

# Vancouver mayor rejects zoning change

VANCOUVER (CUP) - Mayor Art Phillips has rejected a plea by University of British Columbia housing councillors to rezone the Point Grey area, near the University, to allow basement suites with kitchen facilities.

The plea came in response to a crisis in student housing, which will result in hundreds of students living in tents on university land by the beginning of the school year.

The present vacancy rate in Vancouver is less than 1/2 per cent. The Housing Placement Service at UBC reports an average of 125 student inquiries daily, while they receive an average of 35 offers of housing per day.

Disclaiming any responsibility for student housing shortages, Phillips pointed out in an interview that the university is outside city jurisdiction.

"If they (university administrators) listened to me, they would cut their enrollment by 5,000 students, but they never listen to me," he commented.

"If they cannot provide

housing for their students, they should not allow them to register," he said.

Getting back to the question, Phillips outlined his conception of what would happen in the Point Grey area was rezoned to allow kitchen facilities.

"It would not help students," he said. "Landlords want somebody to rent a place on a year-round basis, while students only rent seven months of the year."

"With the housing situation the way it is in Vancouver, the basement suites would be snapped up very quickly, and not by students," he said.

That statement "is obviously untrue", according to Stu Sevard, a housing placement worker at UBC.

He pointed to the example of the Dunbar and Kits areas, where many UBC students live. In these areas, those students who do move away for the summer usually sub-let their suites while they are away, precisely so that they do have a place to live when they return.

Lake Sagaris, also a hous-

ing placement worker, commented that "basement suite living, which could be a result of re-zoning, is only suitable for certain lifestyles. Few families find this type of accomodation suitable, where students find it ideal."

Dave Johnson, co-ordinator of the UBC Housing Placement Service, commented on other aspects of rezoning. "If the city allowed basement suites throughout the city, it would not only help to alleviate the shortage but would provide revenue for struggling small home-owners, who have to cope with mortgage payments."

"Also it would provide work for carpenters, plumbers, electricians, etc....." he said.

He pointed out that provincial Home Conversion Mortgage Loans are available to small home owners, removing any economic barriers from

home conversion.

The first annual report of the B.C. Department of Housing notes, "Many home-owners were obviously interested in converting their dwellings as the department received 1,076

inquiries about the program.

"Rigid municipal zoning and building by-laws were, however, major obstacles and only 17 applications for the loans were approved," the report says.

## SF Council staff unionize

VANCOUVER (CUP) - The five employees of the Simon Fraser Student Society have unionized.

The employees received certification July 10 from the B.C. Labour Relations Board as bargaining unit 12, local 1, of the Service, Office, and Retail Workers Union of Canada.

Office co-ordinator and elected shop steward, Pat Barter said "one of the prime reasons SORWUC was founded was the belief that unorganized working women need the kind

of union that can defend their rights."

Barter said the employees will be proposing a grievance procedure so that Student Council members can not "always be yelling at the staff with a dozen conflicting orders". Instead, she said, instructions should be brought by the first vice-president to the shop steward.

The staff will be asking for day care benefits and for an across the board wage increase which has not yet been decided upon, she said.



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