



Province Grants 'Green Light' to Old Grace Housing Co-op

November 4, 2015

(Winnipeg) The Province of Manitoba today announced the Old Grace Housing Co-operative (OGHC) is the successful bidder to develop the original Grace Hospital property located at 189 Evanson Street in Winnipeg's Wolseley neighbourhood.

In making the announcement at the site of the future co-op, Premier Greg Selinger said, "We know that Wolseley residents have been actively engaged in the future of this site, and we are pleased to see this exciting new project move forward. The goal is to create a community within a community, built on shared co-operative values, quality housing and a commitment to sustainability."

OGHC board director, Laura Sevenhuysen, spoke for the co-op. "On behalf of Old Grace Housing Co-op members, who have been working tirelessly for more than 4 years toward this happy day, I'd like to express our thanks to the Province of Manitoba. We are honoured that our proposal was chosen for the development of this site."

Sevenhuysen credits the success of the co-op's proposal on the guiding principles and collaborative nature of those involved. "We were guided by our commitment to collaboration, community development, environmental sustainability and International Co-operative Principles. We thank the Wolseley residents and businesses who have worked with us over these past years. All along, they seemed to appreciate that a co-op will create a stable, intentional community of residents who have made significant investment in the co-op, care for the property, and respect and contribute to the local neighbourhood."

The co-op's plans are built on OGHC's vision of an inter-generational, mixed-income, architecturally distinctive and environmentally sustainable co-operative housing project.

The design concept reflects the character of the surrounding neighbourhood. The 59-unit apartment complex includes a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom units, well-designed common areas and amenities, landscaping and outdoor areas. Thirty of the units are designated 'affordable' (including 12 Rent Supplement units) and 29 are designated 'market' (meaning there will be no cap on resident income). Six fully accessible units are planned. The parking, service and common areas and exterior landscape are all designed to be fully accessible. Peg City Car Co-op will manage two carshare locations on site and members will have the option of joining the car co-op if they choose. Secure bicycle parking will also be provided.

Sevenhuysen concluded, "We greatly appreciate our consulting team for their efforts on our behalf and for their confidence in this project. DSI Tandem, Prairie Architects and HTFC Planning & Design have shared our vision and values and never treated this as 'just another project'. Our core team recently welcomed Concord Projects, which

brings extensive experience in multi-family construction. Without this team, our members and supporters, and the residents of Wolseley – our vision never could have been realized.”

The co-op expects construction to begin in the spring of 2016, with the first occupants moving in early 2018.

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Old Grace Housing Co-operative Backgrounder

November 2015

What is the Old Grace Housing Co-op (OGHC)?

OGHC is a group of more than 125 people, from a variety of backgrounds, ranging in age from 30 to 80. Nearly half of us are current or former Wolseley residents. We know this community and value its diversity and character.

How have we gotten to this point?

When the provincial government announced its intention to redevelop the property where the original Grace Hospital was located and accept proposals for the development of the land, our vision emerged as all good visions emerge – around a kitchen table. As it took shape, more people became excited and involved, and we have been working together for more than 4 years to build our organization, consult with the larger community and develop our proposal. We have been guided by our commitment to collaboration, community development, environmental sustainability and International Co-operative Principles. We have held formal consultations with Wolseley residents and housing groups, many of whom participated in a Collective Design Process Workshop held last fall to set parameters for architectural and landscape design.

What is the vision of the co-op?

OGHC's plans are built on our vision of an inter-generational, mixed-income, architecturally distinctive and environmentally sustainable co-operative housing project – one that will be an asset to the Wolseley neighbourhood. Occupants will finance and govern their co-op, which creates a stable, intentional community of residents who care for the property, and respect and contribute to the local neighbourhood.

What's the design plan?

OGHC's design concept reflects the character of the surrounding neighbourhood, and includes a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom units in a 59-unit apartment complex. Thirty of the units are designated 'affordable' (including 12 Rent Supplement units) and 29 are designated 'market' (meaning there will be no cap on resident income). Six fully accessible units are planned. The complex will include numerous exterior design features – front porches, patios, pergolas, a central courtyard, professional landscaping, and more. All will be designed to be fully accessible.

What will happen with parking?

The parking allocation for the complex is 29 spots, including 3 handicap spots and visitor parking. Co-op members have a strong focus on environmental sustainability, and reducing car usage is an integral part of our commitment to sustainable development and a reduced environmental footprint. Surveys of our members show that many will not use private vehicles, and instead will rely on alternative transportation including transit, cycling and/or carsharing. In addition, Peg City Car Co-op will manage two carshare locations on site and members will have the option of joining the car co-op if they choose. Peg City's research suggests each co-op car takes up to 13 vehicles off the road, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and parking demand. Secure bicycle parking for more than 60 bikes will also be provided.

Is the property at 905 Preston part of the co-op's future?

Yes. Following completion of 189 Evanson, we will move to phase two of our plans, which includes the development of this property on Preston. We are in the very early stage of planning.

How many co-op members have requested a unit?

Many members have expressed interest in moving into the co-op on completion, and our intention is to have the co-op fully occupied when construction is complete. We still have several months of work to do before we will have finalized detailed drawings and cost information that would enable members to make a fully informed decision.

What is the budget?

As a co-operative, all members contribute to the financing of the project. The projected capital budget is \$15 million to be funded by member shares/loans, mortgage financing, provincial tax credits, support from Manitoba Housing (who will retain ownership of the land), and fundraising. The land will be leased to OGHC at a nominal rate.

What is the timeline?

Following the formal announcement in November, we anticipate construction will begin in the June 2016 with occupancy in early 2018.