

Article rank | 25 Jan 2012 | Moose Jaw Times Herald | AUSTINDAVIS | MOOSE JAW TIMES-HERALD

Detox drama

Redevelopment of Ina Grafton Gage gets community talking

More than 50 people were in attendance at the Ina Grafton Gage facility on Tuesday night. The community meetings — another will be held again on Thursday night — were advertised to residents of the Pleasant View community as a forum to discuss the site's future.



Times-herald photo by Austin Davis

Anne Marie Ursan, executive director of Thunder Creek Rehabilitation Association, addresses the crowd at the Ina Grafton Gage facility on Tuesday night.

The future of the site has already been decided.

What was a care home for senior citizens is being converted into a centre for a social detox program. The social detox program had been housed in the [Angus Campbell](#) Centre for several decades.

Five Hills Health Region reached an agreement with the Thunder Creek Rehabilitation Association to convert the building to have it functional for its new needs by April 1. The building was purchased for \$1.2 million with approximately \$2,000 - \$3,000 worth of renovations left to do.

According to Five Hills, there will still be 14 independent living suites on the grounds for seniors.

The detox centre will be providing 20 beds for adults recovering from addictions.

The detox centre will be non-custodial, meaning that the people receiving treatment will be there voluntarily. Withdrawal treatment lasts from about 11 - 14 days.

Community members were openly concerned about the impact this development would have on their daily life.

Anne Marie Ursan is the executive director of Thunder Creek Rehabilitation Association. She said that meetings like Tuesday's, and the upcoming one on Thursday, are important for their new

neighbours.

"We purchased the building, we're going to offer this service, and we felt we'd introduce ourselves to our neighbours and hear any concerns they had," Ursan said. "We heard the concerns and we openly welcomed and invited those concerns. We're also excited that they invited solutions and that's encouraging."

She said she was surprised and pleased by the turnout.

"I think the whole notion of the service being located here may have created unsettled feelings with people in the neighbouring community," said Ursan. "Everyone should be concerned for their own personal safety and the safety of those around them and now we have an opportunity to work even further with them."

Ursan said the format and approach of Thursday's meeting wouldn't differ much from Tuesday.

"Given that we received lots of great information I don't know that we'd approach it much differently," Ursan said. She added that Thunder Creek would have more to share with the members of the community coming on Thursday.

"We'll have a couple of days to think in terms of offering more detail because people seemed a little frustrated and we weren't clear on what detail they wanted," Ursan said.

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