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PRESS RELEASE

PUBLIC MEETING FOR THE PROPOSED SUPPORTED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN DUNBAR
The Dunbar Apartments is the first supported housing project of its kind for the Dunbar Community

VANCOUVER, November 10 – Over the past couple of months Coast Mental Health has held four public meetings to collect comments and feedback on the proposed Operations Management Plan (OMP) for the Dunbar Apartments. This project will provide supported housing for those who currently reside in Dunbar, West Point Grey and Kitsilano areas, or whose origins are from within these communities. The community is invited to participate in the final meeting to provide input on the revised draft OMP on Thursday November 20, 6:30 – 8:30 pm at the Dunbar Community Centre, 4747 Dunbar Street.

According to Katherine Taylor from St. George's Place Housing Society, "The community consultation process has been very positive. The input has been respectful and constructive, and I think that a collaborative relationship is being built with community members."

George Pinch, Co-President of the Dunbar Resident's Association expresses his support, "When the board of the Dunbar Residents Association was informed that the new social housing development at 16th and Dunbar was to be for people with mental illness, and that Coast Mental Health would be the managers, the board decided that the project was worthy of our full support. We are prepared to 'make it work'. We are determined to make the project a great success. Dunbar will not settle for less".

Coast Mental Health will provide a combination of housing and support services at 3595 West 17th Avenue. Coast will manage the 51-unit apartment building in a manner that exemplifies their mission and values and enhances the neighbourhood. St. George's Place Housing Society and Yaffa Housing Society are operating partners on this project.

"St. George's Place Housing Society is proud to partner with Coast on their project at 16th and Dunbar. We believe that this housing will provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities to live in a safe and supportive housing environment," says Katherine Taylor.

Robert Huber, President of Yaffa Housing Society is equally enthusiastic, "Yaffa Housing Society, in collaboration with Coast Mental Health, is working to address the affordable housing needs of persons in the Jewish community who are suffering with a mental illness. Residents of the Dunbar location will receive strong family and community support as is customary in the Jewish tradition. Yaffa is pleased to participate in this initiative which integrates support services with housing to help people move beyond temporary shelter to secure housing, and greater self-reliance through dignity and hope and eventually attain appropriate employment."

Darrell Burnham, Coast's Executive Director states, "This project will serve individuals from the local community and fills a real need. Currently Coast operates five buildings on the Westside of Vancouver, all which have integrated well within the community".

For more information on the proposed development and to view the Second Draft OMP, visit www.coastmentalhealth.com.

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**Coast Mental Health:**

Coast promotes recovery of persons living with a mental illness and provides supportive housing to 700 people in 31 different homes and apartments in Vancouver and area. Coast began providing housing for people with a mental illness in 1974 and its tenants and facilities are integrated in neighbourhoods throughout Vancouver.

Coast also has two public community service facilities:

- The Coast Mental Health Resource Centre in downtown Vancouver has over 2,000 members and provides basic needs (such as serving 150 to 250 meals per day, Monday to Saturday) as well as programs designed to help people develop skills to function in daily life
- The Coast Clubhouse in the Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood operates employment and volunteer programs for over 600 people who are seeking to find meaningful activity, transitional employment, work skills development and part or full-time work. For those seeking part or full-time work Coast has employment counselors who assist in developing vocational plans, teach job search and interview skills, develop resumes and provide a supported employment. Coast also operates two social enterprise businesses called Landscaping with Heart and Sewing with Heart which directly employs people with mental health issues.

Coast is a non-profit charitable organization, has an annual budget of approximately \$15 million and employs 200 FTE staff. Coast is funded through donations, fees for service and a variety of government ministries and agencies. Coast also runs the province-wide Courage To Come Back Awards which celebrated its tenth year in 2008. More information on Coast is available at www.coastmentalhealth.com.