

**Affordable Housing Working Group  
Agenda  
June 26, 2019  
12 Noon - Carnell Rm**

**ST. JOHN'S**

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**AGENDA**  
**AFFORDABLE HOUSING WORKING GROUP**  
**June 26<sup>th</sup> , 2019 – 12:00 p.m. – Carnell Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, City Hall Annex**

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

- a. Minutes of May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**4. BUSINESS ARISING**

- a. Update and discussion on affordable housing initiatives
- b. Rental rate advocacy
- c. Upcoming federal election

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Housing forum clinic

**6. OTHER BUSINESS**

**7. DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

# ST. JOHN'S

## Affordable Housing Working Group Minutes

May 16, 2019

12:00 p.m.

4th Floor, City Hall

### Present:

- Simone Lilly, Affordable Housing & Development Facilitator, Chairperson
- Jill Snow, CMHC
- Gail Thornhill, Stella's Circle
- Grayson Kelly, NLHC
- Emily Timmons, Poverty Reduction, Gov NL
- Victoria Belbin, Canadian Homebuilders Association
- Andrew Harvey, First Light
- Doug Pawson, End Homelessness St. John's
- Judy Tobin, Manager of Housing
- Karen Chafe, Supervisor – Office of the City Clerk

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

### 2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

**Moved By** Victoria Belbin

**Seconded By** Gail Thornhill

That the agenda be adopted as presented

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

### 3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

The Chair updated Committee members on a proposed change to the Committee's reporting structure to Council.

#### 3.1 Adoption of Minutes - March 7, 2019

**Moved By** Gail Thornhill

**Seconded By** Andrew Harvey

That the minutes of the Affordable Housing Working Group held on March 7, 2019 be adopted as presented.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**4. BUSINESS ARISING**

**4.1 Information Note: Update and Discussion on Affordable Housing Initiatives**

**CITY OF ST. JOHN'S HOUSING NEEDS STUDY UPDATE:** A new consultant has been engaged to complete this work. Drafts have been reviewed by Jill Snow and Simone Lilly and a final report is expected in the next two weeks. Document will be circulated to the AHWG for review and to advise on next steps.

**LAND INVENTORY** (of City owned land): The Legal Department has been working with Non-Profit to identify parcels of City owned land for potential projects. Four properties have been circulated through associated City departments and have received favorable comments speaking to their potential for redevelopment. Recommendations for one parcel of land have been prepared and discussion on the other three parcels will take place with the AHWG.

**REVITALIZING POLICY:** Envision St. John's, prepared as a result of a comprehensive review, will replace the current St. John's Municipal Plan (2003) and Development Regulations (1994). The Envision St. John's Development Regulations were presented at Council on March 4, 2019 for adoption-in-principle. With the formal adoption-in-principle, the draft Municipal Plan and Development Regulations documents have been sent to Municipal Affairs for provincial review and release. This has been stalled due to the provincial election.

The implementation strategies reflected in Envision St. John's include

- Allow subsidiary dwelling units in as many residential zones as possible
- Incorporate provisions for tiny homes
- Support intensification and mixed-use development
- Allow small apartment buildings in some residential zones

- Make best use of land base to provide affordable housing
- In new neighbourhoods, plan development around the parks and open space network, with an emphasis on compact, walkable residential neighbourhoods, with a mix of uses and employment areas along primary transportation corridors
- Continue to require new developments to consult with the St. John's Transportation Commission regarding public transit infrastructure requirements.

**MUNICIPAL FEES:** A Decision note to expand the exemption of municipal fees to private developers of affordable housing who have confirmed approval under the National Housing Strategy's National Housing Co-Investment Fund - new construction (NHCF), Federal Lands Initiative (FLI) and Innovation Fund (IF) was unanimously approved on April 29th.

The equivalent percentage of municipal fees will be waived for the percentage of affordable units of a project, with confirmed written approval under the three National Housing Strategy programs.

Ms. Belbin referenced an Urban Housing Committee (Urban Council) chaired by Steve Porter who is a huge advocate for partnerships. She agreed to refer the matter to the next meeting of the Urban Council.

### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY:**

#### Interdepartmental Committee

- Implementation of the affordable housing strategy 2019-2028 will require action across the organization. The IAHWG will lead and coordinate the internal components of this strategy. It is anticipated that the IAHWG will meet quarterly and when possible preceding AHWG meetings.

Support from the following Divisions has been identified:

1. Division of Transportation Engineering
2. Division of Planning
3. Division of Regulatory Services
4. Division of Marketing & Communications
5. Division of Family & Leisure Services

6. Other Divisions will be consulted and included as required

Terms of reference were drafted for the IAHWG and the introductory meeting was held on May 10<sup>th</sup>

Implementation Strategy Working Document (road map)

Implementation strategies have been divided by division responsible for leading action items.

Timelines, next steps and priority areas for each have been laid out. This will serve as a guiding document for implementation and will be updated as actions move forward.

**CENTRAL HOUSING WAITLIST:** We continue to have conversations with CRA re. granting direct access to Option Cs for applicants and tenants. CRA requires legislation that states that we can collect this information. The City of St. John's Act (governing the municipal affairs of St. John's) outlines authority to acquire land, enter into housing agreements, provide housing, adopt Building Codes etc. but does not reference setting rents, collecting rent or verifying income. We have agreements signed with CMHC/NLHC that require us to verify income and dictate how we must calculate rent however these are agreements and do not provide the authority required. NLHC were granted permission under the Housing Corporation Act and the Intergovernmental Affairs Act. CSJ does not qualify under either of these. Our next step is to begin advocacy for this to be addressed during the review of the St. John's Act that is currently underway.

**EVOLUTION OF NON-MARKET HOUSING PROJECT:** We have met with a researcher that is considering undertaking this project as part of their post doctorate. We have acquired permission from the 4 individuals that attended the history discussion to share the recording of the session. We can now proceed setting up an agreement with this researcher to outline scope and ownership of work.

**SOCIAL MARKETING STRATEGY:** AHDF met with Communications following the March AHWG meeting. As suggested, we would like to move forward with this project as a collaborative community led project. As a next step, a sub – committee could be established to take on building the profiles campaign to be launched in November 2019. Members agreed to give this some thought as to whether or not and/or who should be selected from their areas to be represented.

#### **4.2 Rental Rate Advocacy**

The Affordable Housing Working Group was asked to consider undertaking advocacy for rent control legislation in Newfoundland. A backgrounder has been prepared and is now before the Committee for discussion.

During discussion, Ms. Tobin retired from the meeting at 12:43 pm.

Following discussion, the motion below was put forth:

**Moved By** Andrew Harvey

**Seconded By** Gail Thornhill

That there be no further consideration or advocacy of rent control given the background information presented during this meeting.

For (3): Gail Thornhill, , Victoria Belbin, and Andrew Harvey

Abstain (1): Jill Snow Emily Timmons, Grayson Kelly

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5 to 0)**

### **5. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **5.1 Mapping Housing Needs**

The Affordable Housing and Development Facilitator attended a presentation by a Cape Breton University researcher on affordable housing and neighborhood deprivation. <https://www.cbu.ca/news-events/story/funding-awarded-to-cbu-professor-for-research-on-affordable-housing-and-neighbourhood-deprivation/>.

A non-market housing inventory of the City of St. John's has been completed and as a next step staff would like to explore similar mapping as was done in Cape Breton.

Such a tool would be instrumental for planning purposes particularly in relation to transit and community supports.

The Chair will work with staff and members to develop a research statement and will keep the Committee apprised of progress in this regard.

Ms. Belbin also advised that the NIMBY toolkit which is currently posted on the CHBA website, needs to be updated. Chairperson Lilly proposed that a decision note be prepared for referral to Council for an RFP to update the NIMBY toolkit. The revised toolkit would then be placed on the City's website. Emily Timmins suggested that this may be a suitable project for her summer student to take on and would follow up with Simone. Victoria suggested that in sync with this initiative that the case studies be updated, i.e. Garrison Hill and other developments that took place.

## **5.2 Land Parcels Discussion and Next Steps**

Chairperson Lilly spoke to the various parcels of land that may be available for affordable housing development. She requested input from the Committee on what areas to be targeted. The Planning Dept. would have to be consulted on the potential for development. The Chair will schedule a meeting in this regard.

Ms. Snow retired from meeting at 1:44 pm.

## **5.3 Upcoming Federal Election**

The Group was reminded that the next federal election will be held October 2019. For the past several months, CHRA has been hard at work preparing a campaign designed to influence the electoral platforms and positions of the major political parties, and ultimately, the next government. CHRA formally launched their election campaign – A Home For Everyone on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Key election messages have been developed along with a campaign website and there are opportunities to become involved in the coming election campaign.

The Group discussed whether the AHWG should participate through the CHRA campaign and/or write local candidates as a collaborative voice on social, non profit and community housing needs.

## **5.4 Housing Forum Clinic**

Chairperson Lilly proposed a workshop series introducing affordable housing themes including the planning process and municipal tools available to them. Such topics could include dealing with NIMBY, universal design, innovation, funding and designing of affordable housing.



Ms. Belbin expressed interest in partaking in this initiative, including other municipalities as well as the leveraging of corporate sponsors to assist.

**6. OTHER BUSINESS**

**7. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

To be determined.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 1:54 pm.

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Simone Lilly  
Chairperson

# INFORMATION NOTE

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**Title:** Affordable Housing Update

**Date Prepared:** 06/19/2019

**Report To:** Affordable Housing Working Group (AHWG)

**Issue:** Affordable Housing Update

**Discussion – Background and Current Status:**

Here is an update on some of the main areas of work:

**CITY OF ST. JOHN'S HOUSING NEEDS STUDY UPDATE:** The final housing needs assessment report is now complete. The document was circulated and reviewed by the AHWG members. The document will be introduced through an information note at the July 10<sup>th</sup> Committee of the Whole meeting and published on the City of St. John's. It will also be circulated through our newsletter. Discussion is needed at the AHWG to determine if/ how/ when a presentation on this report should take place.

**LAND INVENTORY** (of City owned land): The Legal Department has been working with Non-Profit to identify parcels of City owned land for potential projects. Four properties have been circulated through associated City departments and have received favorable comments speaking to their potential for redevelopment. Recommendations for one parcel of land have been prepared and discussion on the other three parcels will take place with the AHWG. AHWG will set up a meeting for early fall to discuss options for these parcels of land.

**PLANNING AND BUILDING APPROVAL PROCESSES:**

We have met with the Planning, Engineering and Regulatory Services team to discuss moving the housing strategy action item "4.3.3 Prioritize planning and building permit approval processes for affordable housing projects who have confirmed investment from another level of government" forward. We have had initial and favorable discussions on how this could work. Next steps will be to outline the proposed process and circulate internally to those that would be involved.

**CENTRAL HOUSING WAITLIST:** We continue to have conversations with CRA re. granting direct access to Option Cs for applicants and tenants. CRA requires legislation that states that we can collect this information. The City of St. John's Act (governing the municipal affairs of St. John's) outlines authority to acquire land, enter into housing agreements, provide housing, adopt Building Codes etc. but does not reference setting rents, collecting rent or verifying income. We have agreements signed with CMHC/NLHC that require us to verify income and dictate how we must calculate rent however these are agreements and do not provide the authority required. NLHC were granted permission under the Housing Corporation Act and the Intergovernmental Affairs Act. CSJ does not qualify under either of these. Our next step is to begin advocacy for this to be addressed during the review of the St. John's Act that is currently underway.

**EVOLUTION OF NON-MARKET HOUSING PROJECT:** Unfortunately, the researcher that considered undertaking this project as part of their post doctorate was unable to take the project on due to their current workload. We have drafted a one-page outline of the project and will look for guidance and discuss next steps with the working group.

**SOCIAL MARKETING STRATEGY:** A subcommittee was established with marketing expert representation from Stellas, Choices for Youth, End Homelessness St. John's and the City of St. John's. The initial meeting was held

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on June 17th. TOR have been drafted for the committee and an overarching plan outline is being created. Both documents will be circulated to the sub committee before the next meeting which is booked for July 11th.

**ENERGY EFFICIENCY RETROFIT PROJECT:** An energy audit was conducted on a vacant unit targeted for the energy retrofit project. Both action groups guiding this process were brought together on June 20<sup>th</sup> to discuss the findings and recommendations of the project. Next steps will be for one group to move forward and develop tenant information packages, resources, information sessions to educate on energy efficiency as a function of affordability. The second group will move forward implementing energy upgrades.

**NON-MARKET HOUSING TOOL:** Working with Doug Pawson and Emily Timmins, a project outline was created defining the parameters of this project. All data has been collected and provided to LIS to map.

**NIMBY TOOLKIT:** Partnering with Poverty Reduction, Department Children, Seniors and Social Development we hope to be able to update the NIMBY toolkit. Guidance will be needed from the AHWG to support this process.

**SUCCESSFUL TENANCIES:** Some initial work has been done to connect with key service providers to deliver safe and healthy housing presentations again focusing on educating on the effective identification and reporting of property standard violations.

**Conclusion/Next Steps:** This update is to inform of progress as well as obtain further direction and guidance from the Affordable Housing Working Group.

**Prepared by/Signature:** Simone Lilly, Affordable Housing Development Facilitator

**Approved by/Date/Signature:** Judy Tobin, Manager of Housing Division

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# ST. JOHN'S

# INFORMATION NOTE

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**Title:** Rental Control Legislation

**Date Prepared:** 06/20/2019

**Report To:** Affordable Housing Working Group (AHWG)

**Issue:** Rent Control Legislation

**Discussion – Background and Current Status:**

The Affordable Housing Working Group requested a briefing document be prepared on the topic of rent control legislation in Newfoundland. This document will be a public resource and published on the City of St. John's website. A draft document was circulated to the AHWG for review.

**Conclusion/Next Steps:** With guidance from the Affordable Housing Working Group, this discussion will determine next steps re. rent control document

**Prepared by/Signature:** Simone Lilly, Affordable Housing Development Facilitator

**Approved by/Date/Signature:** Judy Tobin, Manager of Housing Division

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# INFORMATION NOTE

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**Title:** Affordable Housing Advocacy

**Date Prepared:** 05/09/2019

**Report To:** Affordable Housing Working Group (AHWG)

**Councillor and Role:** Hope Jamieson

**Ward:** Ward 2

**Issue:** Advocacy

**Discussion – Background and Current Status:**

The next federal election will be held October 2019. For the past several months, CHRA has been hard at work preparing a campaign designed to influence the electoral platforms and positions of the major political parties, and ultimately, the next government. CHRA formally launched their election campaign – A Home For Everyone on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Key election messages have been developed along with a campaign website <https://www.ahomeforeveryone.ca/> and there are opportunities to become involved in the coming election campaign.

At the may AHWG meeting, it was decided that the AHWG would participate in advocacy efforts and members would e-mail Affordable Housing Facilitator their top housing challenges for discussion. Attached are the answers submitted.

For Discussion:

We would like to have a discussion at the AHWG on how we will proceed voicing concerns to local candidates as a collaborative voice on social, non profit and community housing needs.

**Key Considerations/Implications:**

**Conclusion/Next Steps:** With guidance from the Affordable Housing Working Group, this discussion will finalize our direction with advocacy with the upcoming Federal Election

**Prepared by/Signature:** Simone Lilly, Affordable Housing Development Facilitator

**Approved by/Date/Signature:** Judy Tobin, Manager of Housing Division

**Attachments:**

Attachment A: CHRA Campaign Summary

Attachment B: Responses received by the AHDF from AHWG

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ATTACHMENT A

# A HOME FOR EVERYONE

**Every person living in Canada deserves a home that is safe, affordable, and meets their needs.** However, for millions of people in Canada, access to safe and affordable housing is simply not possible. By protecting and strengthening the community housing sector in Canada, the federal government can play a key role in supporting community housing providers whose mandate is to provide access to non-market housing to those people who may otherwise have no other housing opportunities.

## WHY DO WE NEED TO PROTECT AND EXPAND COMMUNITY HOUSING?

There are approximately **600,000 subsidized homes in Canada**, housing over a million people. By not protecting and expanding community housing, **we run the risk of increasing homelessness** and leaving hundreds of thousands of people in Canada without access to proper housing that they can afford.

### WHAT DOES THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT NEED TO DO?

The 2017 National Housing Strategy was a welcome step in reinvesting in community housing. But more needs to be done. **CHRA is advocating three specific recommendations in Election 2019:**

- » **Develop and implement an urban, rural and northern Indigenous Housing Strategy** to raise housing standards for Indigenous peoples to that of the non-Indigenous population.
- » **Preserve the existing stock of community housing** by making federal rent subsidies permanent, provide ongoing funding for repairs, and increasing federal investments in social supports.
- » **Increase the supply of social and non profit housing** through greater access to capital for new construction, and expand the Federal Lands Initiative.

**THE NEXT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO ENSURE A HOME FOR EVERYONE.**



### DURING THE 2019 FEDERAL ELECTION, WHAT CAN YOU DO?



- » Visit **ahomeforeveryone.ca** for more information on the challenges facing community housing providers.
- » From that website, **send a message to the candidates in your riding** telling them why reinvesting in community housing needs to be a priority.
- » Sign up for **CHRA's newsletter** to stay informed on campaign developments.
- » Tweet the candidates in your riding, using **#ahomeforeveryone**.
- » **Attend an all candidates meeting** and ask questions about community housing. If there is a housing-specific event in your region, encourage your friends and colleagues to attend.



[ahomeforeveryone.ca](http://ahomeforeveryone.ca)

## Rents Are Becoming Unaffordable

According to the Rental Housing Index:

**40%** OF RENTERS IN CANADA ARE IN **CORE HOUSING NEED**  
(spending **over 30%** of their income on rent)

**18%** OF RENTERS IN CANADA ARE IN **DEEP CORE HOUSING NEED**  
(spending **over 50%** of their income on rent)

## Demand for Social Housing is Going Up

Over the past 5 years, wait lists for community housing have gone up in most Canadian cities.

<b>Calgary</b> 16.4% ↑	<b>Toronto</b> 10.7% ↑
<b>Moncton</b> 28% ↑	<b>Vancouver</b> 22.9% ↑
<b>Montreal</b> 8.1% ↑	<b>Whitehorse</b> 55% ↑

## Indigenous Peoples in Urban Settings

The 87% of Indigenous peoples living in Canada's urban and rural centres face unique housing challenges.

- » **1 in 15 Indigenous peoples are homeless**, compared to 1 in 128 for the non-Indigenous population.
- » **23% of Indigenous households live in unsuitable dwellings**, compared to 14% of non-Indigenous households.
- » Indigenous people suffer from much **higher rates of housing discrimination**, and do not live in housing that is culturally appropriate.

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## ATTACHMENT B

1. Not enough purpose-built affordable and supportive housing solutions (e.g. seniors, youth, Indigenous, disability etc.)
2. Limited integration of housing and homelessness policies with social determinants of health. Continues to be an afterthought vs. part of the start point
3. Stigma around affordable housing; lack of community integration efforts and/or a broad based communications strategy to de-stigmatize affordable housing
4. Affordability
5. availability/supply
6. continuum of types(lack of 24 hour staffed facilities for examples)

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