

**Affordable Housing Action Network
Meeting April 26, 2005**

Present: Pam Murphy, Hasting Housing; Nancy Smith, Ontario Works; Reta Shappard, Hastings Housing Resource Centre; Patty Park, Three Oaks; Jennifer Davis, OSSTF; Suzanne Lough, Hastings County; Patricia Roblin Fitzgibbon, Hastings County; Tom Johnston, Hastings Housing; Lorre Allison, Counselling Services of Belleville and District; Rahno Godfrey, Three Oaks; Joanne Belanger, Quinte Coordinating Committee Against Violence; Susan Chennells, Prince Edward CAS; Bob Cottrell, Quinte Labour Council; Gina Cockburn, Michele Leering, Community Advocacy and Legal Centre; Debbie Simpson, John Howard Society; Joanne Goodfellow, Community Visions and Networking; Paul Latchford, Loyalist College; Allison Berridge, Cathy McCallum, Hastings and Prince Edward Health Unit; Scott Robertson, Hastings County Housing Branch; Margaret Walsh; Diane Poirier, Canadian Mental Health Association; Patricia McLaughlin; Carole Dove Victorian Order of Nurses

Introductions

Michele Leering as Chair of the meeting welcomed participants and outlined the agenda for the meeting. A round of introductions followed.

Michelle shared with the meeting the definition of homeless and of participatory action research.

Presentation of “Boxed In – The Affordable Housing Crisis In Hastings County”

Scott Robertson, a member of the Housing Working Group presented the highlights of the report on homelessness in Hastings County. A copy of this presentation is attached separately on the email of these minutes. A hard copy of this slide presentation will be available at the next meeting or by emailing pattypark@sympatico.ca if you are unable to download.

Hastings County social housing and homelessness information

It was reported that the current waiting list for rent geared to income housing in Hastings County is 1119 households.

Ontario Works reports that in July and August of 2004 there were 121 individuals that they would classify as homeless in January and February of 2005 this number was 125. These individuals are from 14 – 65 years. This figure does not include people who are “couch surfing” this would add another 100 people mostly youth.



Bricks and Mortar Task Force March 2, 2005 Minutes

The task force met on March 2, 2005 to discuss ways to move forward with the following; **creation of new units** and **educating people with regards to home ownership**. Those in attendance were; Scott Robertson, Reta Sheppard, John Paul Bard, Suzanne Lough

Creation Of New Units

John Paul advised members that he has been in contact with John D'Angelo from Peel region regarding the creation of affordable housing in Hastings County. John D'Angelo expressed an interest in this area and possible options for the creation of more affordable housing and will be meeting with John Paul to discuss this further.



Reta informed members that Mark Turner renovates units and rents them at a reasonable rate and could be a possible contact for people in need of affordable housing.

The empty units at the military base were also discussed as an alternative for affordable housing. Reta will contact Joanne Belanger for more information.

The suggestion was made to involve prominent citizens in the community to aid in the creation of more affordable housing through fund raising or private monetary or land donations. Scott and Suzanne will look into this when a more concrete plan has been devised.

Educating People With Regards To Home Ownership

Scott suggested arranging a Home Ownership seminar for those who would like to own their own home but feel that they cannot afford it. This seminar could possibly include representatives from CMHC, a banking institution and a local real estate agency.



Patricia and Suzanne will look into this.

Scott informed members that he will talk to Eric Fry regarding the possibility of municipal participation.

Community Capacity Building, Advocacy and Awareness Task Force

This task force has three sub committees who reported.

1. Advocacy Sub Committee

This sub committee members are: Jennifer Davis, OSSTF; Patty Park, Three Oaks; Bob Cottrell, Quinte Labour Council; Allison Berridge, Hastings and Prince Edward Health Unit.

The April 5, 2005 meeting of the Capacity Building Task Force met to hear the reports of the Task Force sub committees. After discussion of the whole group the following were agreed on actions for the Advocacy Sub Committee:

1. Advocate with provincial, federal and municipal governments for affordable housing. (Affordability was understood to include the issue of proper repair and maintenance of accommodation)
2. Develop a message for the advocacy that is consistent with overall message of the Affordable Housing Action Network
3. Develop an action plan with time lines to advocate with decision makers
4. Develop creative and direct action to raise awareness and change of housing issues eg. Substandard housing repair

The above work to seek the participation and/or involvement of community members; those with personal experience through capacity building.

2. Networking Sub Committee

Ideas for activities include:

1. website -- linkages to national and provincial
2. educate/inform agencies
3. know what services are available
4. training -- increasing cooperation between agencies
5. clients included in planning
6. seek participation and involve those who experience issues addressed

3. Information Sharing Sub Committee

Information Sharing Group

Met April 4, 2005

Present: Rahno Godfrey, Richard Ferris, Cathy McCallum
Jennifer Davis

Regrets: Tom Johnson, Caroline Oostrum

Cathy provided us with an article from our local paper that gave us a description of the work the committee was to perform.

The Information Sharing Group will pull together housing information for distribution at public events and to different agencies. It will also hold information sessions for service providers.

Then we asked ourselves a few questions to help clarify our task.

- ❖ What is our goal?
- ❖ What is our desired outcome?
- ❖ Who are we going to share information with?
- ❖ What type of information are we going to share?

Identified:

Potential Audiences

Politicians

Media

Service Providers

Report

Landlords/Tenants

Churches

Service Clubs, ie. Lion's Club

Available Resource

CLEO

Landlord Self Help

Affordable Housing

Tenant Help

Information Forms

Print ie. Pamphlets/postcards

Create packages according to audience for distribution

Create display board for public volunteer opportunities

Create presentations for agency

We felt our first task was to create a display board of information describing perhaps health effects, statistics and facts from the report as well as copies of the executive report to hand out at public venues

Our goal is to increase public as well as agency awareness and perhaps move people to some type of direct action to support increased affordable housing units in our area.

SCIP Application (Sustaining Community Initiatives Program)

Michele Leering reported that an application has been made for a SCIP grant. Funding decisions will be made in September. The application includes activities that were outlined in the original action plan that is part of the “Boxed In” report. Michele also reported on a conference all about the Rural Homelessness Initiative in which programs in (Saskatchewan – a project in which an old school had been renovated for housing; Nova Scotia - a project for housing for single moms in which there would be shared spaces and a resource centre, this project is still at the vision stage; and Megog, Quebec in which accessible units were being built, this group commented that the project needed more diversity) were reported on

Next Meeting

Scheduled for 2 p.m. on Tuesday, June 14, 2005 at the Hastings and Prince Edward Health Unit on Park Street in Belleville.