



**To:** General Purposes Committee **Date:** September 8, 2009  
**From:** Cathryn Volkering Carlile **File:** 08-4057-20--  
 General Manager – Community Services INBOX/Vol 01  
**Re:** **RESULTS OF CITY REVIEW: HORIZON HOUSE GROUP HOME EXPANSION**

**Staff Recommendation**

That Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) – Richmond, be advised that:

- 1) The City has no objection to the issuance of a Community Care Facility (CCF) license for the expansion of Horizon House Group Home from six to eight beds; and,
- 2) Nine months after issuance of the CCF license, City staff will contact neighbours of Horizon House for any further comments on the home, with Council, in turn, providing pertinent comments to VCH-Richmond.

Cathryn Volkering Carlile  
General Manager, Community Services  
(604-276-4068)

Att. 1

<b>FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY</b>		
<b>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</b> 		
<b>REVIEWED BY TAG</b>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>REVIEWED BY CAO</b>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

## Staff Report

### Origin

In March 2009, Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) – Richmond informed City staff that Horizon House Group Home had applied to increase its licensed capacity from six to eight beds. In accordance with the City's Group Home Planning Framework (originally adopted by Council on May 27, 2002, with minor housekeeping amendments being approved on May 25, 2009):

- Group homes for six or fewer people are permitted in all residential zones of Richmond and do not require a City neighbourhood notification process.
- Group homes for seven to ten residents (classified as Residential Care Facilities in the Richmond Zoning Bylaw) are permitted uses in all residential zones in Richmond, but are subject to:
  - separation criteria (i.e., new Residential Care Facilities are not permitted within 200 metres of an existing licensed or unlicensed group home); and
  - neighbourhood notification requirements (i.e., the City notifies neighbours within a five house radius of the proposed facility; provides them with pertinent background information; invites them to a neighbourhood information meeting; forwards pertinent City comments to VCH-Richmond; and conducts a follow up consultation with neighbours nine months after issuance of the CCF License).

A copy of the Group Home Planning Framework is presented in Attachment 1.

VCH-Richmond is responsible for issuing Community Care Facility (CCF) Licenses to group homes. The City is responsible for ensuring that municipal requirements are met (e.g., zoning, building, fire safety). *It must be stressed that, while the City can provide comments on a group home application to VCH – Richmond, it cannot preclude issuance of a CCF License if zoning and other applicable City requirements are satisfied.*

This report provides background on Horizon House, summarizes the results of the City's review and neighbourhood notification process for the proposed facility expansion, and recommends a City response to VCH – Richmond.

### Findings Of Fact

Horizon House is a licensed group home for six adults with mental health issues situated in the Bridgeport area of Richmond. It is owned and funded by Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) – Richmond, and is operated by a private contractor (Andre Chevalier), under the business name Horizon Facilities. It began operation in September, 2008, in a house that was originally constructed in 1987.

As indicated, in March 2009, VCH-Richmond informed staff that the operator was applying to have the home's licensed capacity increased from six to eight beds, thereby triggering the City's neighbourhood notification requirements. An overview of the neighbourhood notification process and City assessment for the proposed Horizon House expansion is provided below.

### Neighbourhood Notification Process

Staff from the City, in conjunction with VCH-Richmond, hosted a neighbourhood information meeting concerning the expansion proposal at Tait Elementary School on June 10, 2009. Invitation letters were sent to 32 households near Horizon House (substantially more than the five properties on either side of the home as required by City policy). Of the invitees, only two attended the information meeting. The two attendees asked various questions about the operation. And, while indicating that they were initially concerned when they learned about the home last fall, they acknowledged that Horizon House has generally been a good neighbour. Based on the attendees' comments, and the absence of other residents at the neighbourhood information meeting, it is concluded that Horizon House is not presenting concerns to the community.

### City Review

The Horizon House property is zoned R1/D, which allows Residential Care Facilities (group homes for 7 – 10 residents), provided that the homes are situated a minimum of 200 metres from other group homes. As no other group homes are within 200 metres of the property, the Horizon House expansion meets City zoning requirements.

The operator of Horizon House applied for a Building Permit, submitting plans for the expanded facility to the Building Division on July 17, 2009. The plans involve converting an office space into an additional bedroom and accommodating another bed in a large room currently occupied by one resident.

A joint City – Health inspection occurred in early August 2009. The operator was asked to attend to a number of minor requirements (e.g., complete drywall and caulking, install a shock arrestor for the piping for the washing machine). It is expected that the requirements will be satisfactorily addressed by mid-September, with final City inspection and approval occurring before the end of the month.

### **Financial Impact**

None

### **Conclusion**

In accordance with the Richmond Group Home Planning Framework, staff coordinated a neighbourhood notification process and City review of the application to expand the licensed capacity of Horizon House group home from six to eight beds.

The key points to note from the review are that:

- no neighbourhood opposition or concerns were identified regarding the proposed expansion;
- the expanded facility is consistent with City Zoning Bylaw requirements; and
- the operator is attending to minor requests identified by Building staff, with final approval expected to be granted in late September, 2009.

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In light of the foregoing, and when the upgrades to the home have passed final City inspection, it is recommended that Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) – Richmond, be advised that:

- 1) The City has no objection to the issuance of a Community Care Facility (CCF) license for the expansion of Horizon House Group Home from six to eight beds; and
- 2) Nine months after issuance of the CCF license, City staff will contact neighbours of Horizon House for any further comments on the home, with Council, in turn, providing pertinent comments to VCH-Richmond.



John Foster  
Social Planning Co-ordinator  
(604-247-4941)

JF:cas

City of Richmond Group Home Planning Framework

Richmond	Fire & Building Safety	Zoning	Neighbourhood Notification / Information
<p><b>Licensed Residential Care Home: 3 - 6:</b> (three to six persons in care)</p>	<p>Proposed building must meet City fire and building safety requirements for single family homes, and must also contain a sprinkler system, emergency lighting, and fire separation at the garage.</p>	<p>- Managed as a residence. - Permitted in all districts zoned for residential use.</p>	<p>Not required.</p>
<p><b>Unlicensed Residential Care Home: 1 - 6</b> (one to six persons in care)</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>Not required.</p>
<p><b>Licensed Residential Care Facility: 7 - 10</b> (seven to ten persons in care)</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>- Managed as a residence. - Permitted in all districts zoned for residential use, provided building is a minimum of 200 meters from another licensed or unlicensed Residential Care Home or Residential Care Facility.</p>	<p>1. Upon notification by VCH - Richmond that an application for a licensed Residential Care Facility has been received, the City writes to neighbours within a five-house radius of the proposed building to:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite them to an informal meeting, hosted by the City in conjunction with VCH-Richmond, to provide information and to solicit comments on the proposed home;</li> <li>• Provide them with contact information for designated member of Residential Care Facility operating team, a "fact sheet" about the home, and the "Group Homes in Richmond" publication.</li> </ul> <p>2. The City provides comments on the group home application to VCH - Richmond for information and consideration.</p> <p>3. VCH-Richmond, at its discretion, issues a Community Care Facility (CCF) License for facility.</p> <p>4. Nine months after issuance of the CCF License:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City contacts neighbours within a five-house radius of the facility, in writing, to seek additional comments and feedback on the group home, hosting an additional information meeting for the neighbours, if required;</li> <li>• The City conveys comments of VCH - Richmond for information and consideration.</li> </ul> <p>Upon the City receiving an application from an unlicensed Residential Care Facility, the City writes to neighbours within a five-house radius of the proposed building to:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite them to an informal meeting to provide information and to solicit comments on the proposed home;</li> <li>• Provide them with contact information for designated member of facility operating team, a "fact sheet" about the home, and the "Group Homes in Richmond" publication.</li> </ul> </p></p></p>
<p><b>Unlicensed Residential Care Facility: 7 - 10</b> (seven to ten persons in care)</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>Upon the City receiving an application from an unlicensed Residential Care Facility, the City writes to neighbours within a five-house radius of the proposed building to:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite them to an informal meeting to provide information and to solicit comments on the proposed home;</li> <li>• Provide them with contact information for designated member of facility operating team, a "fact sheet" about the home, and the "Group Homes in Richmond" publication.</li> </ul> </p>
<p><b>Institutional Facility 10+</b> (more than ten persons in care) <i>Note: These are not group homes.</i></p>	<p>Proposed building must meet Assembly Occupancy Standards of the National Building Code.</p>	<p>- Managed as an institution - Rezoning likely required to accommodate institutional use.</p>	<p>Rezoning includes neighbourhood notification and public hearing process.</p>

- Originally adopted by Council on May 27, 2002, with minor housekeeping amendments adopted on May 25, 2009.