

ⁱⁱ City of Vancouver, Housing Centre, *Supportive Housing Strategy for Vancouver Coastal Health's Mental Health & Addictions Framework, June 2007:*

<http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/housing/supportivehousingstrategy/pdf/StrategyJune2007.pdf>.

ⁱⁱⁱ City of Vancouver, Housing Centre, *Frequently asked Questions, October 2007:*

(<http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/commsvcs/housing/supportivehousingstrategy/faq.htm>).

^{iv} The Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addiction, Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University, *Housing for People with Substance Use and Concurrent Disorders: Summary of Literature and Annotated Bibliography*, January 2007: Page 3.

^v The Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addiction, Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University, *Housing for People with Substance Use and Concurrent Disorders: Summary of Literature and Annotated Bibliography*, January 2007: Page 4.