

## **Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee**

Meeting held November 23, 2021

A meeting of the Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee is held this day commencing at November 23, 2021 at 10:00 o'clock a.m. via Zoom video conference, there being present the following members:

Marina Clemens, Chair  
Anna Angelidis (arrives at 10:05 a.m.)  
Jessica Brunet  
Fiona Coughlin  
Phil Dorner  
Kathy Hay  
Eric Hill  
Mayor Gary McNamara, Town of Tecumseh  
Jim Steele  
Leigh Vachon  
Angela Yakonich  
Joyce Zuk

### ***Regrets received from:***

Councillor Kieran McKenzie

### ***Also present are the following resource personnel:***

Jelena Payne, Commissioner Human & Health Services  
Debbie Cercone, Executive Director, Housing & Children's Services  
Greg Atkinson, Planner III  
Jeannie Diamond Francis, County of Essex  
Kelly Goz, Manager, Homelessness & Housing Support  
Jude Malott, Executive Initiatives Coordinator, Office of the City Solicitor  
Tina Moore, Coordinator, Housing Administration & Development  
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

### **1. Call to Order**

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 10:01 o'clock a.m. and the Committee considers the Agenda being Schedule A attached hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

## 2. Disclosure of Interest

None disclosed.

## 3. Adoption of the Minutes

Moved by E. Hill, seconded by P. Dorner,  
That the minutes of the Housing & Homelessness Advisory Committee of its meeting held September 21, 2021 **BE ADOPTED** as presented.  
Carried.

## 4. Business Items

### 4.1 Residential Rental Licensing Pilot Study

J. Brunet advises that in speaking to community leaders and colleagues, there are concerns that “units will be pushed underground”; the tenants will pay for the cost of the licensing fees, not all landlords will participate, and the supply of housing will be deterred. A benefit of residential rental licensing will deliver a different way of measuring the housing stock.

J. Zuk states as this is being piloted in Wards 1 and 2, looking at the impact that the University and College rentals have will disproportionately impacts the market. She adds from the homelessness work that they are involved in at Family Services, their struggle is that many of the units that are affordable and available are not on the radar anywhere. She adds that even if the pilot study was expanded, how will the illegal units be found and how do we get landlords to buy into this process. The cost of this will be borne by those who will be renting. She asks Administration to comment on what consultations have taken place with the University and College.

Discussion ensues regarding how the before and after metrics will be measured for both positive and negative outcomes, if we are losing stock and what is the ultimate goal of this pilot study.

J. Zuk suggests that if the city’s objective is to improve the overall quality of the rental housing stock, it would a proactive move if the city were to bear the cost of the licensing system, which then would not be passed onto the tenants.

The Chair requests that statistics from other municipalities who have undertaken this pilot study be provided. She indicates that she completed the Residential Rental Licensing survey and found it difficult to complete, intrusive and high level.

Mayor G. McNamara states that the pilot study will separate the bad apples from the good ones. The safety issue is very important, as we have seen the impact of inadequate development of certain units.

The Chair asks Administration to advise how many individuals participated in the residential rental licensing survey along with the results.

J. Malott provides the following comments in response to questions and concerns posed by the Committee:

- The pilot study is not focused on student housing but on the areas of Wards 1 and 2 as instructed by City Council.
- The pilot is being designed presuming that it will be rolled out citywide and will not be focused on any one particular type of housing other than rental units that are in buildings that contain one to four units.
- Consulted with the Town and Gown Committee as well as the University and the College who provided minimal comments.
- The pilot study is in the planning stage of the project.
- In terms of the metrics and how success will be evaluated, we will be counting the number of units deemed illegal.
- The exact metrics will be defined by the framework approved by Council through the by-law.
- The purpose of the survey was to evaluate those frameworks and not to evaluate whether or not a licence should be implemented because that has been decided by Council. The intention was to see what framework tools people felt were important; which were effective and whether there was a correlation between the issues that they experienced both in their frequency and levels of concern with which tools that they found were important or effective.
- In terms of the premise of the city, bearing the cost that was asked in the survey.
- The proposal that we bring forward to the city with their by-law as derived from the feedback from the survey, will include some option for varying levels of cost recovery which will be determined by Council.

In response to a question asked by J. Brunet regarding if the residential licensing will be voluntary, J. Malott responds that it is not and there will be a required licence.

The Chair thanks J. Malott for attending the meeting and for providing clarification to questions asked by the members.

The members articulate the following remarks subsequent to Administration's comments:

- HHAC's focus should be on increasing the number of rental units available, recognizing the lack of housing that is available and how does this initiative line up with that.
- Suggestion to provide a one-pager as additional information to Mr. Malott's report when it goes to the Environment, Transportation and Public Safety Standing Committee and Council.
- There is a need to have good quality rental housing along with available housing stock and HHAC'S position should be that they do not want the cost of the licence to be passed onto the tenants. Council should look for a mechanism to ensure that rental costs are not increased.
- Passing on the cost of the residential rental licence may put people out on the street and there needs to be a balance.
- Suggestion to cross-reference this initiative with the Housing Strategy to see if it lines up with what Council has already approved.

In response to a question asked by J. Zuk regarding if the Housing and Homelessness Department has provided feedback on this matter, D. Cercone responds that they have had an opportunity to provide feedback. Their biggest concern is passing on the cost to the tenants and the inclusion of social housing as a requirement of the licensing.

D. Cercone responds to the comment regarding the alignment with the Ten Year Plan, and adds that when they embarked on the Housing First Program in 2015 they stayed true to the model - the goal is to allow people to have their own one bedroom apartment. They are now looking at different ways of housing individuals for different reasons – affordability being one of the major ones that is a barrier at this time. She alludes to home sharing where friends share an apartment and split the cost of the rent. She adds that what is available for the low income and affordable housing population is not safe or livable in certain circumstances so the idea around a licensing regime will hold landlords accountable for their rental units.

J. Zuk states that on one hand we are very much advocating for an increase in the housing stock. She adds that in no way is HHAC condemning any initiative that is looking to hold landlords to account to improve the rental housing stock and this potential by-law is one way to make that happen through licensing. We need to advise the Standing Committee and Council that their job is to balance and to ensure that the landlords are held to account with maintaining rental costs and not putting in place anything that will drive up the rental costs.

K. Goz advises that we also have to look at room sharing – putting more than one individual in a unit in order to increase safety and to address that social inclusion piece.

The Chair asks members to volunteer to author a one-page report outlining the concerns relating to the Residential Rental Licensing Pilot Study, which will be forwarded to the Environment, Transportation and Public Safety Standing Committee and City Council. J. Zuk and A. Angelidis volunteer to outline the concerns of HHAC in a report.

L. Vachon asks if there have been conversations with the University of Windsor and St. Clair College regarding their responsibility for bringing international students to Windsor who have no housing. She notes there have been challenges for the students who did not receive assistance.

D. Cercone responds that when the announcement was made regarding bringing in international students, the College had an understanding that the city had a repository of information that the students could access which the city clarified that they did not. The city only discovered this through the number of students using Transit Windsor buses. Since that time, there has not been any formal ongoing communication with the College or the University from the perspective of their obligations to the students.

J. Zuk advises that the number one piece that HHAC is bringing forward is in municipalities in Ontario where Residential Rental licensing has been brought in, i.e. City of London, which directly relates to an increase in rent because the costs are passed onto tenants. HHAC is following the Ten Year Housing & Homelessness Plan and there are concerns with the possibility that this will increase rents.

Moved by J. Zuk, seconded by Mayor G. McNamara,  
That a submission from the Housing and Homelessness Advisory Committee **BE SUBMITTED** to the Community Services and Parks Standing Committee and City Council identifying HHAC's concerns that the Residential Rental Licensing Pilot Study will increase rents in an already expensive rental housing market.  
Carried.

## 4.2 Updates by Administration

### 4.2 Goal 1: Sustain & expand social housing & affordable housing supply Expiring Rent Supplements – Mitigating Strategy

As reported in September 2019 and again in September 2021, a number of Provincially funded RS/HA programs that are allocated to various priority populations including but not limited to chronic homelessness, survivors of domestic violence, survivors of human trafficking, youth, Indigenous Peoples and persons with disabilities are set to expire over the next 2 years as follows:

Program Name	Expiry Date	Current Households (at July 2021)	Approx Yearly Subsidy
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Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH)	March 31, 2022	82	\$ 460,000
Strong Communities Rent Supplement (SCRSP)	March 31, 2023	195	\$ 1,164,000
Investment in Affordable Housing (Ext) – (IAHE)	March 31, 2024	203	\$ 1,400,000
IAHE – Social Infrastructure Funding (SIF)	March 31, 2024	48	\$ 190,000
SIF – Anti-Human Trafficking (SIF-AHT)	March 31, 2024	17	\$ 111,000
Ontario Priorities Housing Initiative (OPHI – HA) (yearly allocation)	March 31, 2022	6	\$ 30,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>551</b>	<b>\$ 3,355,000</b>

Housing Services has been meeting and working with Program Administrators who are contacting and meeting with tenants who have a rent supplement expiring on March 31, 2022 (IAH). All effected tenancies have been granted PII status on the Windsor Essex centralized waitlist.

Administrators are working with tenants to facilitate a transfer to another housing program, where available (Canada Ontario Housing Benefit, Windsor Essex Housing Benefit, RGI (social housing units)) to be effective April 1, 2022. It is expected the majority of affected tenancies will transition to a Windsor Essex Housing Benefit (WEHB In an effort to ensure households currently in receipt of an expiring rent supplement find a replacement subsidy, the WEHB program has been paused (new tenancies) in order to preserve funding for our expiring IAH rent supplement tenancies to transition to a WEHB effective April 2022.

Further meetings will be initiated in late 2022 to review and plan mitigation strategies for the remaining expiries (2023 and 2024). At this time, Housing Services is not aware of any replacement provincial/federal funding to offset the expiring programs noted above.

Currently there is a pause on offering any new rent supplements in Windsor Essex as the remaining funding streams are fully allocated. Housing Services is monitoring the rent supplement claims and funding streams on an ongoing basis and will work with rent supplement administrators on any changes moving forward. Housing Services, Sector agencies and AMO have been advocating to MMAH to seek a solution and on-going/new funding to offset these expiring programs.

Housing Services is preparing a report to further advise Council on the above expiries and mitigation strategies currently underway.

### Capital Funding Opportunities

There have been a number of funding announcements from the provincial and federal government to help shift the focus from emergency response to long-term solutions. Updates are provided in the table below.

Funding Stream	Funding Ministry	Amount	Month Allocation Received	Notes
Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF Phase 3)	Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing (MMAH)	\$6.8 million	March 2021	<p>The Additional funding to Service Managers provided under SSRF Phase 3 is intended to support COVID-related protocols and additional operating expenses at emergency shelters, Housing with Supports Homes, H4 and other organizations that serve vulnerable populations.</p> <p>This funding also supported two capital projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The purchase of a hotel to be converted to an emergency shelter for up to 32 women and 16 families. This will achieve key recommendations in the Windsor Essex Emergency Shelter Review approved by City and County Councils in the summer of 2020. Renovations are underway and the shelter will open in early 2022.</li> <li>2) A supportive housing project that will add 29 units that has not yet been announced, .</li> </ol>
Social Services Relief Fund (SSRF Phase 4)	Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing (MMAH)	\$7.7 million	August 2021	The Province announced the fourth and final phase of the Social Services Relief Fund with an allocation of \$7.7 million. The focus for this stream of funding is long-

				<p>term housing based solutions for homelessness and to ensure an orderly wind down of initiatives funded through the first three phases of SSRF.</p> <p>Administration submitted an investment plan to MMAH on Sept 15th, which was approved on November 12<sup>th</sup>. The investment plan outlined the anticipated operating and capital projects that are currently under review. These investments will provide, on the operating side, the continuation of COVID related expenditures in homelessness and housing support programs and will yield an additional 18 affordable units in the City and the County (units are not mutually exclusive to SSRF Phase 4 as some projects received more than one stream of funding). More details to follow after provincial announcements are made.</p>
Canada-Ontario Community Housing Initiative (COCHI)	Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing (MMAH)	\$573,700	August 2021	An additional funding allocation of \$573,700 to the COCHI program bringing the 2021-22 total funding to \$2,308,365 through the Community Housing Renewal Strategy to support community-housing providers.
Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy	Employment & Social Development Canada (ESDC)	\$2.9million	August 2021	<p>Communities are encouraged to use these additional Reaching Home funds to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Extend emergency COVID-19 measures</li> <li>2. Invest in activities that promote housing stability</li> <li>3. Undertake activities to prevent future inflows into homelessness</li> </ol> <p>As part of the business case communities must clearly describe planned investments in housing placements / stability as well as activities that will help prevent</p>



				<p>homelessness, given their importance in containing the spread of COVID-19.</p> <p>This funding represents a one-time in year enhancement.</p> <p>Funds must be fully spent by March 31, 2022</p> <p>These funds are planned for an expansion of affordable housing units, consulting and professional services for the Housing Hub, renovations, and furnishings for a supportive housing project. Further details to follow after federal announcements have been made..</p>
Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) – Round 2	Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation (CMHC)	Cities Stream	June	<p>The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation announced the creation of 4,500 new affordable housing units across the country with an additional investment of \$1.5 billion through a Round 2 of the Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI). These housing units will support Canadians who are in uncertain housing situations, experiencing or at risk of homelessness, or living in temporary shelters because of the pandemic.</p> <p>The City of Windsor as Consolidated Municipal Service Manager for Windsor and Essex County received a priority allocation of \$9,337,117 in Round 2 to create a minimum of 35 units of new permanent affordable housing as part of the Cities Stream. The City submitted an application for 3 projects, 2 in the City and 1 in the County that meet the minimum unit count requirement on August 31, 2021 All 3 projects were approved by</p>

				CMHC in October 2021. Details will be provided once federal announcements are made on the successful projects. The initiative targets rapid housing and delivery of units within 12 months. CMHC will contribute up to 100% of funding to cover eligible residential construction costs.
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**5. Date of Next Meeting**

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

**6. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 11:45 o'clock a.m.

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**CHAIR**

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**COMMITTEE COORDINATOR**