

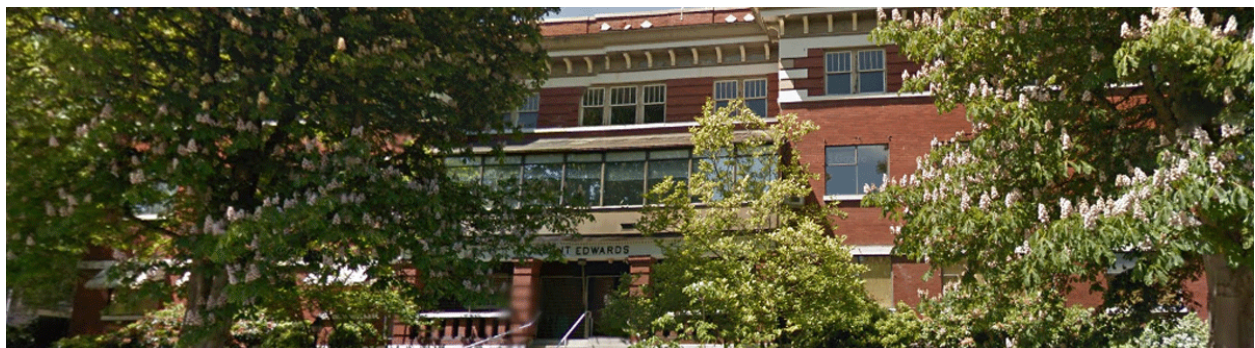


Dear Neighbours:

**Re: Mount Edwards – Update and Invitation to Community Meetings**

Victoria Cool Aid Society is now in a position to publicly discuss the proposed future use of Mount Edwards Court (1002 Vancouver Street). You are invited to join us at the following opportunities:

- Information Open House, **Tuesday, April 18 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm**, Cook Street Village Activity Centre, 380 Cook Street (parking lot entrance)
- Fairfield / Gonzales Community Association Land Use Committee community meeting, **Monday, April 24 at 7 pm**, Christchurch Cathedral School, 912 Vancouver Street



**Recent History**

Under contract with BC Housing, Cool Aid opened up the first floor of Mount Edwards Court (38 units) in February 2017, to provide transitional housing and support services to individuals who were living in the nearby camp located on the courthouse lawn. Since then we have housed and supported 60 individuals, assisting 18 of them to move on to permanent housing.

Some of the services Cool Aid is providing for the residents and neighbourhood are:

- Three support staff are on-site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- The building is accessible anytime **at 778-265-3456** or in person by going up to the building and pressing the doorbell.

- Two meals are provided daily for our residents.
- Health supports, including addiction counselling are on-site weekly.
- Life skills programming includes financial and budgeting education.
- Mount Edwards' residents participate in a "clean and safe" team, which picks up litter in the area near Mount Edwards Court.
- A full-time Client Services Worker (CSW) assists residents with goal setting and case planning, including help with securing permanent housing.

### **Proposed Future Uses**

Throughout the past year Cool Aid has continued to meet regularly with Cathedral School staff to address any concerns. Beginning last December Cool Aid and BC Housing have had a number of meetings with the school and its board to discuss how the future use of Mount Edwards could unfold. As a result of these discussions we have agreed to some changes on the profile of our residents as we prepare to rezone for the future use of this property:

- Residents will be 50+ years old (seniors).
- A screening tool will be utilized to ensure that the support needs of residents are low to moderate; this will include screening out anyone with a history of violence or predatory behavior.
- Anyone actively engaged in problematic substance use, particularly those using intravenous (IV) drugs will be screened out.

With respect to changes to the building, we are proposing the following:

- The second floor will be renovated in a similar fashion as the main floor to create supportive housing for an additional 40 residents.
- The third floor will be renovated to provide independent affordable apartments for 50+ seniors. We are still working with our architect on how many, but anticipate the number at about 15. The third floor renovation may be a longer term plan, dependent on the availability of funding.
- The commercial kitchen in the basement will be brought up to code so that we can create fresh and healthy meals for our senior residents on site. This will also allow us to expand life skill and employment opportunities for residents living at Mount Edwards.

- Finally, the building will designated heritage, and add-on features like the glass solarium on the second floor will be removed, restoring the look of the building to its historical roots.

We encourage you to come to the information open house on the 18<sup>th</sup> to speak to representatives from Cool Aid and BC Housing in person. You can also contact me directly – I will do my best to answer any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathy Stinson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kathy Stinson CPA, CMA, CIHCM  
Chief Executive Officer

(250) 414-4792  
kstinson@CoolAid.org