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ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES Housing Issues Working Group Meeting Notes

Tuesday, February 18, 2020

Room 192, City Hall

10:00a.m. – 12:00p.m.

In Attendance: Lance Dingman, Anthony Frisina, Paula Kilburn, Tom Manzuk, Robert Semkow, Doug Stone, Jayne Cardno, James Kemp

Those Absent: Michele Dent, Mary Sinclair, Sophie Geffros

1. Welcome
2. Approval of agenda
3. Approval of minutes
4. Review of Modified Unit Classification Guide: This is the guide that housing uses to determine if a unit is “Accessible” and the consensus around the table is that it is not comprehensive enough. For example, the guide says that the bare minimum to be considered accessible is grab bars in the bathroom and a space under the sink; There is no dimensions to the grab bar placements or space allowance under the sink, nor does this address the rest of the apartment, door widths, hall widths, levered handles, rocker switches, lowered cupboards, etc., ...

Our concern is that this is skewing the twenty percent threshold of accessible units and makes us wonder how many of those apartments are truly accessible.

There are also gaps in disability representation, for example; there is little for the hard of hearing or people with non-visible disabilities. There was also some questions about who this

guide applied to and that we would like someone from housing services to explain this process. We concluded our discussion by agreeing that everyone should list what they felt was required to realistically deem something “accessible” for the next meeting and we would try to find a consensus. Anthony raised the point that smart appliances and switches should be considered on the guide. The chair asked him to do some research on what that would entail, so that we could make a more informed decision.

5. City Housing’s No Smoking Policy: We discussed the new no smoking policy in City Housing properties. There was no disagreement regarding cigarettes or other tobacco products. There was however a big problem when it came to smoking marijuana and other THC/CBD products in apartments. This is counter to the City’s policy of seeing things through an EDI (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion) lens. Medical Marijuana is used to treat or manage the symptoms from a large number of disabilities and medical issues, including, but not limited to: Cancer, Muscular Dystrophy, HIV, Glaucoma, Hypertension, Chronic Fatigue, Asthma, ALS, Osteoporosis, Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, Multiple Sclerosis, Epilepsy, Tourette’s, Depression, PTSD, OCD, Bipolar Disorder, ADD/ADHD, Anxiety Disorders, Crohn’s Disease, Diabetes, Gastrointestinal Disorders, Anorexia, Arthritis, Insomnia, Fibromyalgia, Spinal Cord Injuries, Phantom Limb Syndrome, Migraines, Hepatitis, Ehler Danlos Syndrome, Autism Spectrum Disorder. It is also believed that this new policy violates the AODA as it creates new barriers for people with disabilities. Paula raised the point that ACPD signed off on this policy in the past, but that they were looking at it in terms of tobacco and not marijuana. We concluded that we would like to speak with people from the Public Health Department as well as City Housing to see if we can address some of these issues.

6. Review of Barrier Free Guidelines: We didn't discuss much in the way of guidelines, but, it was asked if we could obtain six hard copies of the 2016 BFG. Also requested six copies of the Housing Guide.
7. Future Presenters List: We discussed having the Public Health department and City Housing come to a future meeting regarding the no smoking policy.

We would like someone from Housing Services, Greg Witt, for example to discuss and explain the Housing Classification guide.

We would like a representative of the newly formed Hamilton Health Team to discuss what services they offer persons with disability in regards to housing.

If possible, we would like someone from Indwell to explain to us how they approach modification and also if possible, provide us with a tour of a recently modified unit.

If possible, we would like a representative from St Joseph's to discuss transitional care.

If possible, we would like someone to come in a discuss Medical Marijuana with us.

8. Housing Working Group's Terms of Reference: As there is no existing copy of the old Terms of Reference we have decided to start from scratch. At our next meeting we will attempt to address this.
9. Meeting was adjourned at 11:35