

**ACPD's Housing Working Group Meeting Notes**

**March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**Virtual Teams Meeting**

**10:00AM – 12:00PM**

**Members in Attendance:** James Kemp

**Also in Attendance:** Amanda Warren-Ritchie, Adrian McKenzie

**Members Absent:** Paula Kilburn, Lance Dingman, Benjamin Cullimore, Hargun Kaur, Robert Westbrook

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

**2. Approval of March 18<sup>th</sup> Agenda:** Agenda was reduced to meeting with CityHousing Staff due to lack of member attendance.

**3. CityHousing Accessibility Update w/ Amanda Warren-Ritchie and Adrian McKenzie:** Chair began the discussion by noting that when we last spoke, CityHousing was making training its first priority in improving accessibility; he then asked how that process was going. Adrian responded with a

breakdown of work so far. He developed accessibility training for staff on the basis of improving customer service. Training has been completed with regular staff and is now being done with building attendants. Adrian explained how he began the process with Brave Space vs. Safe Space training to which the Chair asked him to expand on that. In a Safe Space it is customary to not broach difficult or uncomfortable equity issues so as not to alienate anyone. A Brave Space recognizes that to find answers and improve equity issues, uncomfortable and often difficult discussions need to be had so everyone understands all points of view. The difference being that all people in the discussion understand it is done in order to make the world a more equitable place for us all to live in and any discomfort felt by anyone is unfortunate, but not done with intent or malice. Adrian then went on to explain how he is working with staff to be more empathic and understanding when dealing with tenants and their issues. That's not to say they weren't before, but just in ways that they may not have thought of. Chair asked if there is any special training for contractors being prepared and Amanda responded that there is not, that contractors are required to have read the AODA only. Adrian went on to explain that it will be two training modules; one on IDEA and another on human rights. They should be

up and running by June or July. Accessibility training will now be refreshed every three or four years.

Chair then asked about Adrian's touring of CityHousing facilities to assess accessibility issues at each property. Adrian responded that he has toured around ten percent to twenty percent of CityHousing's portfolio, but they are developing some communications with tenants and they are consulting their tenant advisory group as well. Adrian went on to explain the difficulty in updating the properties and how each property manager has to put in individual requests based on how much work is required in respective buildings and whether it is internal or external.

Chair asked about the tenants advisory group as he was unaware there was currently one in operation. Amanda responded that it has been meeting since last year and has begun working with staff inside CityHousing now that its governance had been decided upon. Amanda went on to explain how they meet and that they have reviewed their first presentation on CityHousing's new twenty year initiative called Connecting CH. She used this as an example of how they are trying to be as inclusive as possible seeking input from any and every quarter.

We then discussed snow removal as it was especially bad this year. Chair began by explaining how he had to complain this year about snow. Amanda responded that this year was unprecedented with the sheer amount of snow needing removal and that though they employed additional contractors, there weren't many to be had. Chair expressed that he understood the unusual nature this year, but why he brought it up at this meeting is to address snow removal plans in general. He went on to explain that in the decade plus he has lived in a CityHousing building there have been many different contractors and they all seem to clear the same disconnected sections and never the complete sidewalk. Amanda explained that they have site maps that show clearing areas and they probably need to be updated. She also recognized that there is much work to do and ask for our patience as they try to improve as there are many properties to address.

Chair then asked whether there had been any progress updating information to the website or improving the complaints process. Amanda explained that they were probably going to move to their own website in the near future they are not ready yet by far. They do have a staff member going through all forms of communications and trying to improve them

with regards to accessibility standards and hope to have more information on that soon.

Chair asked about any progress to laundry room accessibility and Amanda and Adrian explained some of the problems they are having there. They don't own most of the machines; they are having issue with heat pumps interfering with washing machines; there are different designs of equipment at all buildings; there are different needs in each building. Currently they are addressing issues on a case by case basis and ask for patience.

Chair closed by thanking Amanda and Adrian for taking the time to give us an update, it was very detailed and progress has been made.

#### **4. Adjournment**