

Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee

Meeting held February 11, 2020

A meeting of the Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee is held this day commencing at 9:30 o'clock a.m. in Room 204, 350 City Hall Square West, there being present the following members:

Anna Angelidis, Acting Chair
Councillor Kieran McKenzie
Jessica Brunet
Fiona Coughlin
Eric Hill
Mayor Gary McNamara, Town of Tecumseh
Ashley Nelson
Paul Rideout
Jim Steele
Leigh Vachon

Regrets received from:

Marina Clemens
Judith Binder
Phil Dorner
Kathy Hay
Angela Yakonich
Joyce Zuk

Also present are the following resource personnel:

Debbie Cercone, Executive Director of Housing & Children's Services
Greg Atkinson, Planner III
Chris Aspila, Planner III
Jeannie Diamond Francis, County of Essex
Kelly Goz, Coordinator, Housing Administration & Development
Tina Moore, Coordinator, Housing Administration & Development
George Robinson, Planner II
Jennifer Tanner, Manager Homelessness & Housing Support
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

1. Call to Order

As the Chair is unable to attend this meeting, Anna Angelidis has agreed to be Acting Chair in the Chair's absence.

2. Disclosure of Interest

None disclosed.

3. Adoption of the Minutes

Moved by J. Brunet, seconded by Councillor McKenzie,
That the minutes of the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee of its meeting held November 19, 2019 **BE ADOPTED** as presented.
Carried.

4. Presentations

Changes to the *Planning Act* and **Bill 108**

Greg Atkinson and George Robinson, Planning Department provide an overview of the Presentation entitled “Creating Opportunities for more ADUs – Draft Official Plan and Zoning Amendments for Additional Dwelling Units” as follows:

- OPA 122 and Z-009/18 passed in Fall 2018 permitted one Second Unit in single detached, semi-detached, and townhome/row house/dwellings or within a building accessory to these dwelling types (but not within both buildings on the same property).
- 15-20 permits issued since Fall 2018. Most second units built in new construction as basement units.
- Many inquiries for laneway suites above garage, but abandon project when they learn about height limits
- Bill 108, the *More Homes, More Choice Act*, 2019 amended Planning Act. Requires municipalities to permit an additional residential unit in both the primary building AND an accessory building.
- Allows one additional dwelling unit in principle building, and one in an accessory building, on the same lot, total 3 units.
- Outside of floodplain areas – basement units may be permitted where flood mitigation criteria has been met.
- Foundation drains disconnected from the sanitary sewer and a backflow prevention valve installed in basement units.
- For an additional dwelling unit in an accessory building:
 - Height tied to main building: new prohibition for accessory buildings containing a dwelling from exceeding the height of the main building.
- Ensures the scale or new development is proportional to the existing building, and prevents the development of an accessory structure that is taller than the main building.

- Parking – CURRENT: one space for the first additional unit outside of older neighbourhoods. No parking required for additional units within parking exemption area.
- PROPOSED: no parking required for second additional unit, maximum required parking would be one space for main building, and one space for the second additional unit.

In response to a question asked by J. Brunet regarding the process for the public to access information relating to secondary suites, G. Robinson responds a website has been developed and adds workshops will also be held.

Moved by Mayor McNamara, seconded by F. Coughlin,
That the presentation provided by Greg Atkinson, Planner III and George Robinson, Planner II regarding changes to the Planning Act and Bill 108 **BE RECEIVED**.
Carried.

Windsor Essex Community Housing Corporation – Nostalgic look at the first building of Social Housing in Windsor 1964

A nostalgic look at a video of the first building of social housing in Windsor is shown depicting a glimpse into the state of low income housing in the downtown area in 1964.

The document entitled “CHC Business Intelligence Central Housing Registry” providing information relating to the Applicant waitlist, Applicants by Age Group, Applicants by income group, etc. is distributed and **attached** as Appendix “A”.

J. Steele advises there are 5,636 on the applicant waiting list. He adds more units are required in the social housing portfolio as 98.5 of the units in the Central Housing Registry are rented.

F. Coughlin proposes that clients be referred to Habitat for Humanity as the building of homes is ongoing.

D. Cercone indicates of the 5,636 people on the waitlist, at least 400 are experiencing homelessness. K. Goz adds that 6,500 individuals are at risk of homelessness as per Home Together: Windsor Essex 10-year Housing & Homelessness Plan.

In response to a question asked by Councillor McKenzie regarding if inclusionary zoning should be required in Windsor, J. Steele responds affirmatively.

5. Business Items

5.1 Secondary Suites Update

This item was discussed in the presentation provided by Greg Atkinson and George Robinson.

5.2 Discussion regarding Goals Previously Identified

K. Goz provides an overview of goals previously identified as follows:

- Housing Services has been taking steps to implement the strategies and achieve the targets identified under the HHMP
- 16 targets are identified as ongoing/long term
- 13 targets are identified as mid term
- 4 targets are identified as short term
- Housing Services has also begun to create a tracking mechanism that will detail the progress made under the strategies, action/ sub-tasks and targets for the items identified in the HHMP
- The Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee and Community Advisory Board will be engaged to act as champions of the Plan and inform the development of a work plan to put the Plan and its strategies into active use in our community. This includes efforts to raise awareness of key issues and prompt change in policy and service delivery in a way that improves a person's outcomes.
- Further updates will be provided regularly to City and County Council, HHAC, CAB, relevant funders and the community for shared accountability for the Plan including but not limited to publishing Annual Reports on the progress attained under the Plan
- Housing Services will be meeting with Corporate Communications in the coming weeks to develop a communications plan regarding the update and implementation of the plan as well as to increase awareness on issues related to housing and homelessness

5.3 City of Windsor 2020 Budget

D. Cercone reports that City Council approved through the 2020 Budget Stabilization Reserve an Outreach Worker position at Family Services Windsor-Essex.

D. Cercone states the Capital Budget includes some funding for the Meadowbrook Project for a total of \$12 M over 2 years. There are placeholders in 2021/2022 for CHC specific to some capital that has yet to be determined in terms of projects. Council also approved \$250,000 in 2020 for a municipal housing benefit. As identified in the 2020

operating budget issue, the city has not been at the prescribed social housing unit service level standard set by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for a number of years. The service level standard issue is not isolated to the City of Windsor; as other Service Managers have also identified similar shortfalls in their legislated service levels. Housing Services has developed a plan to achieve an increase to our service level over a 3-year period at a cost of \$750,000 (City and County cost-shared). The housing benefit will go directly to individuals who are eligible to be on the Central Housing Registry waiting list.

D. Cercone advises the County in their 2020 budget approved \$1.5 M for funding in a reserve for the purposes of social/affordable housing. The County is preparing for future needs around housing and has slowly started to build reserves for that purpose.

D. Cercone adds there are no changes to the CHC budget for 2020. There was some question around whether they could reduce their budget as they had put forward a request for an increase primarily driven by municipal taxes. A recommendation was made to not increase the budget pending additional information regarding the municipal tax situation and then make a recommendation going forward in terms of their operating budget.

5.4 Canada Ontario Housing Benefit

D. Cercone indicates the Canada Ontario Housing Benefit was announced in December 2019 as part of the National Housing Strategy and is co-funded by the provincial and federal governments. It is expected that overall 40,000 households will be assisted by 2027/2028 and notification was received that the allocation for Windsor Essex is \$755,473 for the 2020/2021 year. This benefit will be delivered through the Ministry of Finance and is similar to the Portable Housing Benefit Special Priority Policy (PHB-SPP) which is designated for victims of domestic violence or human trafficking. In relation to the COHB, Service Managers will be responsible for marketing activities, providing education, assisting applicants with completing forms, and submitting required documents to the Ministry of Finance (MOF). The MOF will assess applications, determine eligibility, calculate the COHB, and issue monthly COHB payments to eligible households. Households that receive this benefit have to be taken off the Central Housing Registry Waiting List (although the province indicates they may reapply again).

5.5 Reaching Home/ CAB

As many of you may recall, Housing Services issued a Request for Proposals to fund eligible proponents to deliver components of and receive funding from April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2024 (program years 2 - 5) under the Government of Canada's Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy as a component of Windsor Essex Housing Connections.

The RFP closed in late December and the evaluation committee comprised of representatives from the City and the CAB met in January to evaluate the proposals. Further details related to the successful proponent(s) and what services and supports will be offered moving forward will be presented at the next HHAC meeting.

Reaching Home Community Plan/ Community Progress Reports (CPR)

Under Reaching Home, communities are required to complete and publish annual public reports known as the Community Progress Reports. The new CPR will incorporate annual performance outputs, and track progress toward achieving community-wide outcomes.

Community Progress Reports will include 3 sections:

- Communities report on progress in implementing coordinated access through a self assessment checklist;
- Communities report on annual performance outputs; and
- Communities report on progress towards community-wide outcomes (beginning in 2020-2021).

The targets identified in the Reaching Home Community Plan have been structured to complement/mirror those identified in Home Together: Windsor Essex 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Master Plan.

Point in Time Count

The City of Windsor is federally required to conduct Everyone Counts 2020: Coordinated Point in Time Count. The event will occur over the week of April 20, 2020 with Registry Weeks sites and the street count occurring April 21-22, 2020. If your agency is interested in hosting a registry week site, please contact Kelly Goz. We will also be looking for volunteers to act as team leads during the 3 shifts (3-7pm; 8-11pm; 6-9am). If you are interested in being part of the planning committee, please contact Kelly Goz at (kgoz@citywindsor.ca).

5.6 Housing Services Act Changes

In **April 2019**, the provincial government released the Community Housing Renewal Strategy which outlined the commitment to stabilize and grow the community housing sector.

In **September of 2019**, the province filed new regulations that will improve

waiting lists, create safer communities and simplify RGI rules and calculations.

The amended regulations:

- Give community housing providers the authority to refuse to re-house a household based on previous eviction for a serious criminal offence;
- Require applicants to prioritize their housing selection preference(s) and accept the first unit offered;
- Give Service Managers and housing providers more flexibility to efficiently manage tenant transfers; and
- Change the rules that govern the calculation of RGI to make it more fair, easier for tenants to understand and simpler for staff to administer.

Housing Services conducted a social housing provider meeting on December 3, 2019 to share the information on the regulatory changes, obtain feedback and provide an overview of the timelines for implementation.

Waiting List Changes: Community Safety

The Waiting List changes came into effect the day it was announced on **September 23, 2019**.

Regulatory changes give housing providers the authority to refuse to re-house a household based on a previous eviction for serious criminal activity. The housing provider:

- May refuse to offer a unit to a household if a member of the household was previously ordered evicted from community housing by the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) due to illegal activity AND
- Must have reasonable grounds to believe that the household would pose a risk to the safety of other people at the housing project (i.e. other residents, staff).

Waiting List Changes: Refusals

The change comes into effect on **January 1, 2020**. All Service Managers will be required to apply the rule no later than **January 1, 2021**.

- New provincial eligibility rule states that a household is no longer eligible for RGI assistance if it refuses an offer for RGI assistance, except in extenuating circumstances as determined by the Service Manager. This means an applicant on the waitlist will no longer receive three offers of housing before being deemed ineligible. This new one offer rule applies to all applicants on the waitlist including special needs and special priority applicants.

Housing Services is currently working with the CHR and CHC staff to implement this change. Target date for implementation in Windsor Essex is tentatively set for November 1, 2020.

Waiting List Changes: Transfers

The change would come into force on **January 1, 2020**.

This regulatory change will remove the current requirement that tenants requesting a transfer to a RGI unit operated by a different housing provider have their application placed on the centralized waiting list. The changes include the following:

- The Service Manager has the flexibility to determine how to manage transfers between housing providers. Discretion is given to Service Managers to determine whether households will or will not be required to be added to the centralized waiting list.
- Consultation with social housing providers and CHR staff identified an interest in prioritizing the transfer of over housed RGI tenants. The process of transferring RGI tenants between social housing providers in Windsor Essex will begin by offering priority transfers to RGI households that are over housed. Prioritizing this group for transfers between housing providers will ensure that tenants in social housing units in Windsor Essex are in the right size unit and housing resources are being utilized appropriately.

Housing Services is currently working with the CHR and CHC staff to implement this change. Target date for implementation in Windsor Essex is tentatively set for **November 1, 2020**.

RGI Simplification

The change comes into force on **July 1, 2020** but allows Service Managers the choice of whether to implement the changes on either **July 1, 2020 or July 1, 2021**.

Target date for implementation in Windsor Essex is set for **July 1, 2021**.

MMAH will revoke Ontario Regulation 298/01 and introduce a new, simplified regulation (Ontario Regulation 316/19}. The changes include the following:

Moving to a simplified, annual calculation of rent based on 30 percent of adjusted family net income (utilizing income tax return).

Income may also be based on a projection of net income for the next 12 months in certain situations (e.g. if a tenant's income tax return is not available).

In-year reviews will only be completed under specific circumstances (e.g. 20% reduction or more in household income, change to household composition), and tenants will no longer be required to report an increase in income between annual reviews.

All tenants in full time studies will now have their income exempt from the rent calculation.

RGI minimum rent will be increased and is subject to phase in for existing tenants. Minimum rent increases are in effect for new RGI households as of **July 1, 2020**.

Housing Services has worked with the CHR to develop a detailed implementation plan regarding the regulatory changes with consideration provided to updating Local Rules, RGI Verification Guidelines, updating CHR documents, website, communication with social housing providers and community partners, providing adequate notice to CHR applicants and ensuring that mandated timelines are met.

5.7 Support of the 10 Year Housing & Homelessness Plan

The Acting Chair refers to the HHAC Report No. 10 (HHAC meeting held November 19, 2019) as follows;

Moved by Councillor McKenzie, seconded by J. Steele,

*“That a subcommittee **BE ESTABLISHED** for the purpose of supporting the activities to lead to the implementation of the 10 Year Housing & Homelessness Master Plan and further, that relevant administrative resources from the City and County **BE INVITED** to sit on the subcommittee.”*

Carried.

The Acting Chair indicates the Community Services and Parks Standing Committee at its meeting held February 5, 2020 amended HHAC Report No. 10 as follows;

Decision Number: CSPA 102 *That Report No. 10 of the Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee -“Establish a subcommittee to support activities to lead to the implementation of the 10 Year Housing & Homelessness Master Plan” **BE REFERRED back to the Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee so that the Committee members can review and potentially amend the recommendation in light of the additional information provided by Administration dated January 30, 2020.***

Carried.

Councillor McKenzie suggests the establishment of a subcommittee that is comprised of HHAC committee members only with no administrative staff. He also notes that this subcommittee will report directly to the Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee.

Moved by F. Coughlin, seconded by Councillor McKenzie,

That in light of the additional information memo dated January 30, 2020 from the Commissioner of Community Development and Health Services regarding support of an Administrative working group structure to move the work of the 10 Year Housing & Homelessness Master Plan, that the motion approved by HHAC at its meeting held November 19, 2019 **BE AMENDED** to indicate the following:

That HHAC **ESTABLISH** a 10 Year Housing & Homelessness Master Plan Subcommittee consisting solely of members of the Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee.

Carried.

6. Updates from HHAC Members

No updates are provided.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at the call of the Chair.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 11:42 o'clock a.m.

ACTING CHAIR

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR