

CITY OF BURNABY

SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

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HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS

**RE: ALLOCATION OF SPACE/CHANGES IN USE AT THE
BURNABY HEIGHTS COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council authorize Rooms 38 and 25A at the Burnaby Heights Resource Centre to be re-advertised for lease.
2. **THAT** Council authorize allocation of Room B8 to the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion on the understanding that the room will be made available to the Greater Vancouver Food Bank three mornings a month for its food distribution program.
3. **THAT** Council approve a \$200 storage rate charge to the Burnaby Theatre and Film Acting Society for its use of the former IE shop from 2004 November 1 to 2005 January 31 while it undergoes efforts to reorganize the operation of its Heights Performance Centre, and that it be required to indicate to staff by 2005 January 14 whether a new operation plan for the Centre is possible.
4. **THAT** a copy of this report be sent to Ms M. Lin, 5921 Sunset Street, Burnaby, B.C., V5G 4N2; Greater Vancouver Food Bank, Attention Catherine Matthews, 1150 Raymur Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V6A 3T2; Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion, Attention Dave Woolcott, 2702 Norland Avenue, Burnaby, B.C., V5B 3A6; and Burnaby Theatre and Film Acting Society, Attention Jim Purcell, 103-3865 Hastings Street, Burnaby, B.C. V5C 2H7.

REPORT

The Social Issues Committee, at its Open meeting held on 2004 October 27, received and adopted the attached report presenting proposals for the use of space at the Burnaby Heights Community Resource Centre.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor D. Johnston
Chair

Councillor L. Rankin
Vice Chair

Councillor S. Dhaliwal
Member

COPY - CITY MANAGER
- DIRECTOR PLANNING & BUILDING
- DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES
- DIRECTOR FINANCE
- DIRECTOR ENGINEERING
- CHIEF LICENSE INSPECTOR
- CITY SOLICITOR

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

2004 October 21

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

OUR FILE:12000-10

SUBJECT: ALLOCATION OF SPACE/CHANGES IN USE AT THE
BURNABY HEIGHTS COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE

PURPOSE: To present proposals for the use of space at the Burnaby Heights Community Resource Centre.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Rooms 38 and 25A at the Burnaby Heights Resource Centre be re-advertised for lease.
2. **THAT** Room B8 be allocated to the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion on the understanding that the room will be made available to the Greater Vancouver Food Bank three mornings a month for its food distribution program.
3. **THAT** the Burnaby Theatre and Film Acting Society be charged a storage rate of \$200 for its use of the former IE shop from 2004 November 1 to 2005 January 31 while it undergoes efforts to reorganize the operation of its Heights Performance Centre, and that it be required to indicate to staff by 2005 January 14 whether a new operation plan for the Centre is possible.
4. **THAT** a copy of this report be sent to Ms M. Lin, 5921 Sunset Street, Burnaby, B.C., V5G 4N2; Greater Vancouver Food Bank, Attention Catherine Matthews, 1150 Raymur Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V6A 3T2; Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion, Attention Dave Woolacott, 2702 Norland Avenue, Burnaby, B.C., V5B 3A6; and Burnaby Theatre and Film Acting Society, Attention Jim Purcell, 103-3865 Hastings Street, Burnaby, B.C. V5C 2H7.

REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

In 2004 August, Planning Department staff received notice from the Pathfinder Youth Centre Society that it was unsuccessful in securing funding for its program and that it would not be able to occupy recently allocated space (Room 38) at the Burnaby Heights Resource Centre.

Shortly after, staff received notice that Comitato Attivita Scholastiche Italiane (CAST) would be terminating its lease of Room 25A at Burnaby Heights. Upon receiving notices from the two organizations, staff undertook to advertise the available space in early September.¹

To solicit applications for new tenants, the available space was advertised in the two local newspapers and in a mail distribution to a broad base of community organizations, community schools and City facilities. Interested applicants were asked to submit a letter of application to the Planning Department by 2004 October 8. Only one application (for Room 38) was received.

During the time that the available space was advertised, staff also received requests from two existing tenants to change the occupancy of two other rooms at the Resource Centre. This report provides information on the application for Room 38. It also presents proposed changes to the occupancy of Room B8 and the former Industrial Education (IE) shop) at the Centre.

2.0 AVAILABLE SPACE

Rooms 38 (864 sq. ft) and 25A (437 sq. ft) were advertised for lease. The established 2004 lease rate for office/program space at the Burnaby Heights Resource Centre is \$10.26 per square foot per year. As noted, one application was received for Room 38. None were received for Room 25A.

3.0 APPLICATION FOR ROOM 38

In 1990 July, Council adopted guidelines that provide for the allocation of space at the Resource Centres. As indicated in the guidelines, the space is primarily geared to registered non-profit groups that provide services of benefit to Burnaby residents. Staff used the guidelines in assessing the application for Room 38.

3.1 Room 38

Canadian Children Centre (proposed name)

Min Tong Lin, a resident of Sunset Street in Burnaby, has expressed interest in Room 38 for the operation of a preschool. The applicant has indicated that she is in the process of forming

¹ To expedite the reallocation process, the Social Issues Committee, at its meeting in 2004 May, gave approval for staff to advertise the availability of space as soon as possible after notice to terminate a lease is given by a tenant. Prior to 2004 May, staff would first inform the Committee of the vacancy and then advertise the available space.

a registered non-profit society in order to be eligible to lease space at the Resource Centre. If successful in becoming a registered non-profit society, and receiving a space allocation, the applicant would offer preschool to children in north Burnaby. She has also indicated that she may eventually like to offer full-time child care as well.

If allocated the space, the applicant would need to meet the licensing requirements of the Fraser Health Authority (FHA) before operation could begin. In preliminary discussions with the FHA, the applicant states that she was informed that a maximum of 20 children would be permitted in the space.

Ms Lin was the only applicant for Room 38. Although it is recognized that finding suitable and appropriately zoned space for a child care centre is difficult, Ms Lin has yet to form a registered non-profit society and, as such, does not qualify for space at the Resource Centre. It is therefore proposed that Room 38 be re-advertised for lease. The applicant would be informed of the availability of the space and invited to reapply if she has succeeded in forming a registered non-profit society. It is also anticipated that through the process of becoming a society, the applicant would have a better indication of the client base, the management structure of a non-profit society, the services the society would offer, and the licensing requirement of the Fraser Health Authority.

4.0 CHANGES IN OCCUPANCY OF ROOM B8 AND THE FORMER IE SHOP

During the period that Rooms 38 and 25A were advertised as available for lease, staff received requests from two existing tenants, the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI) and the Burnaby Theatre and Film Acting Society, to change the occupancy of two rooms at the Centre, as discussed below.

4.1 Room B8 (1,512 sq. ft)

Room B8 in the basement of the Resource Centre is currently used by the Greater Vancouver Food Bank three mornings a month to distribute food. It is charged a storage rate of \$200 a year for its use of the room. The room is situated next door to the disabled artists studio (B7A and B) that is run by BACI. BACI has expressed interest in leasing B8 in order to provide more workshop space for the artists, many of whom are in wheelchairs. The artists would be able to access Room B8 through B7A, which has a ramp outside its door. BACI recognizes the importance of keeping the Food Bank in the same location and would be willing to continue to let the Food Bank use B8 three mornings a month to distribute food, at no cost to the Food Bank. In exchange, BACI is willing to pay for the use of the room on a full-time basis. The 2004 lease rate for space in the basement of the Heights is \$6.37 per square foot per year (BACI would also be eligible to apply for a lease grant to offset the cost of the lease).

The Food Bank has used Room B8 for over two years. During this time, staff have not received any other inquiries from agencies wishing to acquire the space on a cost basis. Since the Room B8 is not being used to its full potential (and rent is not being collected for the space), it is proposed that BACI be allocated the space, on the understanding that it would continue to let the Food Bank distribute food from the space three mornings a month. Staff have spoken to Food Bank staff who have said that this arrangement would be acceptable. The Food Bank would also appreciate not having to pay the storage fee and has indicated that it would use the money saved towards strengthening its services.

4.2 Former IE Shop (1,568 sq. ft)

The Burnaby Theatre and Film Acting Society has occupied the former IE shop at the Burnaby Heights Resource Centre since 2001. The Society uses the space to present small theatre productions and offer acting classes to the community. It is known to the community as the Heights Performance Centre. During this time, the Society has worked to involve the community in many aspects of its theatre productions. For example, seniors from the Confederation Community Centre for the Retired handle the box office for the theatre, merchants in the Heights hang posters advertising current productions in their shop windows, and students perform community service hours with the Society. The Society has also partnered with other agencies in the building to do fund-raising events.

At the beginning of October, Jim Purcell, artistic director of the Society, contacted staff to state that he is no longer able to put in the time, effort and financial resources to run the Society. Once the possibility of closure became known in the community, Mr. Purcell states that there has been considerable community interest in trying to keep the performance centre open. As a result of initial community efforts to explore options to keep the Centre open, Mr. Purcell has written to staff stating that he would like to halt theatre productions from November 1 to 2005 January 31 while efforts are made to find a new executive director and fund raiser for the Society. During this three month period, Mr. Purcell has asked that the Society be charged a storage rate of \$200 for the room instead of the \$416.17 per month that is paid now. If, at the end of this period, the Society has not been successful in its re-organization, the Society is prepared to terminate its lease of the room.

The lease rate for the former IE shop is the same as for other space in the basement of the Resource Centre (\$6.37 per square per year). During the time that the Burnaby Theatre and Film Acting Society has occupied the space, staff have received very few inquiries from community organizations seeking this type of space (basement space at the Centre is largely unfinished and has fewer amenities). During this same period, the Heights Performance Centre has become recognized for its contribution to community life in north Burnaby.

Staff are cognizant of the concern not to set precedents for similar requests in the future. Nonetheless, it is apparent that the Society would benefit from a short reprieve from its rent payments. Therefore, in light of the Society's situation, and its contribution to the community and the Resource Centre, it is proposed that the Society be charged a storage rate of \$200 for its use of the former IE shop from 2004 November 1 to 2005 January 31 while it undergoes efforts to reorganize its management structure and develop a viable operation plan for the performance centre. It is also proposed that the Society be required to indicate to staff by 2005 January 14 whether a new operation plan for the Centre appears possible. If this does not appear possible, the Society would be required to vacate the space at the end of January

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the assessment of the application for Room 38 at the Burnaby Heights Resource Centre, as contained in section 3.0 above, it is proposed that Room 38, along with Room 25A which did not receive any applications, be re-advertised for lease.

It is also recommended that BACI be allocated Room B8 at the Centre for use as an artists studio on the understanding that the room will be made available to the Greater Vancouver Food Bank three mornings a month, at no cost, for its food distribution program. The Food Bank in turn, would no longer be required to pay the City a storage fee for its use of Room B8.

Lastly, it is recommended that the Burnaby Theatre and Film Acting Society be charged a storage rate of \$200 for its occupancy of the former IE shop from 2004 November 1 to 2005 January 31 while it undergoes efforts to reorganize the Society. If, at the end of January, it has not been able to develop a new operation plan, it would be required to vacate the room. It is also recommended that it be required to indicate to staff by 2005 January 14 whether a new operation plan for the Centre appears possible.

With Council approval of the Committee's recommendation for the changes in occupancy of Rooms B8 and the former IE shop, staff would undertake the necessary lease arrangements with the approved tenants. Once lease arrangements have been finalized, any lease grant application received from the new tenant of B8 would be forwarded to the Executive Committee - Grants for consideration.



J.S. Belhouse, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING

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cc: City Manager
Director Engineering
Director Finance

Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
City Solicitor
Chief License Inspector