

ST. JOHN'S

Affordable Housing Working Group

February 25, 2020

11:30 a.m.

Conference Room A, 4th Floor City Hall

Pages

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**
 - 2.1 Adoption of Agenda
3. **ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**
 - 3.1 Adoption of Minutes - January 8, 2020 1
4. **BUSINESS ARISING**
 - 4.1 Affordable Housing Strategy Update 7
 - 4.2 Opportunities for Collaboration with Community Housing Transformation Centre 11
5. **OTHER BUSINESS**
 - 5.1 Workshop Series
 - 5.2 Emergency Shelters - follow-up 13
 - 5.3 Verbal Update - Office of the City Clerk
6. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**
7. **ADJOURNMENT**

ST. JOHN'S

Affordable Housing Working Group Minutes

January 8, 2020

12:00 p.m.

Conference Room A, 4th Floor City Hall

Present: Deputy Mayor Sheilagh O'Leary, Council Representative
Jill Snow, CMHC
Gail Thornhill, Stella's Circle
Ayon Shahed, Choices for Youth
Doug Pawson, End Homelessness St. John's
Grayson Kelly, NLHC
Emily Timmins, Poverty Reduction, Gov NL
Andrew Harvey, First Light

Regrets: Victoria Belbin, Canadian Homebuilders Association

Staff: Simone Lilly, Affordable Housing & Development Facilitator, Chair
Judy Tobin, Manager of Non-Profit Housing
Shanna Fitzgerald, Legislative Assistant

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

2.1 **Adoption of Agenda**

Moved By Gail Thornhill

Seconded By Ayon Shahed

That the Agenda be adopted with an addition from Ayon Shahed.

MOTION CARRIED

3. **ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

3.1 **Adoption of the Minutes - September 24, 2019**

Moved By Andrew Harvey

Seconded By Jill Snow

That the minutes of September 24, 2019 be adopted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

4. BUSINESS ARISING

4.1 Affordable Housing Strategy Update

The Chair updated the Committee on the following ongoing initiatives for 2019-2028 and the following was noted:

- Housing Week

National Housing Day is meant to raise awareness about housing and homelessness and encourage events designed to focus on the needs of individual communities. This year, a film screening, a housing forum, a community art project and a housing 'coffee break' were held. Activities and events were well attended and reached a broad range of stakeholders and community members. It was noted that the housing week was a success with some positive follow up engagement. It was noted that next year a subcommittee would be beneficial.

- Annual Update

An annual update on the Affordable Housing Strategy's first year and main areas of work was published on the City's website. The Chair can provide a copy if requested.

- Workshop Series

Affordable Housing are preparing to launch an affordable housing workshop series for 2020. This workshop series would essentially give attendees a 101 guide on key topics and project steps in our sector. This could contain six sessions in 2020, the first being held in early February. Each session would include a topic expert and would be roughly one hour in duration. The proposed first sessions are:

1. Affordable housing 101 – key concepts, housing need, and addressing the gaps
2. The development process – development application, the rezoning process and municipal incentives for affordable housing builds
3. NIMBY– Unpacking the Nimby toolkit

The Panel was asked to support this initiative by circulating it to their contacts. The list of proposed topics and possible speakers as well as the tentative dates will be sent in an email following the meeting. The Chair requested that the Panel provide feedback. Discussion ensued and it was suggested that the Workshops can then be placed in a manual as a resource.

- Successful Tenancies

The Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Tenant document developed by the City and our affordable housing partners, has been updated to reflect the Residential Tenancies Act changes that came into effect in 2019. The document has been translated into French and Arabic. The Panel was informed that this can now be placed in the newsletter and distributed. The files will be sent out to members by the Chair to distribute as they see fit.

- Housing Catalyst Fund

The application period for 2020 Housing Catalyst Fund grants is now closed. A selection committee has been formed and decisions are anticipated before the end of the first quarter. The committee is scheduled to meet January 9, 2020.

- Property Standards

Attempts were made to reach out to Eastern Health to see if they would be interested in the 'Safe and Healthy Housing' Presentation. There will be follow up as there has not yet been a response. Gail Thornhill to contact Lisa Gilbert of Eastern Health. Staff are considering offering an open community presentation. It was noted that members can contact the Chair if an organization represented on the Panel would like to take part.

- Land

Habitat for Humanity will be applying for rezoning on the City owned Eric Street parcel of land. Internal consultations have been held throughout December to investigate any concerns raised with the proposed development to date. This information will be prepared as a report for Council as part of the rezoning process. The group will be kept informed as this moves forward.

- Social Marketing Strategy

A social marketing campaign has been created to tackle the fears associated with affordable housing through increased information (awareness campaigns, success stories, etc.) and focusing on the benefits

of affordable housing. A communications sub-committee has been struck to guide this work. Three short videos have been prepared with inanimate objects that are common to every home. The script is aimed at producing self-reflection for the viewer to chip away at the perceptions of affordable housing. A new affordable housing website page is being developed to support the videos when they are released. The link will be sent out after coordination on a landing web page with the city. The hope is to begin circulating the videos in quarter 1.

4.2 NIMBY Toolkit Update

The Affordable Housing Working Group determined there was value in updating the CHBA NL NIMBY toolkit to include new case studies, an updated contact list and revised City of St. John's Planning Process. The update is now complete and ready to be relaunched.

The Panel discussed the timeline to release the updated toolkit and the AHWG's position on broadening the toolkit's reach through presentations and sharing. The following points were noted:

- Canadian Home Builders Association website link will be shared by City of St. John's.
- Panel discussed a possible launch of the new toolkit at the NIMBY workshop.
- New introduction outlines the changes made to the toolkit.
- It was noted that one image should be changed in the updated copy of the NIMBY toolkit included in the agenda. Emily Timmins to send photo to Simone Lilly.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

5.1 Emergency Shelters

Council has requested that there be a discussion with members of the Affordable Housing Working Group around what the City's interaction with emergency shelters is and what it could or should be.

The City's current interactions with emergency shelters include:

Regulatory - In partnership with Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, the City provides assistance with inspections and enforcement of the province's Emergency Shelter Program. On a pilot basis, the City of St. John's will inspect all buildings used for private

emergency shelters every six months and nonprofit emergency shelters annually.

Information - The City documents information about emergency shelters as part of efforts to keep a non-market housing inventory.

Planning - Development decisions with regards to emergency shelters are laid out in the City's Municipal Plan and Development Regulations.

Advocacy and system planning - Via EHSJ (Part of the City until April 2020) - End Homelessness St. John's continues to support efforts and help lead discussion on the state of emergency shelters, as the system planning organization for St. John's.

Discussion on emergency shelters ensued and the following points were made:

- The City should have a stronger capacity to deal with individuals with mental health issues.
- End Homelessness St. John's provided an update to the Panel on the meetings held in November and December with Minister Dempster. Commitment was made to continue the conversation. The next meeting date is to be determined.
- Within those meetings it was noted that the RNC mentioned that 15% of the calls to private shelters are criminal related and the vast majority are mental health issues. This speaks to the need that shelters with services are important.
- A member of the committee suggested that the AHWG can provide advocacy points with recommendations to support Council.
- It was requested that Ayon Shahed draft a reference document for the Panel.

5.2 Verbal Update - Scope and Context of the Affordable Housing Working Group

The Chair provided a verbal update about the scope and context of the Affordable Housing Working Group. End Homelessness St. John's is leaving the City in April 2020. It was suggested that the group then become the "Housing and Homelessness Working Group" to widen the topics and discussion and the terms of reference can be amended if necessary, to specifically outline the criteria covered. Discussion ensued

and the consensus of the group was to agree with this change. A decision note is to be drafted and brought to Committee of the Whole.

5.3 Visitors to St. John's

Ayon Shahed of Choices for Youth gave a brief update to the group. The CEO of the Canadian Housing Transformation Center will be in St. John's the first week of February to present a broad overview of their program by holding presentations and setting up meetings with housing and the City. It was recommended by a member of the Committee that contact is made with Stacey House at First Light. It was noted that the morning of February 6 the Network has already been booked and the space can be used for the presentation.

5.4 Verbal Update - Office of the City Clerk

The Legislative Assistant gave a verbal update from the Office of the City Clerk on attendance and participation. It was requested that members RSVP to invitations as soon as they are sent out as this gives the organizer time to ascertain there is quorum and the meeting can go ahead as planned. A reminder email will be sent to those with no response and members can advise via email that they will be attending. Attendance is required.

The Office of the City Clerk periodically reviews attendance for the various advisory committees and working groups to ensure membership is current and maintains active involvement. Some memberships are due for renewal in March and an email will be sent out to those affected with instructions on what is needed by the Office of the City Clerk to maintain membership to this group.

The next meeting date will be set at the end of each meeting.

6. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting has been scheduled for February 25, 2020 at 11:30 am.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:31 pm.

CHAIRPERSON, SIMONE LILLY

INFORMATION NOTE

Title: Affordable Housing Strategy Update

Date Prepared: February 14th, 2020

Report To: Affordable Housing Working Group

Councillor and Role: Deputy City Mayor Sheilagh O'Leary

Ward: N/A

Issue: Provide an update on the City of St. John's Affordable Housing Strategy 2019-2028 and main areas of work

Discussion – Background and Current Status:

The City of St. John's approved the Affordable Housing Strategy, 2019-2028, in November 2018. The strategy will address the municipality's housing needs by working in step with partners, stakeholders and residents to create and maintain safe, suitable and affordable housing throughout the city. The following is an update on the main areas of work.

Growing Capacity

We were pleased to partner with Choices for Youth to welcome two National colleagues to St. John's; Dominika Krzeminska the Director of Strategic Initiatives with CHRA and Stéphan Corriveau, the Executive Director of the newly formed Community Housing Transformation Centre.

The week's agenda included

- Individual meetings with community housing providers/ support organizations
- Meetings with City of St. John's and NLHC government officials to discuss regional strategic directions and opportunities for collaboration
- 'Growing Capacity in Community Housing' public forum. This event sought to raise awareness on the two organizations, their programs and capacities. It allowed attendees to engage with these National Organizations and discuss our together discuss our local context within their National mandates and strategic priorities.
- Choices for Youth and Happy City co hosted a panel discussion on Affordability in St. John's. Dominika took part in this event as the panelist on housing affordability.

ST. JOHN'S

Successful Tenancies

The Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Tenant document developed by the City and our affordable housing partners, has been updated to reflect the Residential Tenancies Act changes that came into effect in 2019. The document has recently been translated into French and Arabic and has been uploaded to the City of St. John's website City of St. John's> publications> housing.

Housing Catalyst Fund

A Housing Catalyst Grant selection committee was established to review submissions. It included the CMHC Affordable Housing Specialist, NLHC Manager of Affordable Housing programs and the following internal staff: Chief Municipal Planner, Supervisor– Tourism & Events, Manager- Housing and the Affordable Housing and Development Facilitator. Due to remaining funds from 2019, The selection committee was able to recommend seven applications for funding, 5 at \$10 000 and an additional 2 at \$5 000 each. Recommendations were approved by Committee of the Whole on February 12th.

2020 Housing Catalyst projects are as follows:

Organization	Project	Grant Amount
Fundamental Inc	Net Zero Ready Affordable Tiny Home- Prototype Unit	\$10 000
Power Brothers Inc	Design costs to make affordable housing units accessible as part of retrofit build	\$10 000
Stella's Circle Community Services	Consultant costs to expand housing portfolio and maximize current units/land	\$10 000
L'Arche Avalon	Floor plan design for the construction of two l'Arche Avalon homes and a day centre	\$10 000
Connections for Seniors	Supportive Housing Needs Assessment for Older Adults	\$10 000
NL Gray Gays	Housing and care needs assessment for LGBTQI2S community	\$ 5 000
Universal Design Network	Universal Design Education	\$ 5 000

Property Standards

We continue to reach out to Eastern Health to see if they would be interested in the 'Safe and Healthy Housing' Presentation. The next scheduled presentation will be held for Stella's Circle staff on March 5th.

Land

Habitat for Humanity will be applying for rezoning on the City owned Eric Street parcel of land. Internal consultations continue to be held to investigate any concerns raised with the proposed development to date. Habitat for Humanity are preparing a potential design and until this design is submitted to the Planning Department, community concerns can't fully be investigated as they relate to the project (ex. impact on trees or traffic flow). In the interim, a meeting has been set up with the West End Community Alliance to outline concerns and ensure that the project process and current phase are understood. This will be an informal meeting outside of the formal public consultations that are part of the rezoning process.

Once the potential design has been submitted, an engagement meeting will be held with the community gardeners and Habitat for Humanity to discuss possibilities for revitalization of the garden.

An engage page has been set up that outlines the project background, FAQs and the project lifecycle <https://www.engagestjohns.ca/eric-street>

NIMBY

The Affordable Housing Working Group determined there was value in updating the NIMBY toolkit to include new case studies, an updated contact list and revised CSJ Planning Process. The update is now complete. The new revised document has been uploaded on the Canadian Home Builders of Newfoundland and Labrador website and is linked on the City of St. John's Website under publications> housing. A workshop and relaunch event are being planned for May 2020.

Social Marketing Strategy

A social marketing campaign has been created to tackle the fears associated with affordable housing through increased information (awareness campaigns, success stories, etc.) and focusing on the benefits of affordable housing. Three videos are complete and a revitalized website to accompany these videos is now being created. We hope to launch this social marketing strategy in tandem with the NIMBY workshop.

Key Considerations/Implications:

1. Budget/Financial Implications: Funding is already allocated for 2020 Affordable Housing objectives.

2. Partners or Other Stakeholders: The City's Affordable Housing Strategy was built upon public and strategic stakeholder engagement, and the implementation continues to be guided and shaped by multi-stakeholder partnerships and processes.
3. Alignment with Strategic Directions/Adopted Plans: The Affordable Housing Strategy aligns with the Strategic Plan's vision and directions. Affordable Housing implementations actions work in tandem with the Municipal Plan and Development Regulations.
4. Legal or Policy Implications: No legal implications.
5. Privacy Implications: None anticipated at this time.
6. Engagement and Communications Considerations: The City's Communications and OPS departments are aware, involved and very supportive of the work being completed under the Affordable Housing Strategy
7. Human Resource Implications: None anticipated at this time.
8. Procurement Implications: None anticipated at this time.
9. Information Technology Implications: None anticipated at this time.
10. Other Implications: None anticipated at this time.

Conclusion/Next Steps: Work continues to progress initiatives in the Affordable Housing Strategy

Prepared by/Date: Simone Lilly, Affordable Housing and Development Facilitator

Reviewed by/Date: Judy Tobin, Manager, Non-Profit Housing

Approved by/Date: Judy Tobin, Manager, Non-Profit Housing

Attachments: N/A

INFORMATION NOTE

Title: Opportunities for Collaboration with CHTC

Date Prepared: February 17, 2020

Report To: Affordable Housing Working Group

Councillor and Role: Deputy City Mayor Sheilagh O'Leary

Ward: N/A

Issue: Community Housing Transformation Centre

Discussion – Background and Current Status:

The [Community Housing Transformation Centre](#) (CHTC) works with housing organizations across Canada to bring together expertise, resources and promising practices from across the sector in one place. Their goal is drive transformation, sustainability and growth in community housing. While Stephan Corriveau, Executive Director of CHTC was in St. John's in February we discussed two potential opportunities for collaboration that we would like to consider with the AHWG.

1. Potential partnership with our Housing Catalyst grants. We would be interested in partnering with CHTC on these grants to potentially offer more grants or grants at a higher value (attracting a wider range of projects). We would like to consider entering a Memorandum of Understanding, stating matched funding at a 1\$ for 1\$ ratio for every project that is selected, based on an agreed selection criteria and report process.

CHTC is unable to fund the City of St-John's so we would have to look at one of the following options:

- We both send our share of the grants directly to the recipients, and they answer back to both funders.
 - We send CHTC our money, and they send the total amount to the recipient, they report back to us. Reports would be shared, and no admin fees would be charged to the City
-
2. Potential partnership to create a community housing resource person
It is well recognized in the community that National funding opportunities exist but locally we are facing difficulty accessing that funding due to:
 - Lack of knowledge about existing opportunities
 - Capacity to prepare applications

ST. JOHN'S

- A lack of technical expertise
- Expertise to guide decisions of housing renewal and management

We would like to discuss with the AHWG how we could fill this gap for St. John's by creating a community position that could provide consulting, technical support, planning and funding guidance in support of strengthening the sustainability of the community housing sector.

Key Considerations/Implications:

1. Budget/Financial Implications: Funding is already allocated for 2020 Affordable Housing objectives.
2. Partners or Other Stakeholders: The City's Affordable Housing Strategy was built upon public and strategic stakeholder engagement, and the implementation continues to be guided and shaped by multi-stakeholder partnerships and processes.
3. Alignment with Strategic Directions/Adopted Plans: The Affordable Housing Strategy aligns with the Strategic Plan's vision and directions. Affordable Housing implementations actions work in tandem with the Municipal Plan and Development Regulations.
4. Legal or Policy Implications: No legal implications.
5. Privacy Implications: None anticipated at this time.
6. Engagement and Communications Considerations: The City's Communications and OPS departments are aware, involved and very supportive of the work being completed under the Affordable Housing Strategy.
7. Human Resource Implications: None anticipated at this time.
8. Procurement Implications: None anticipated at this time.
9. Information Technology Implications: None anticipated at this time.
10. Other Implications: None anticipated at this time.

Conclusion/Next Steps: We would like to discuss opportunities to collaborate with CHTC

Prepared by/Date: Simone Lilly, Affordable Housing and Development Facilitator

Reviewed by/Date: Judy Tobin, Manager, Non-Profit Housing

Approved by/Date: Judy Tobin, Manager, Non-Profit Housing

INFORMATION NOTE

Title: Shelters

Date Prepared: February 17th, 2020

Report To: Affordable Housing Working Group

Councillor and Role: Deputy City Mayor Sheilagh O'Leary

Ward: N/A

Issue: Emergency Shelters

Discussion – Background and Current Status:

As discussed at our most recent AHWG meeting, Council requested that there be a discussion with members of the Affordable Housing Working Group around what the City's interaction with emergency shelters is and what it could or should be. Our working group discussed advocacy efforts. It was determined that while End Homelessness St. John's continues to lead the discussions on the state of emergency shelters, as the system planning organization for St. John's, the AHWG saw value in providing advocacy points with recommendations to support Council.

We would like to discuss the attached with members of the AHWG and confirm that these points suffice as a guide on this topic.

Key Considerations/Implications:

1. Budget/Financial Implications: Funding is already allocated for 2020 Affordable Housing objectives.
2. Partners or Other Stakeholders: The City's Affordable Housing Strategy was built upon public and strategic stakeholder engagement, and the implementation continues to be guided and shaped by multi-stakeholder partnerships and processes.
3. Alignment with Strategic Directions/Adopted Plans: The Affordable Housing Strategy aligns with the Strategic Plan's vision and directions. Affordable Housing implementations actions work in tandem with the Municipal Plan and Development Regulations.

ST. JOHN'S

4. Legal or Policy Implications: No legal implications.
5. Privacy Implications: None anticipated at this time.
6. Engagement and Communications Considerations: The City's Communications and OPS departments are aware, involved and very supportive of the work being completed under the Affordable Housing Strategy.
7. Human Resource Implications: None anticipated at this time.
8. Procurement Implications: None anticipated at this time.
9. Information Technology Implications: None anticipated at this time.
10. Other Implications: None anticipated at this time.

Conclusion/Next Steps: We would like to have a discussion on the topic of emergency shelters.

Prepared by/Date: Simone Lilly, Affordable Housing and Development Facilitator

Reviewed by/Date: Judy Tobin, Manager, Non-Profit Housing

Approved by/Date: Judy Tobin, Manager, Non-Profit Housing

Attachments: