

**Housing Issues Working Group's  
Final 2023 Outstanding Business List**

- 1. Accessible Housing Modifications and the Promotion of Universal Design.** We put through a motion regarding universal design in late 2020/early 2021. It was last reported that it would go before E&CS late 2021, but I have not been able to find out about it since then.
- 2. Social Housing Inventory, in particular, whether we have actually achieved 20% accessible housing.** We sent a number of invitations to Edward Johns and asked Council to have Housing Services come to speak to us about this. They directed Housing Services to attend a future meeting and speak to us about this and other things. We have yet to meet with them and Edward Johns is no longer the director. Housing Services is now led by Michelle Baird. I will attach the directive\*\*.
- 3. Reviewing the Housing Application Forms and suggesting improvements to make them more accessible.** This was also on our list to discuss with Housing Services and has yet to be fulfilled.

## 9.2(c)

**4. Review the Smoke Free Policy with CityHousing regarding Medical Marijuana and the use of it by persons with disabilities to alleviate their symptoms.** This issue requires a meeting with both CityHousing and Public Health. It was to discuss ways to ensure people that need to use marijuana in their home can do so while not risking their tenancy as well as not unduly inconveniencing neighbours. It is still pending.

**5. Review the Transitional Housing Process when transferring from the hospital into other forms of housing. It is currently very confusing, convoluted and detrimental to the proper recovery of patients. We hope to have suggestions for improvement as soon as we can understand how it all works and who is in charge. When we have answers there, we would like to produce a transitional section of the housing guide providing help for those going through the process.** We have made no progress in this matter. COVID response made understanding this system nearly impossible. Hopefully the next term will have a more stable system to study. We have received responses on this matter before, but they were restricted to a loan program for home improvement. A former member needed to use this system during the

## 9.2(c)

height of COVID and was transferred to 21 separate locations, was exposed to COVID and labelled a problem patient when she complained about the treatment she and others received. Hopefully, the next term will have more success.

**6. Review of the Residential Care Facility system and try to suggest improvements for the betterment of residents. We would also like to eventually produce a section of the housing guide for RCF residents.** We met with the Roundtable For Poverty Reduction (RFPR), Hamilton Social Medicine Response Team (HAMSMaRT) and Licensing and By-Law regarding RCFs. We also studied the Schedule 20 sections that cover the operation of RCFs as well as heard life experience from an HWG member. We highlighted a number of issues that need addressing. Privacy, social assistance rates, recreation or training programs for development, access to technology and the internet, vehicle or protocol for eventually leaving the RCF system for those that are able to, training and quality of staffing, disparity between for-profit and not-for-profit RCF operators, residents leaving RCFs and living on the streets to receive all of their ODSP every month. We should continue to highlight issues and work with other groups to try and improve conditions. We are

## 9.2(c)

currently trying to assess the percentage of facilities that are air conditioned, through the Extreme Heat Working Group, as the medications required by many residents is temperature sensitive. It is not enough to just provide cool rooms, they need to cool the entire facility.

**7. Review of CityHousing's AODA related policies in order to highlight barriers in housing and seek solutions to address them.** We have written a report and sent it to CityHousing's Board with a series of recommendations and hope to have something positive to report here soon. Chair will delegate on November 28<sup>th</sup>.

**8. Creating relationships with other agencies and stakeholders involved in housing matters: We will continue to seek out other like-minded groups for the purposes of future collaborations or round tables.** We have created a number of relationships with other groups and recommend this committee continue to do so through the next term. Our most recent group communication avenue is through the Extreme Heat Working Group with Public Health.

**9. Social Assistance Allowance: It was felt that, because rent is taking up so much of a monthly**

## 9.2(c)

**allowance, that it is best placed here. We will discuss next steps soon.** We are working on a recommendation to Council regarding Deeply Affordable/Attainable rent as econoviction of people with disabilities on social assistance is increasing. It is a large barrier to safe and supportive housing and we are strongly advising that Council take steps to secure rental properties at an attainable rent (30% Income). We recommend that the next group petition upper levels of government through Council as they are in control of this.

- 10. Review of the Accessible Housing Guide: We will review the housing guide and make sure it is still current or suggest if an update is in order.** We are currently reviewing the guide and will have recommendations on how to update and clarify the guide as well as add sections that are missing. Upon reviewing the first half of the guide, we have serious concerns with the guide in its current iteration. It does not seem to help people with disabilities as much as teach those that don't have a disability how that can affect housing. It seems to be geared more for staff than people looking for housing. We recommend that the next group divide the current guide into two parts and provide better information for those looking for

## 9.2(c)

housing as well as adding sections for Transitional Housing, RCFs and LTCs.

**11. Long Term Care Facilities:** It was suggested that even though LTCs are considered senior's facilities, there are a lot of people in them with accessibility issues and so we will begin to review the accessibility of them when we are able. We have made no progress on this issue. This issue was added after reports from a former member's experience at St. Joseph's Villa. In particular there is a lack of understanding on how to make things safe for the visually impaired; for example, they continuously change the layout and move furniture making it difficult to navigate their surroundings. Hopefully the next term will make some progress to this end. We recommend that the next term look into reviewing the two municipally owned LTCs for accessibility.

**12. Advocacy to the Provincial Government Regarding ODSP's Air Conditioner Program.** At the most recent EHWG meeting, it was suggested that the ACPD's HWG lead the charge to request changes to the ODSP Air Conditioner program. It is currently too stringent and is only approved for the life threatening breathing problems even though extreme

## 9.2(c)

heat affects many disabilities differently. They only issue about 50 every year. We will be asking for an expansion to the program as well as exploring the possibility of operating costs.

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**\*\*City Clerk's Division**

**COUNCIL FOLLOW-UP NOTICE**

**TO: Edward John DATE: June 17, 2021**

**Director, Housing Services**

**Christine Weir**

**Administrative Assistant to Director of Housing Services**

**FROM: Alicia Davenport**

**Legislative Coordinator, Office of the City Clerk**

**SUBJECT: Invitation to the Director of Housing Services to  
Discuss Accessible**

**Housing Matters**

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Please be advised that, at its meeting of June 9, 2021,  
Council approved Item 3(a) of  
General Issues Committee Report 21-012, which reads as  
follows:

3. Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities Report  
21-005, May 11,  
2021 (Item 10.1)

## 9.2(c)

(a) Invitation to the Director of Housing Services to  
Discuss Accessible

Housing Matters (Item 7.2(b))

WHEREAS, the Housing Issues Working Group of the  
Advisory

Committee for Persons with Disabilities will benefit from  
the expertise of

the Director of Housing Services, or their designate;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

(a) That the Director of Housing Services, or their  
designate, be

invited to attend a future meeting of the Housing Issues  
Working

Group of the Advisory Committee for Persons with  
Disabilities to

discuss accessible housing matters including, but not  
limited to,

the following:

(i) Reviewing and improving the Housing Application  
Process;

(ii) Confirming that the City's goal of 20% accessible  
housing

has been achieved and identification of the minimum  
criteria

required to be considered accessible;



## 9.2(c)

Council Follow-up Notice – Item 3(a) of General Issues  
Committee Report 21-012

Council Meeting Date: June 9, 2021

Page 2 of 2

(iii) Information regarding the modular housing project,  
including

its level of accessibility;

(iv) The plan in place when there is a loss of accessible  
housing

due to unforeseen circumstances, such as a building fire;  
and,

(v) The measures that the City is taking to ensure that  
future

social housing incorporates 20% accessibility during this  
housing crisis.

Please take the necessary steps to execute the direction  
of Council.

For your reference, the Housing Issues Working Group of  
the Advisory Committee for

Persons with Disabilities meets virtually via Webex on the  
third Tuesday of every month,  
commencing at 10:00 a.m.

Kindly contact James Kemp, the Housing Issues Working  
Group Chair, as soon as

possible to arrange your attendance at a future meeting of  
the Housing Issues Working

Group that works with your schedule.

## 9.2(c)

James can be contacted via email at:

jamesmpkemp@hotmail.com

Thank you,

Alicia Davenport

Legislative Coordinator

☎ (905) 546-2424 ext. 2729

Cc: Lynn Martinello, Administrative Coordinator, Healthy & Safe Communities

Jessica Bowen, Supervisor, Diversity and Inclusion, Human Resources

Taline Morris, Administrative Assistant II, Talent & Diversity

James Kemp, Chair, Housing Issues Working Group