

Community League Meeting Re: Surplus Building Sites – Seniors Housing

Federation of Community League Building

September 5, 2012

Present: Wedgewood, Blue Quill, Brookview, Homesteader. Community Leagues

Tim Mc Arthur, Ray Jacob, Denise Gee, Brent Morrison City of Edmonton

Alan Bolstad, Bev Zubot . Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues

By 2040, there will be 1,000,000 people living in Edmonton. Therefore, we need to consider housing people differently. The City wants to build buildings on surplus school etc. sites, not on the adjacent shared space – only on the building envelope that was set aside years ago when the neighborhoods were first planned and developed. There are 19 vacant sites, 8 have been proposed for seniors housing. Recommendations for the other 11 sites are to still be determined.

Administration is proposing for Council's vote that new seniors housing be approved for the 8 vacant school sites – one in each quadrant of the City.

Seniors Housing supports:

1. More varied housing choices
2. It changes and adjusts the demographics in a neighborhood.
3. Takes advantage of existing infrastructure and servicing.
4. Provides infill residential development and achieves a more sustainable neighborhood, helps to diversify existing housing stock.

The number of seniors aged 80 and over will increase by 266% over the next 30 years. Seniors aged 55 – 64 will more than double. Therefore, new seniors housing is proposed for each quadrant to meet these needs. The idea is to allow seniors to remain in familiar areas. This allows new families to purchase homes no longer needed by seniors and thus, the neighborhood lives on.

The 8 proposed areas are Overlanders, Miller, Caernarvon, Wedgewood, Bulyea Heights, Kiniski Gardens, Sakaw, and Blue Quill.

What is proposed:

- Both market and affordable (10% less than market rate) seniors housing to support “Aging in Place”.
- Will be built by private and non-profit groups, NOT the City.
- Will require provincial funding to proceed.
- Apartments built from 3 to 4 stories tall
- Density up to 155 units /hectare.
- Requires builders to consult with the community on design before development permits issued.
- **Note – the City does not know when these will be built or by whom or what they will look like. That info comes out at the development permit stage.**

Provincial Funding

- Used to be lodge type housing
- Now there are more units that are 600 to 700 square feet – one bedroom or bed sitting units, also some dementia and assisted living units to support the Aging in Place idea. The funding will move in this direction. Units to accommodate wheelchairs and other mobility challenges and common facilities (dining rooms etc.) will already be built in. AHS will provide funds. These are called Supportive Living Facilities.

The City has never provided seniors housing – it has only provided the land. The Province has always provided funding for the build. Buildings would be like a cruise ship analogy – small sleeping quarters so that people stay together in the common areas most of the time. This is the current provincial thinking.

What they want from City Council:

1. Change the site zoning
2. Amend the statutory plans from school to seniors housing.
3. Remove the reserve designation from vacant building site only, not the adjacent open space.

Public meeting and information session to be held on Sept 12 at Central Lions Senior Centre from 4 to 8 in an open house format. Presentations will be at 5 and at 7. Stations will be set up for the individual sites so they are site specific and people will be able to share comments and concerns.

Question from us – Will City Council be voting on all of the sites at the same time or will they have input on each one and then vote on each one separately? We need to connect with Karen on this.

Apparently, quite often, they vote on an “all or nothing” basis. It is the understanding of the group of City Planners that the motions will all be put forward together under one bylaw.

After re- zoning, the process is that the land parcels are bought or leased by a developer who then applies for a development permit after consultation with the community. This is when specific questions (what will it look like and be like) can be asked and answered – not at the re-zoning stage.

Very important It was noticed that the map that was sent out to all Wedgewood residents shows the building in the wrong place. Corrected maps will be given out at the information session on September 12.

Respectfully submitted,

Wedgewood Ravine Community League