

# District Services Board to have proposed seniors' housing property assessed

<http://www.manitoulin.ca/2012/07/06/district-services-board-to-have-proposed-seniors-housing-property-assessed/>

July 12, 2012

Tom Sasvari

The Recorder

ESPANOLA—The Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board (DSB) will be getting an appraisal on a piece of Gore Bay it owns, prior to considering a proposal from a local group for developing senior citizens housing in the town.

The West End Seniors and Support Interest Group made a presentation to the board (at a meeting last week), asking the DSB to consider selling or giving the property to the town to develop senior citizens housing, said Fern Dominelli, CAO of the DSB, last Friday.

“We have to get the property assessed before the board can take into consideration the request,” said Mr. Dominelli. “We had hoped to have these numbers already, but unfortunately, we didn’t have them in time for the meeting.”

Maxine McVey, a spokesperson for the local group, confirmed, “we did make a presentation to the DSB board. We had someone inform us that they discovered the piece of property (the south extension of the Bayside property on Water Street), is owned by the DSB. It was the preferred site for a housing unit, compared to the two other parcels of land we were looking at, with one of reasons being it is closer to the downtown area. So we approached the town and DSB to let it go and sell it to us or transfer it to us.”

“We have been working on this project for two years,” said Ms. McVey. “We decided we need a piece of land, and have had plans done up for the type of housing we are looking at, so we will be ready when government funding is made available,” she said, pointing out the property being looked at is zoned for housing.

If the DSB board wants to sell the property to the group, “we would fundraise for the purchase of the property,” said Ms. McVey. “But regardless, we felt it would be ideal to have a plan ready and waiting for when and if (government) funding becomes available for this type of project.”

“Based on a study we did (in 2011) of 220 seniors (from Kagawong to Meldrum Bay) there is definitely a need for this type of housing on the West End of the Island,” said Ms. McVey. The plans are for a 20-unit building to be constructed.

“By the year 2036, 48.9 percent of all residents on the West End of Manitoulin Island will be over the age of 65,” continued Ms. McVey. “This has been an exciting project, but somewhat frustrating as well, as it seems we take two steps forward and one back. Once we find out what the DSB’s decision on our request is, then we want to set up a public meeting to provide an update to everyone. We did get support from (Gore Bay) town council, as they willing to accept the property in principle if the DSB transfers it.”

“We understand DSB has to have the property assessed to see how much the property is worth and then decide if they are going to sell it or transfer the property. In Chapleau, because a piece of property was used for used social housing, DSB sold it for \$2 to the town. We said it is our highest hope something like that could be done in our situation or transferred to the town.”

Mr. Dominelli further explained, “apparently the town has a similar arrangement for the Millsite Apartments in Gore Bay. The town owns the land, but it is operated by a non-profit group. The DSB can transfer or sell property such as this to DSB member municipalities.” However, “there would probably be some conditions on this,” he added.