



Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 344
Thorold ON L2V 3Z3

Phone: 905-682-9201
Toll Free: 1-800-232-3292
(from Grimsby and beyond Niagara region only)

Street Address:
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way
Thorold ON

Main Fax: 905-687-4844
Fax – Applications: 905-935-0476
Fax – Contractors: 905-682-8301
Web site: www.nrh.ca

TENANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, July 5, 2023

9:30 am – 12:00 pm – TAC Meeting

Building Meeting

Location: 124 Elmview Street, Welland, ON

“Niagara Region is situated on treaty land. This land has a rich history of First Nations such as the Hatiwendaronk, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. There are many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples from across Turtle Island that live and work in Niagara today.”

TAC Members: Wendy Thompson, Michelle Mellen, Norman Hill, Margaret Davis, Annie Du Toit, Patricia Scott

Guests: Sandy Dupuis, Pam Abeysekara, Julia Chikombero, and Gary Zalepa, Chair of the Board

Regrets: Alisha Forstinger, Karen Littlewood, Carol Chapple David Mole

1. Welcome & Introductions **Michelle**

3. NRH STRATEGIC PLANNING **Sandy**

Sandy Dupuis and Pam Abeysekara from Community Services are part of the committee who is refreshing the Strat Plan. Today’s priority is tenant supports. Tenants were asked for input on:

2.0 Creating Vibrant Communities with our tenants: Enable NRH to be Community-centric, inclusive and responsive, and provide a positive housing experience for our tenants.

2.1 Integrate new tenants into their housing community:

- Have a get together, meet and greet
- More info at move in would be beneficial. Welcome package for new tenants. Current Tenant Handbook and video was noted
- Once a month BBQ in the fall or common room meals. Social gathering if people want to attend.
- Need more picnic tables to create socialization
- Tour of the building. When showing an apartment, the BA gives a tour. Perhaps not done at all the buildings. Perhaps a second tour as a refresher
- Rules for tenants so they know what they can and can't do. Noted this is included in Tenancy Agreement and in Tenant Handbook and/or ask Staff.
- Brought in the package of cleaning supplies before. Thought it was a nice idea. Noted that welcome letters with cleaning buckets did not go over well. Replaced with Welcome letters with Tim Horton's gift cards for new tenants

2.2 Deliver innovative partnerships, programs and services to provide responsive tenant support and community engagement

- Faith Welland Church does an amazing job. Local church that does programs at Elmview and Fitch. Arts, crafts, BBQ in July. Can transport people to events.
- Free grocery delivery.
- Transportation to shopping
- Exercise classes –qi gong exercise. Similar to tai chi.
- Bingo – not available at all buildings.
- Wii Bowling, etc.
- Euchre or card night
- Trivia
- March of Dimes and PSWs available at Carlton. Is it offered in every community? Medication prompts, light housekeeping, showers in a building designed for the wellness living program. March of Dimes is in 4 buildings. Perhaps March of Dimes services are available elsewhere.
- Karaoke
- Nordic pole walking – good way to gain upper body strength and balance.
- Meaningful social gatherings

2.3 Ensure efficient and effective response to tenants' requests for support

- Winter time the snow plough comes by and cars get ploughed in. Need to shovel a zone. Hard for seniors to walk to and in between the cars
- Home care – CPCs can navigate supports for tenants.

- Several tenants in Carlton feel that complaints not being looked after. Mold, patio doors, drafts, tree roots, trip hazard. A response with the status of their requests would be beneficial to tenants to give an approximate timeline. Tenants should be getting a response. If it is taking too long, contact the PM. Tenants have been waiting over a month for the tree roots that are a trip hazard. Others have not heard anything. There have been some staff changes and the call might have been lost. Call back to ensure we know about the issue.
- Can parking for tenants only sign put back up at Elmview. Ensure signs are available across NRH properties.
- Cars are idling in the parking lot and exhaust is entering a tenants unit.
- At Scott Street, a letter was sent to inspect the unit. Everything should be checked, fridge, stove, toilet. If an inspection is done, it is for life safety devices. If something is not working in the unit, please don't wait. Report by calling or emailing issues in or by putting it in the drop box. Call the TSR.

2.4 Create and support healthy NRH communities

- A tenant stated that she is treated like royalty at Elmview and has been here over 20 years.
- This building is not only seniors only now which creates issues. Why are tenants from Toronto coming here to live? There are so many on the list from Niagara Region. Noted that provincial legislation regulates that we have to follow the chronological list unless they are a priority (survivor of domestic violence, homeless, overhoused). We can't ask if people have mental health, addiction, etc. We can't exclude non-Niagara Region residents.
- The community is diverse – they have had drug dealers in the past. Some tenants have been afraid to leave the building. Call the police and let NRH know. If necessary, they can be evicted. We hope we can help them adjust and become good members of the community. A tenant asked how come we don't check into these issues. The CPCs check in with these people regularly, however it is a private matter.
- Had a chop shop in the other building where they were using a torch, sparks flying. Trash was dumped there. If it gets to the point where eviction is necessary, it is a long process with the Police and with the landlord tenant board. There is up to 5 months waiting for a hearing, longer at times. We are working on these issues but is confidential.
- A tenant asked if a person can be running a business in a unit. You can run a business depending on the type, but they need to report the earnings and the business can't be operating primarily out of the unit.

REGULAR MEETING

2. Review Minutes of last meeting

Michelle

- No questions or concerns with the minutes from April 27, 2023. Approved.

4. NRH Update & Staff Update

Michelle

1. New staff members (TSR Position, Pest Control TSR, Program Management Intern, New Board Representative)
2. There have been some TSR movements in other buildings. We have added a summer TSR to help with the backlog. There is a Pest Control TSR dedicated to be able to track pest issues better. This has been successful. We can send someone to check units for pests. We treat for free and help with preparation.
3. A new Property Management Intern was hired to help with some of the summer projects, capital works, and vacations.

5. Non Smoking Buildings Report

1. Non smoking building memorandum distributed. The goal is to get half of all NRH communities converted to non-smoking. New buildings are designated as non smoking. Non smoking buildings have had success. Offer a smoking section if a building allows. Current tenants will be grandfathered if their building converts.
2. Carlton had been converted to a non smoking building. It seems that some floors have issues. NRH would need to prove that people are smoking in units. This is not an easy issue to track and difficult for NRH to address. We have to work with people to try to help them. NRH has more control than a regular building. In a non smoking building, we can take people to court if people are smoking. Report issues to the PMs. Lots of seniors smoked their whole life and it is hard to quit. NRH can bring in supports to help people quit smoking. This is also an issue in private buildings. An air purifier helps and has been used in some cases. NRH is looking into a device to detect smoking.

6. Community Houses Accessibility

Michelle

1. Community house accessibility. Community Houses will be made as accessible as possible in the next year or so.

7. Summer Programming

Wendy

1. There are summer camps in some of the communities. They arrange events like going to Zooz or paddling in the Welland canal. In Welland, Faith Welland provides camps in McLaughlin and Roach (outside because there is no community house yet). Some seniors have volunteered to help which is great experience for the kids and for the adults.

8. Income and Asset Limits

1. The Income and Asset Limits are now required by the Provincial Government. We are working to make the process easy for tenants and NRH. Tenants will only have to provide bank statements if they have over 5000 dollars.
2. Need to make sure that tenants in Community Housing need it – wait list is long. If a tenant is over the limits, they will not be evicted, they will go to market.
3. Work with your TSR if you have any questions. Tenants would like the TSR to come to the buildings during the annual renewal. This used to happen and was beneficial to a lot of tenants. There are lost of pages to go through. We are trying to make it simpler. NRH is hoping to provide clinics soon
4. It would be nice to have someone come in to do income tax. NRH also working on having tax clinics in communities.

9. Communications

Wendy

1. Let us know if we can improve our communications. Let the CPC know if you would like anything added to the Housing Herald. What would you like like different information, more community pictures, dog fashion show?

10. TAC Composition and Recruitment

1. Some communities still need more TAC members. We try to make the meetings convenient and will pay for transportation. We can change the dates and times of the meetings to get more members.
2. We need input across all of the communities. If you are interested, please let us know. You attend meetings, review the minutes, provide insight. This is an opportunity to liaise with NRH and the Board.
3. If there are any building issues, bring them to the Property Manager. TAC is meant for suggestions that are beneficial across all NRH communities.
4. Each community is different. There are a variety of ages, families, turn overs, etc. We want your insight. You don't have to speak with every tenant in the building.
5. Margaret is retiring from TAC in Welland. Thank you Margaret for all her years on TAC. Twenty years as a TAC Member.

11. Terms and Reference and Code of Conduct **Wendy**

1. Defer to next meeting

12. Diversity (Recurring) **Wendy**

1. Diversity is a recurring item on the agenda.
2. A diversity presentation can be done at any of the communities.

New Business **All**

13. How do you stop someone from opening garbage bags in the garbage room. Perhaps the person needs help from the CPC. NRH tries to solve issues without revealing who reported them. Garbage gets dumped on the floor and this is unhealthy. Report it to the PM or escalate to the senior PM.
14. The last TAC minutes were not posted. Minutes should be posted in all of the buildings. The TAC minutes are posted on the website and should be posted in the notice board in all of the communities and some in the laundry rooms. The Agenda is also posted on the website. CPCs post 5 or 6 copies of the minutes, let them know if need more copies.
15. Cyber Seniors offers supports through cyber seniors. She is going to be doing virtual supports. Nancy is going to start a story telling group and is hoping people will participate. Cyber seniors can help with computer hookup.

16. Determine Next Date for ALL TAC Meetings **All**

Thank you for attending the TAC Meeting. We appreciate when you are able to attend. The NRH Board appreciate the information they receive in the minutes. It helps us to deal with any issues early rather than after.

Next Meeting: