

The capital cost of the housing renovations was \$27.7 million. In addition, the City provided the 60-year land lease to the Mole Hill Community Housing Society (valued at \$13.5 million) at no cost. BC Housing provides annual operating subsidies for the rent-geared-to-income units. It is expected that the renovated houses will become municipally designated heritage buildings in 2004 as part of the rezoning of the block to CD-1. If this is approved, the difference between the project's existing FSR (0.9) and that allowed by the RM-5B (2.5) may be available for sale and transfer – reducing the City's net cost.

In addition to housing, the project also includes a 25-space YMCA childcare centre for the West End, occupying most of 1164 Comox. Separate City grants paid for two-thirds of the \$811,000 required to build and equip the centre. The daycare (with 24 spaces) had previously operated in a portable at 1132 Comox (the daycare was first located in 1971 at 1115-23 Pendrell and was moved to 1133 Pendrell in 1989, before moving to the Comox lot). There are also two family daycares operating in other Mole Hill houses.

The 1132 Comox lot will form part of a mid-block public right-of-way linking Pendrell and Comox. The lane itself will be reduced from 33 to 20 feet in width as part of a greenway. These changes have been paid for by a separate City grant of \$300,000. Also included in the project are community gardens for residents of the West End, and workshops and tool sheds.

Dr. Peter Centre

The other new project on the Mole Hill block involved leasing another City-owned house and a vacant lot to the Dr. Peter Foundation. The former six-unit rooming house at 1110 Comox (built in 1906) has been converted into office/medical space, linked by walkways to a new four-storey building built on the vacant lot at the corner of Nelson and Thurlow (1069 Thurlow). The project opened in September 2003, transferring its operations from old dormitory rooms in St. Paul's Hospital.

The Dr. Peter Centre is a prototype for combining a day centre to provide medical and personal care for people with HIV/AIDS with second-stage housing for those who can live independently if they have the appropriate support services. The upper two floors of the new building provide 22 self-contained studio units, two transition rooms (to provide nursing care for people who would otherwise require hospitalization), and the facilities necessary to provide 24-hour nursing support. The lower two floors provide the day-health program facilities and services for use by both tenants and day visitors. It is anticipated that this model will reduce hospital stays by 98% and the cost of care will be 80% less than hospital care.

The capital cost for the Dr. Peter Centre was \$9.8 million. The Ministry of Health provided \$3.6 million; the Dr. Peter Foundation provided \$1.9 million; the City contributed a 60-year land lease (valued at \$1.6 million) at no cost; and the Federal government provided \$660,000 under the Canada-

BC Affordable Housing Agreement. BC Housing pays an annual operating subsidy for the housing component of the project. The Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCH) contributes operating funding for the day centre's programs and the services for the housing residents.

Watson House and the Leslie Lane House

The last City-owned house on Block 23 is Watson House at 1125 Pendrell. Built in 1897 and originally located at 909 Thurlow, it was given to the City and relocated to Mole Hill in 1989, displacing the YMCA portable. The building operated as a special needs residential facility (a SNRF – a youth home) from 1991 until 2002), and in 2004, it will be renovated and leased to the Mole Hill Society, to be operated as an 8-unit SNRF by Coast Foundation. The City is providing the 58-year lease (valued at \$704,000) at no charge and a capital grant of \$280,000. BC Housing is also providing a \$200,000 grant towards the renovation costs.

The Leslie lane house (1117 Pendrell) is the most recent addition to Mole Hill. This 1880's house was originally on the lane behind the Leslie house at 1380 Hornby. To preserve building and to raise funds for the Vancouver Heritage Foundation, the house was relocated to the lane in Watson House's backyard. The lot was then subdivided, the Leslie lane house restored by the VHF and converted into a duplex, and the units sold as market units on a 60-year lease.

Privately owned Properties

The largest of the privately owned properties on the block is Strathmore Lodge, a seven-storey 1910 apartment building at the corner of Bute and Nelson with a 1951 single-family house built as "infill." The two other privately owned properties on Nelson are at 1126 and 1150 Comox, built in 1942 and 1903 respectively. The other buildings are 1110 Thurlow (1903) and rooming houses at 1104 and 1116 Bute (1901 & 1905). The latter is currently being converted to a four-unit strata building. The privately owned properties will be included in the City-initiated rezoning report, with possible incentives for heritage renovation and preservation.



The Mole Hill Block looking north-west along Comox

MOLE HILL

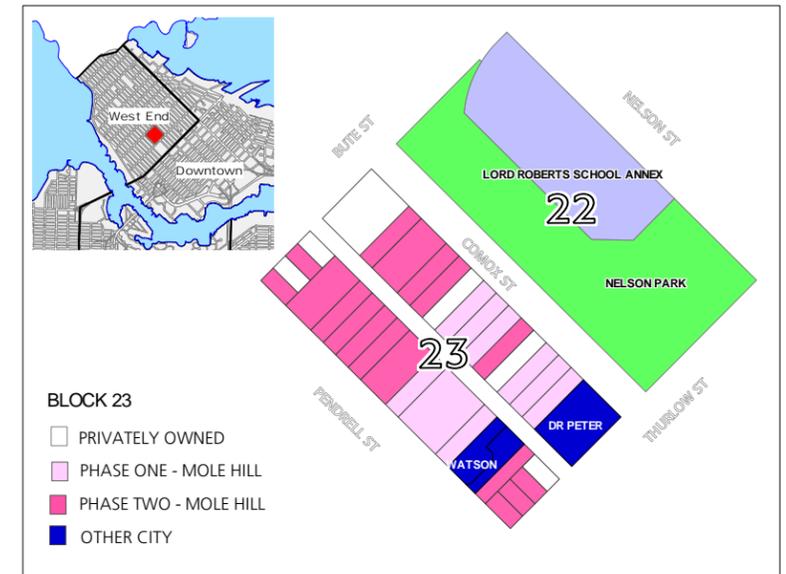
Mole Hill and the Dr. Peter Centre are two projects occupying most of Block 23 in the city's West End, a block made up mainly of heritage houses built between 1888 and WWI. The Mole Hill project involves the restoration and conversion to non-market housing of 27 of these houses. The Dr. Peter Centre project incorporates another of the houses into a new building to service people with HIV/AIDS.

Beginning in the 1950s, the City and the Vancouver School Board began to purchase residential properties on Blocks 22 and 23 in the West End, with the intention of redeveloping as park and a school. In the early 1970s, the City demolished over three hundred and fifty rooming house and apartment units on Block 22, and Nelson Park and a school were developed.

Acquisition of properties on Block 23 proceeded at a slower pace, and from the 1970s onward there was considerable debate about the future of the block. By the 1980s the heritage value of the houses was competing with their value as future park, and by the 1990s a "Save Mole Hill" movement (named after two early residents of the area) was in full swing. The problem the City faced was that the houses were not only valued heritage buildings but also valued low-income housing stock. Many of the Mole Hill houses had been converted to rooming houses, and by the 1990s very little of the West End's rooming house stock was left.

While the future of the block was in doubt, the City continued to rent units in the houses that it owned, undertaking only basic maintenance. Five of the houses acquired by the City were demolished over the period – 1132-34 Comox (1991); 1115,1125, & 1133 Pendrell (1962, 1979, and 1970), and 1069 Thurlow (1977). A portable daycare building and a relocated heritage house (Watson House) were also moved onto the block. Acquisition of the entire block was never completed. By 1992, the City owned 32 of the then 39 legal parcels. Two of these parcels were vacant, one had the YMCA daycare, and the remaining lots were occupied by 29 buildings, 21 of which were listed on the City's Heritage Inventory. The remaining six houses and a 1910 apartment building on the block were and still are privately owned.

In 1996, Council decided that preservation and rehabilitation of the heritage buildings as affordable housing were to be the primary objectives and approved a community planning process to produce a concept plan. In 1999, Council approved in principle a BC Housing/City project to renovate 27 of the City-owned houses as non-market housing, and a second project to use another City-owned house and vacant lot for the Dr. Peter Centre.



Mole Hill

The Mole Hill project was developed by the City, BC Housing, and the Mole Hill Community Housing Society that had led the preservation (heritage and low-income housing) movement. The development was divided into two phases, partly to avoid displacing existing tenants offsite. The first phase of 10 buildings and 68 units was finished in 2001 and 2002, and the second phase of 17 buildings and 102 units was completed in 2003. One of the houses (1145 Pendrell) had to be demolished and re-built instead of being renovated.

The renovations created a small net increase in units, but all units are now self-contained and three quarters have one or more bedrooms. The increase in unit size was created by raising the houses to convert unfinished basements into units. All the units are heated using a geothermal heating system, allowing trade-offs to be made in energy-related code requirements in favour of heritage.

Forty units are for families and the remainder are for single people. Forty percent of the units are rented at low-end-of-market rents and the rest have rents geared to income. The Mole Hill Community Housing Society manages & operates the project, including the selection of tenants.

MOLE HILL - UNITS BY UNIT TYPE						
	ROOMS	STUDIOS	1-BED	2-BED	3+ BED	TOTAL
PRE-DEVELOPMENT	39	69	32	19	3	162
POST-DEVELOPMENT	0	50	80	31	9	170

Density = 66 units per acre (163 units per ha), including the mid-block rights of way.

BLOCK 23: THE MOLE HILL NON-MARKET HOUSES - Detailed information on the houses and past residents can be found in Petrie's 1995 book, Mole Hill Living Heritage



1170 Comox
Heritage 'A', built 1894
3 units

1164 Comox
Heritage 'A', built 1894
1 unit & daycare

1160 Comox
Heritage 'A', built 1888
5 units

1154 Comox
built 1906
9 units

1146 Comox
built 1904
6 units

1140 Comox
Heritage 'B', built 1907
6 units

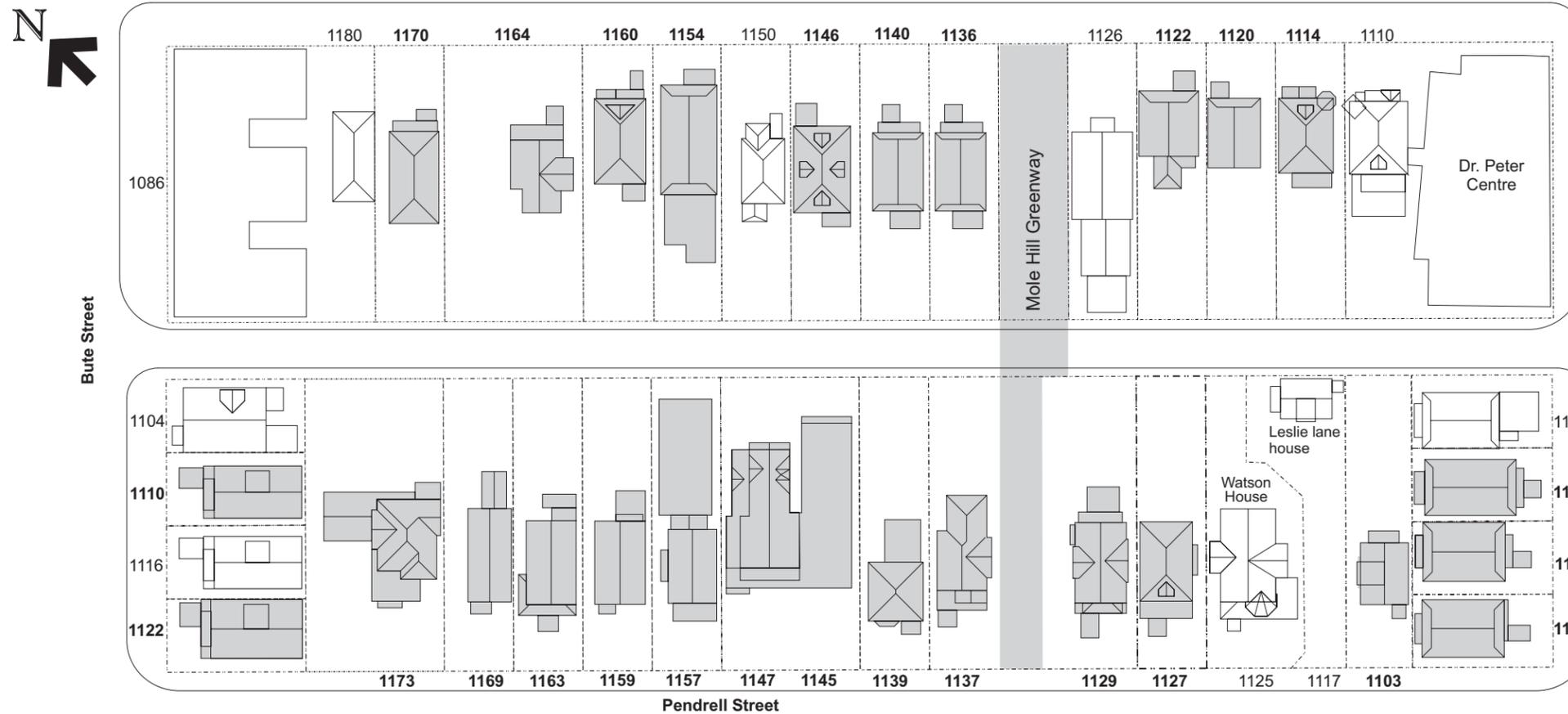
1136 Comox
Heritage 'B', built 1907
7 units

1122 Comox
Heritage 'A', built 1904
7 units

1120 Comox
Heritage 'A', built 1904
6 units

1114 Comox
Heritage 'B', built 1906
9 units

Comox Street



1110 Bute
Heritage 'B', built 1908
7 units



1122 Bute
Heritage 'B', built 1908
8 units



1107 Thurlow
built 1903
7 units



1113 Thurlow
built 1903
4 units



1119 Thurlow
Heritage 'C', built 1903
6 units



1173 Pendrell
Heritage 'A', built 1898
7 units

1169 Pendrell
Heritage 'B', built 1898
5 units

1163 Pendrell
Heritage 'B', built 1898
5 units

1159 Pendrell
Heritage 'B', built 1899
5 units

1157 Pendrell
built 1899
9 units

1147 Pendrell
built 1898
7 units

1145 Pendrell
built 2003
8 units

1139 Pendrell
Heritage 'B', built 1889
6 units

1137 Pendrell
Heritage 'B', built 1889
7 units

1129 Pendrell
Heritage 'B', built 1899
7 units

1127 Pendrell
Heritage 'B', built 1904
7 units

1103 Pendrell
built 1907
6 units