

SOUTH CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

UBC Permit Board Blesses Seniors' Housing

Average age of seniors at Wesbrook Place complex is expected to be 82-84 years

The proposed seniors' residence at the University of British Columbia has obtained approval to proceed with development as planned.

The UBC permit development board unanimously voted to issue a permit to developer Concert Properties in July. After the vote, board chair Harold Kalke congratulated Concert Property representatives and their consultants on their successful application for a development permit.

"I think this project will contribute to making UBC one of the best university campuses in the world."

Ken Bogress, development manager with Concert, one of the largest development companies in British Columbia, replied, "We shall live up to that."

Concert has leased three lots from UBC for its 180-unit seniors' residential development with 134 units designed as rental suites and 46 as 'market-housing' condominiums.

One does not need to be affiliated with UBC to rent a suite or own a condo there.

The lots Concert Properties acquired lie in the 'Wesbrook Place' residential neighbourhood emerging on 100 acres of UBC south of 16th Avenue—and south also of the academic heart of campus. Pacific Spirit Regional Park borders Wesbrook Place to the east while UBC academic and research/institutional areas lie to the south and west.

Five projects had been earlier approved, including a grocery store (Save-On-Foods) and four town-house or apartment projects (Pathways, Keenleyside, Crescent West and



Independent seniors residence will provide both rental and condominium accommodation.

The Wesbrook).

The seniors' residence will stand across Wesbrook Mall from the residential-commercial heart of Wesbrook Place which UBC calls its 'Village Centre'.

Mr. Bogress presented board members with a profile of the community expected to emerge in seniors' residence at UBC, calling it "an independent seniors' residence....not government-funded." Nor is it "licensed care," he said. Its

'assisted-living' elements will key into the same provincial government programs as senior's residences elsewhere in British Columbia.

He predicted the average age of seniors in the residence will be 82-84 years, a prediction based on experience for Concert Properties is also developer of the successful independent seniors' residence near Arbutus and 12th Avenue in Vancouver called The 'Okeefe Centre'.

In the spring, Concert expects to open a similar facility in Toronto.

By agreement with UBC Properties Trust, property development arm of UBC, Concert will build 8,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor of its six-floor seniors' complex facing the Village Centre.

UBC Properties will then lease this space to merchants.

Mr. Bogress said the theme of daily life in the UBC seniors' residence—as it is in the O'Keefe—will be "to stay active and continue to learn."

With their vast experience of life, elderly residents will also be people to learn from, and Mr. Bogress predicted a profitable relationship will develop between seniors in residence and UBC students who visit them on course assignments.

"I think this will be a 'win-win' situation for both UBC and the seniors."

The seniors residence will likely

become a salient design feature of Wesbrook Place for its entrance alone. Mr. Bogress said, "It will have a very hotel-like entrance."

By this, he meant that a town-car and shuttle bus owned by the residence will be constantly either parked at the entrance or ferrying residents back and forth on trips.

The developer is also looking at valet-parking in 'grand hotel' style.

A sixth-floor 'bridge' in the seniors' building will likely also become a salient design feature of Wesbrook Place.

The residence complex will in fact consist of two buildings, one about twice the size of the other, and the bridge will join them.

The larger building will house the rental suites and the bulk of the common areas while the smaller building with house the condos.

Designers of the project are Nigel Baldwin Architects and Davidson Yuen Simpson Architects with PWL Partnership as landscape architect.

Concert is an award-winning diversified real estate enterprise exclusively owned by Canadian union and management pension plans.

It is involved in developing and acquiring rental housing, commercial and industrial properties, condominium housing, seniors living communities, resort developments and hotels in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario.



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