

Gentle Shepherd ousted

Whalley ministry evicted to make room for retailer

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Staff Reporter

A WHALLEY GROUP helping the homeless is out on the street Tuesday.

MaryAnne Connor, who recently gave up her business to work with Surrey's homeless, said Friday the Gentle Shepherd Ministry has been given until the end of the month to vacate the premises at 13501 King George Hwy.

"We've been evicted from our building effective Aug. 31 - an issue between the landlord, city and RCMP that has forced the landlord to ask us to vacate," Connor said.

Earlier this year, the city applied pressure on landowner Nash Kooner to evict people who were sleeping in the back of the old Pinky's Laundromat.

Kooner said the city also told him they were growing weary of the people staying at the ministry, located in an adjoining property.

But bylaw officials say they only directed Kooner to clean up the former laundromat.

"I guess he decided to revamp this place (the ministry) too," one bylaw officer said.

Connor said she's looking for alternate accommodations.

She said the city has to take a more comprehensive look at cleaning up Whalley.

"Coming from a business background, I'm totally sympathetic and understand their concern to clean up the city," Connor said.

"Our stand on this initiative is that while they're making the effort to clean up Surrey streets, they need to include cleaning up the street people as well, inside and out."