

# More trailer park residents evicted

## Oak Bay Marine Group wants to develop the Ladysmith property

BY KATIE DEROSA, TIMES COLONIST JANUARY 25, 2009



Shirley Beaubien stands in front of her trailer in the Ivy Green Marina trailer park. Residents of the trailer park were given eviction notices by the Oak Bay Marine group.

**Photograph by:** Debra Brash, Times Colonist, Times Colonist

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Residents of the Ivy Green Marina trailer park near Ladysmith have been served eviction notices, giving them 12 months to relocate before owner Oak Bay Marine Group turns the property into an oceanfront residential development.

"My wife answered the door and she came back and she was crying," Lloyd Hooper said yesterday. The 93-year-old Second World War veteran has lived in the park for the last eight years. His wife, Ellen, has lived there 30 years.

"At my age and with my condition, we don't know what we're going to do," said Hooper, who has kidney problems. "We have to find a place to go, and they're closing up all the parks. Where do you go with this house?"

The eviction notices came Friday morning, a surprise to many residents of the 38-unit park, several of them elderly or on fixed incomes.

The Oak Bay Marine Group wants to build a residential community of about 42 single-family homes, three 30-unit condominiums and 68 townhouse units. The land sits adjacent to the Ladysmith Marina,

which was purchased by the group in 2004.

This is only the latest case of trailer park residents being forced from their homes as developers eye more lucrative opportunities for their land.

In January 2007, the Oak Bay Marine Group announced the eviction of tenants living in the Metchosin trailer park near Pedder Bay, sparking a legal brawl between residents and the group. For the first time, mobile-home owners challenged the Manufactured Park Tenancy Act, as several trailer parks across the province faced threats of demolition.

In October, B.C. Supreme Court Justice Keith Bracken concluded the Oak Bay Marine Group acted within its rights as a landowner and forced residents to relocate or abandon their homes.

The Oak Bay Marine Group will provide Ivy Green Marina residents with 12 months' rent -- about \$2,280 -- and a relocation plan is in the works, said Lanny Sawchuk, the group's executive vice-president and chief operations officer.

It also struck a deal with a local developer -- Sawchuk would not say which one -- to construct a new trailer park nearby for residents willing to relocate. The group will give the developer financial assistance, about \$55,000, to "offset the cost of moving homes," he said. Sawchuk said 11 residents have already agreed to move.

The group offered tenants the first opportunity to purchase a unit on the newly developed site, said Sawchuk, who said he did not yet know the starting price for a home on the waterfront lot.

Residents also have the option of purchasing a new mobile home in the developer's second trailer park, he said.

Residents worry some fixed mobile homes are too old to be moved without destroying them.

"If you take them apart and move them, they're going to have leaks and cracks, so ... you might as well throw them in the garbage," Shirley Beaubien said.

Sawchuk countered that in Pedder Bay, "people with homes they thought were immovable were moved."

Other municipalities, like Langford and Sooke, have mobile-home protection bylaws stipulating that homeowners displaced by redevelopment must be offered fair market value for their homes or a guaranteed relocation site. Residents approached the town in November asking for similar protection, but it was voted down.

In a letter to tenants, Mayor Rob Hutchins said even if there were such a policy, it would not apply in this case because no rezoning is needed for the site.

"We don't have any recourse. Without some kind of a law on our side, we're out in the cold," Beaubien said.

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