

News Leader

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'WAR ROOM'



Photo By Mario Barlet

With composite drawings of the suspect as a backdrop, police constable Julian Knight catches up on paperwork.

Police mobilize in wake of attack

By Rob Gerein
Staff Reporter

It's a despicable act that has personally offended every police officer and civilian in this police department
~ Cpl. Gary Weishaar

"Usually, this room is a pretty pristine place, not as much clutter and action as there is today," Cpl. Gary Weishaar says, looking back at a long table where a half dozen plainclothes police officers are busy poring over the latest batch of tips. The walls are covered with composite drawings, photos, and pieces of paper with suspect descriptions. Two blackboards sit to the left of the table, each with information about the victim and the crime that police don't want revealed. And at the end of the room, sitting under a bright light, is a cardboard box containing 250 files, each representing a tip police have received from the public in the past 10 days, each a potential link to a suspect.

The briefing room at New Westminster police headquarters has been transformed into the "war room," taken over in the past 10 days by a team of investigators who share a common goal: to catch a vicious rapist before he strikes again.

Despite its location in the middle of a large urban area that has led the country in violent crime, New Westminster doesn't see many crimes like the one that occurred in the early hours of Friday, Oct. 4.

At about 3:50 am, a man in his mid-20s broke into a 79-year-old woman's

apartment, beat her almost to the point of death - shattering her cheekbone in the process - and then sexually assaulted her.

"It's a despicable act that has personally offended every police officer and civilian in this police department," Weishaar said, adding that

the attack is the most vicious on a senior he's seen in his 15 years with the department.

Police have employed almost every investigative tool they have, including the ViCLAS (Violent Crime Linkage Analysis System), a computer data base which can match similarities between violent crimes. Information on the assault was entered into ViCLAS "within hours," said Cpl. John Gibeau, an investigation coordinator, but as of Friday ViCLAS had not

CONTINUED PAGE 2 - SEE ATTACK

Candidates vie for votes

By Gareth Kirkby
Staff Reporter

They're off.

Nominations closed Friday for the November 16 civic elections and residents can expect to see candidates on their doorstep, cable TV and at town hall meetings.

Mayoralty candidates are: Linda Fletcher-Gordon, Helen Sparkes, James Bell, Arthur Crossman, Calvin Donnelly and Kathy Cherris.

There are 26 candidates announced for six council seats: Margot Barton, Joaquin Ayala, Hildegard Bechler, Jerry Dobrovolny, Robert Hamilton, Bob Hooey, Karol King, Howard King, Julia Mueller, Chuck Puchmayr, William Raiton, Gloria Ross, Elizabeth Summerfield, Joe Walia, Stephen Wilding, Robert Osterman, Bill Zander, Gordon Mackie, William Barton, Elizabeth McIntosh, Donal Klimchuk, Edward Burnham, Phillip Crossman, Earl Smith, Casey Cook and Charmaine Murray.

Eleven candidates are running for seven school trustee spots: Michael Ewen, Linda Barron, Bobby Dhami, Vasant Saklikar, Douglas Walker, James Goring, James Janzen, Brent Atkinson, Stephanie Carlton, Robert Nasato and Harbans Thind Singh.

The large number of council candidates is seen as a reflection of the turnover on council caused by the retirement of Mayor Betty Toporowski and the decision by four current councillors to run for the mayor's chair. After November 16, three of those councillors will be without a position in local politics.

Candidates will be scrutinized until October 18. Challenges can be made up to that date.

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS LEADER IN NEW WESTMINSTER

01535

Police trying to allay residents' fears

By Rob Gerein
Staff Reporter

New Westminster police held an information meeting to ease concerns of tenants of an 8th Street apartment building where an elderly woman was attacked Oct. 4.

There's a lot of very grief-stricken people in that building right now
~ Cpl. Gary Weishaar

"There's a lot of very grief-stricken people in that building right now," Cpl. Gary Weishaar said.

"There are tenants who have been there for 20 years or more, a lot of them seniors. It's like its own little community."

Members of the investigation team trying to solve the brutal attack on a 79-year-old woman spoke to about

50 tenants at the building Wednesday evening, as did members of the department's crime-free multi-housing unit, and the owner and manager of the building.

Police updated the tenants, who Weishaar described as frightened and concerned, on the investigation and also discussed safety and crime prevention tips.

"We wanted to give tenants a chance to voice their concerns and help them work through their grief. We also wanted to discuss security and the potential for this (an attack) happening in the future."

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Police mobilize in wake of attack

found a match.

As a result of information supplied by corrections officials (parole, probation and prisons) and tips from the public, investigators have interviewed more than 50 possible suspects in the past week, he said, most with a history sex crimes. Of particular interest are offenders who have recently been released from custody.

Police have also talked to major crimes investigators with police detachments from around North America, Gibeau said, and have issued a bulletin on the attack to every police department in BC.

They've been in close contact with Abbotsford police, who compiled an extensive list of known sex offenders in the lower mainland during their investigation of the murder of Tanya Smith.

There is little doubt the man responsible has attacked before, or been involved in some form of sexu-

al deviancy, Weishaar said. "The suspect has probably committed a crime of a sexual nature before, but I can't say with any certainty that it would have been of this magnitude."

Police have their suspicions why the attacker chose his victim, but won't reveal them. "We certainly have a prioritized list of motives, but we won't discuss that just yet."

A stolen car found near the woman's building the night of the attack has not been ruled out as evidence, Weishaar said.

Forensic evidence at the scene is also proving to be helpful in the investigation. No weapon was used in the attack, Weishaar said.

The woman, whose name is being withheld at the family's request, is recovering in a New Westminster hospital.

Anyone with information can phone New Westminster police at 525-5411 or Crime Stoppers at 669-TIPS.

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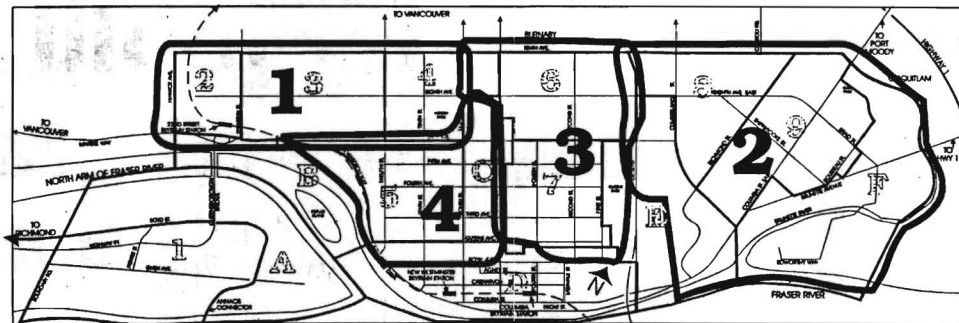
Official Community Plan Update Community Charrettes

Help create visions for your Neighbourhood!

The City of New Westminster is hosting a series of community design workshops, known as charrettes, as part of the update for the Official Community Plan. The Planning Department has been holding these workshops throughout the year. Each charrette will involve two sessions, a Thursday evening and an all day Saturday session.

Two areas are not included as part of these workshops. A Charrette has already been held for the Downtown last November, which was well received, and Queensborough has recently adopted a new Official Community Plan.

Referring to the map, New Westminster will be divided into four areas. Each Charrette will focus on one area. In April, a design charrette was held for Area 1, in June, a design charrette was held for Area 2, and in late September and early October, a design charrette was held for Area 3. Later, in October, a design workshop will be held for Area 4.



- Area 1 - West side
- Area 2 - East side
- Area 3 - Central Area (east of Sixth St.)
- Area 4 - Central Area (west of Sixth St.)

- 1 Queensborough
- 2 Connaught Heights
- 3 West End
- 4 Kelvin
- 5 Brow of the Hill
- 6 Glenbrooke North
- 7 Queen's Park
- 8 Victory Heights
- 9 Sapperton
- A North Arm South
- B North Arm North
- C Uptown
- D Downtown
- E Glenbrooke South
- F Brunette Creek

The fourth design charrette will be held for the Central Area (west of Sixth St.) portion of the City.

The first session will be held on Thursday, October 17, 1996 from 7:00 - 9:30 pm at Century House, 620 Eighth Street and the second session will be held on Saturday, October 26, 1996 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at Royal City Centre Mall, 610 Sixth Street, in the Community Room.

If you have any questions, please telephone the Planning Department at 527-4532.