



Date: February 12, 2004

**TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation**  
**FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation**  
**SUBJECT: COLLINGWOOD HALL**

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

- A. THAT Collingwood Hall be closed and that notice be given to the Collingwood Community Association to terminate the operating agreement;*
- B. THAT staff support a smooth transition for the Association and its programmes including the disposition or relocation of equipment and assets;*
- C. THAT staff proceed with plans to demolish the building and restore the area as soon as possible, contingent on available funding through existing Park Board budgets;*
- D. THAT staff work with the Association on a commemorative feature or event in Killarney park as a tribute to the many years of dedicated service and enriching activities operated through Collingwood Hall since 1947.*

## **BACKGROUND**

Collingwood Hall is situated on the east side of Killarney Park in the 6200 block of Kerr Street. It is a wood frame building, approximately 55 years of age. It is a non-conforming building which is partially encroaching on city street right-of-way and has been identified for demolition for many years. Consequently, no major maintenance has been done on the building and it has deteriorated to a poor condition.

The Hall is operated by the Collingwood Community Association under an operating agreement with the Park Board. The Association has a long history of providing community and recreation programs and other support services to residents of all ages. The Association pays all programme and janitorial costs and the Park Board pays utility costs.

## DISCUSSION

The building sustained considerable water damage due to a water pipe breaking during the exceptional cold weather on January 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> of 2004. A water pipe broke in the north section attic of the building and went undetected for several days, completely saturating the insulation in the ceiling and leaking through the plywood ceiling to flood the floor. Park staff took immediate action, on report of the incident, by turning the water off, installing braces to support the weight of the ceiling and placing heaters to begin to dry the insulation. The building was rendered unsafe and was closed pending assessment and repairs to the damage.

The Association was notified and Park staff at Killarney Centre was deployed to assist in relocating existing programmes. Following is a description of the programmes and the relocation arrangements.

### COLLINGWOOD HALL PROGRAMME RELOCATION

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Schedule</b>	<b>Relocation Location</b>
Evergreen Tai Chi	47 (divided into 2 groups)	Mon - Sun 8-10:00 am	Killarney Centre
Weight Watchers	40	Thursday 6-9:00 pm	Victoria Drive Community Hall
South Vancouver Seniors Bingo	20-30	Friday 11:00 am-3:00 pm	South Van Neighbourhood House

In addition, the Killarney Soccer Association was contacted to remove their jerseys and other equipment which suffered from water leakage in the dressing room. Flexibility on the part of participants, leaders and the teams at the welcoming relocation facilities was demonstrated by everyone and made the transition as smooth as possible recognizing that this was an unwelcome disruption which caused stress and extra effort on the part of everyone.

The Killarney Community Association was contacted for the purpose of information sharing and President Keith Jacobson inquired about impacts on the summer programmes which have been using the Hall.

An assessment of the building outlined significant costs would be required for:

Essential Repairs	\$5,000 was the estimate for repairs to water damage and basic fire code requirements.
Basic Repairs	\$35,000 - These are required maintenance activities which have been deferred due to the non-conforming status of the building and includes replacing rotten siding, windows, painting, showers.
Upgrade	\$66,000 - These are the items which would be undertaken if this facility had an extended future as a Park Board facility and includes such things as replacement of all exterior siding, all doors and frames and accessibility upgrades.

A previous assessment on demolishing one wing of the building and undertaking required interior renovation to retain the Hall portion was estimated at \$112,000 and was not funded. As the building is non-conforming, no building permits would be issued for this building.

This issue was discussed at the Planning and Environment Committee on February 3, 2004, in which representatives from the Association and Evergreen Tai Chi attended and made deputations. Staff presented two options for discussion:

- Option A The Association spend the estimated \$5,000 to undertake the minimum repairs to re-open the building to extend use of the building to June 30, 2004;
- Option B The building remains closed on a permanent basis and the Park Board implement a plan to demolish the building towards the goal of returning the area to green space.

At the meeting, the Association suggested an alternative option which involves the Park Board selling a portion of Killarney Park to raise funds to replace the Hall with an annex facility attached to Killarney Centre. Following discussion, the Association was asked to call a meeting of their Board, as soon as possible, to determine if they were interested in Option A.

An Extraordinary Meeting of the Association was called on February 11<sup>th</sup>. Park Board staff, Lori MacKay, Director, and Garry Lum, Recreation Supervisor, were invited to attend as guests. At the meeting, the Association voted AGAINST spending \$5,000 to undertake the repairs with the understanding that this would likely result in the building being demolished. The relocation arrangements were reviewed with attention focused on the long term and they appear satisfactory. The new locations present a range of benefits and drawbacks for different participants, with the locations either being closer or farther for people to travel and impacts related to whether parking was available. One group, which was the only revenue generating group for the Association, has indicated that they would not be interested in returning to Collingwood Hall if it was reopened.

During the meeting, the Association expressed that the community wants a dedicated space for seniors in the Killarney area. Discussions began on ideas to commemorate the Collingwood Hall legacy of service which has resulted from the work of the Association and many dedicated volunteers. Preliminary ideas include a drinking fountain, memorial plaque, bench, sculpture or a great celebration. Current President Faye Grant and Vice-President/Treasurer Gertie Sivertson were particularly acknowledged for their long standing efforts. Staff offered to support the Association in arranging a smooth transition to allow the Society to make arrangements for the disposition/relocation of their assets.

The cost for removing asbestos and demolishing the building is estimated at \$25,000. Further costs associated with restoring the area to green space and rebuilding the sidewalk is estimated to be \$20 - 25,000.

## **CONCLUSION**

Collingwood Hall is a non-conforming building which can not stay in its present location as it is encroaching on street right-of-way. The building has been slated for demolition for many years, is in poor condition and experienced significant water damage due to a water pipe break in early January. The Collingwood Community Association, which operates programmes in the Hall, has worked with Park Board staff to relocate programmes and has decided not to fund the required repairs since the future life of building can not be extended.

Staff are recommending that the building be permanently closed and that the agreement with the Association be terminated. The Association will be supported in the disposition or relocation of their assets and in arranging longer term relocation arrangements for their programmes. The needs of the summer programmes operating out of Killarney Centre and the storage needs of Killarney Soccer will be reviewed by staff to determine future alternatives. As soon as possible, the building is recommended to be demolished and the area be restored to green space. The timing of the restoration would be contingent on available funding within the Park Board budget. The Hall and the Collingwood Community Association have a long history of service to the citizens of Vancouver and therefore it is recommended that the Park Board work with the Association in planning a park feature or event in commemoration of the contribution to the development of recreation services in Vancouver.

Prepared by:

Vancouver East District  
Vancouver Park Board  
RC