

Bates, Tamara

From: Glenn
Sent: June 18, 2019 11:40 PM
To: Bates, Tamara
Subject: Wesley Community Homes and Wesley Day Centre

Dear Ms Bates and members of the Emergency & Community Services Committee

- Councillor Sam Merulla
- Councillor Nrinder Nann
- Councillor Tom Jackson
- Councillor Terry Whitehead
- Councillor Esther Pauls
- Councillor Brad Clark

I was dismayed to learn last week of Wesley Community Homes has decided to discontinue providing (renting) space to Wesley Urban Ministries for use of the Wesley Day Centre programs. These two organizations, which were originally one, but split due to provincial regulations on community housing, have much in common in their mandate and people they serve. People in that area rely on the services of both organizations. It has been reported that Wesley Community Homes has not provided a reason for failing to renew the rental agreement, involving space that was specially developed for the Wesley Day Centre programs. In 2014-2017 the city stepped in to appoint an "operational adviser" for Wesley Community Homes as there were issues of oversight and failing infrastructure, and I assume the committee is therefore very familiar with the operation. This suggests the city is well aware of both organizations and the valuable work they do. It is extremely unfortunate for those in real need in Hamilton will suffer due to the short-sighted decision and inability of the organizations to work for a common goal. I urge the Emergency & Community Services Committee on behalf of the city to help find a solution so that the Wesley Day Centre can continue to provide care for this community. As an initial step, I would urge attempts at mediation to really find out what the problem with continuing the longstanding rental arrangement that has existed since 1996. Wesley Community Homes says they want to build more apartment units in the space, but the additional number is only 5 or 6 units and to me just does not make sense. Additionally, there is a high likelihood that many of the current residents in the housing project make use of the services provided by the Day Centre programs, and I have not heard of any survey of the residents suggesting they are supportive of this decision.

You may wish to view a story in the Hamilton Spectator <https://www.thespec.com/news-story/9432571-wesley-day-centre-calls-mount-to-save-downtown-hamilton-community-hub-services/> from June 13 that describes some of the programs and difficulties the decision to close the Day Center will cause.

It has been reported that a modified meal program will be located at City Housing project, but will only serve those people residing in that building, not the broader community, and is not a good long-term solution.

Sincerely,

Glenn Fletcher