

May 17, 2021

Self Advocates of Semiahmoo
15306 - 24 Avenue
Surrey BC V4A 2J1



City of Surrey
13450 – 104 Avenue
Surrey, BC V3T 1V8

Dear Mayor McCallum and Council Members,

We, Self Advocates of Semiahmoo, write to you regarding the Harmony Apartment Project on 20th Avenue as we want to show our support for developing the apartment. The City of Surrey has been growing rapidly and finding affordable housing is becoming very tough. People who grew up in this neighbourhood cannot afford to live here because of high rent and housing prices. Building this apartment will be helpful not only for people with a lower income, in need of affordable homes, but also beneficial for people with diverse abilities. The benefits of housing developed by Peninsula Estates Housing Society have been shown with the Chorus apartments. Some of our support workers live in these buildings and the apartment has provided employment opportunities. Some of the residents are single parents, families, and people who want to live in the South Surrey area. We believe this housing gap can be addressed by building Harmony, a housing project meant to benefit not just people with diverse abilities, but all people who need homes.

There are many advantages to building this apartment and many reasons as to why people with diverse abilities want to live in Harmony. It will give people the option to live on their own or with a roommate, and it builds a stronger community. It also helps us develop our life skills and help us gain confidence as we ultimately want to live on our own. These apartments will be developed with special consideration for people with diverse abilities. The location for the apartment has been chosen with consideration for people, as everything we must do for our daily lives is within walking distance and close to transit. It will allow us to be close to our people, programs, and workplaces. Overall, living in this apartment will allow us to surround ourselves with people who can support each other. Building affordable housing like this is especially important to people with diverse abilities because it allows everyone freedom and independence to live on their own.

In Chorus, we have created an inclusive community where all the neighbours know each other. We have developed bonds with our neighbours and residents have become more aware and engaged in the projects that SAS worked on as a result. We live in the community like everyone else and we want to continue to break down the assumptions individuals have about people with diverse abilities. We are their neighbours, we are part of their community, and we have a place to be. Chorus apartments have been a success story and it shows how people can come together to make a difference. We strongly believe that Harmony apartments will benefit the South Surrey community by bringing people together who love this area and want to make it their home.

Sincerely,
Self Advocates of Semiahmoo

Michaela Robinson, Stacey Kohler, Asma Patel, Krista Milne, Jeevan Basra, West Bosma, and Natalie Raven