

## FERNWOOD

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# Group gets \$50,000 for renovation effort

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Renovation on a building hoped to become the cornerstone of the Fernwood neighbourhood got a boost this week when Vancity awarded the Fernwood Neighbourhood Resource Group a \$50,000 grant.

Roberta Martell, executive director, says the money will be used toward offsetting the \$135,000 cost of installing geothermal and solar hot water heating in the planned four three-bedroom suites at the top of the building at 1301 Gladstone Ave. at the corner of Fernwood Road.

Vancity and the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia give the Green Building grants to non-profit organizations who are doing environmental building work.

The Fernwood group, formerly called the Fernwood Community Centre Society, purchased the building in August 2005. Plans are to make it a neighbourhood hub with affordable housing on top floor and small business tenants on the street level. The derelict building had been vacant for five years and before that had a revolving door of tenants.

Meanwhile, the group is bringing in environmentalist David Suzuki for a presentation this evening and proceeds from the event will go toward the group. The event is at 7 p.m. at the Victoria High School auditorium. Tickets are almost sold out.

Martell said the group is also shortlisted for the \$1-million Vancity award for projects that leave a lasting legacy to communities. There were 72 applications for the award and nine left. Martell said a shortlist of three will be named in June and sent to Vancity membership to vote on.