

TORONTO COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION
TENANT SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 5, 2021

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WRITTEN DEPUTATIONS / COMMENTS

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07-05-2021 Deputation to Tenant Service Committee

Re: Item 2C - PublicTSC minutes- May 4, 2021

Good morning Mr. Chairman, Ms. Penny and Committee Members,

My name is Bill Lohman. I am a senior living in one the 83 building that will become the Toronto Senior Housing Corporation. I am a member of the Senior Tenants Advisory Committee(STAC) for the Integrated Service Model and I am a long standing member of Seniors Voice.

Although there are no senior specific issues on the agenda, I am here today because the May 4, 2021 Tenant Services Committee minutes does not accurately reflect the discourse and dialog of Item 8- Seniors Health and Wellness Hub and Item 10- Tenants First update.

Instead of honestly noting the contention and failure of due diligence, omission and erroneous assertions imply everything is just fine and going smoothly, as planned, when it is not!

In the minutes:

- “Referring this matter back to the Tenants First team to take a second look at the plan.” (I heard and understood the issue was to be referred to an independent agent to evaluate, not back to the dept. whose dismissive 'seniors last' agenda created the problem.)

- The proposed hub programming includes: (A question about this list of programming was raised- whether the those listed programs were actual and would be available to seniors or just an unsecured list of possible ideas. The answer was the latter.)

- Engagement with the Senior Tenant Advisory Committee (“STAC”) were undertaken by the Seniors Housing Unit (“SHU”) and Woodgreen to determine the approach to animate the hub and provide equitable access to programming. (A disingenuous statement that was directly contradicted by the deputations and follow-up responses of STAC members.)

The Community Safety Unit (“CSU”)
and no major concerns were identified, and staff will escort non-tenants in and out of the building when accessing programming. (Tenants most certainly expressed safety and security concerns and the quaint, moronic notion that staff will escort non-tenants in and out of the building to ensure resident's safety, was soundly rebuffed by senior tenants and their deputations.)

- Management feel confident that they have done adequate engagement with tenants regarding the implementation of the hub. (The very fact that this hub is a contentious issue speaks to the dismissive hubris given senior affairs.)

- The recent letter STAC members received from the Seniors Manager directly negates this claim.

The Senior Tenant Advisory Committee (“STAC”) was formed, through a lengthy process, to bring seniors’ voices to the forefront when developing the Integrated Service Model (“ISM”)

The STAC reviews a variety of topics based on key areas of interest, including seniors’ engagement.

- The STAC provides a forum for senior tenants to bring their own or others’ views forward to share input.

I think it is important to recognize and acknowledge the unwavering focus of TCHC, over the past two years, and it's concerted collaborative efforts and continuing drive to live up to the well earned distinction of a progressive, World Class Landlord for the work of Toronto's Revitalization project. I've watched as Tenant Services Committee agendas have exhibited an increasing coordinated focus and collaborative push to realizing the other half of the City's 'woke' vision; achieving a social housing model for low income and marginalized families predicated on a tenant inspired equity lens, that will be Tenants First's crowning achievement for Toronto's revitalization plan.

The Seniors Housing management, run by the city's top project management fixers, have openly dismissed and stated to STAC members that our concerns about the ISM transition, seniors engagement and problems occurring in our communities aren't part of their agenda and are issues for someone else to deal with.

Last week, we were informed that 'Tenant Services' at TCHC, the tenant facing and engagement department, no longer exists. There was no answer provided to the question, "Then, why is there a Tenant Services Committee meeting on July 5?". (The answer; because the tenant engagement in the family buildings continues, just not for the seniors communities.)

We have had no engagement support, no CSC, and no engagement manager since July 2019. When you add Seniors Housing management's condescending and demeaning treatment of the senior volunteers who were selected to advise on implementing the ISM into the 83 seniors buildings, it encapsulates the ongoing indifference to and disregard for seniors communities and their wellness. This is contemptible. Have you forgotten that low-income,

vulnerable seniors are classified as an equity seeking group?

TSC has remained silent throughout Tenants First 5 year remake of TCHC tenant engagement system while democracy for tenants to choose their Directors to the Board, died, and the imbalance of staff input, focus, resources and support efforts provided by Tenant Services, is comparable to the World Wealth Gap, and canceling the 83 seniors building in July 2019. This body has listened to numerous deputations pointing to the absence of senior input and inclusion, including repeated concerns about bias and ageism against seniors.

THE SILENCE IS DEAFENING!

Thank you for your time.

Bill Lohman



Item 2C – Comments – Janet McLeod
Confirmation of the Public Meeting Minutes of May 4, 2021
TSC Public Meeting – July 5, 2021

Two errors in the minutes of the May 4 meeting:

1) Before she made the motion about referring the SHU report on Greenwood Towers as a Hub to Tenants First, Councillor Fletcher asked Jill Bada if the proposed Woodgreen Health and Wellness Hub would be restricted only to seniors (age not clarified). Jill Bada replied "No." Anita Dressler adds that she had clarified at another meeting that an agency delivering service being allowed to include everyone from the catchment area and was told "Yes, with no exceptions." Anita affirms that this solidified her position that Hubs should be in no seniors buildings. But the minutes just refer to seniors, and this point is important to Greenwood Towers tenants, adding that some "seniors" tenants age 59 and over are quite capable of causing security issues.

2) The minutes and the SHU report indicate engagement with STAC (Senior Tenants Advisory Committee). Though there was, indeed, a special Hub meeting on March 5, the findings were never shared with the entire STAC committee for discussion or recommendations. Not sharing findings of our subcommittees to the Committee as a whole is a deficiency of STAC, but it should be clear that it was only a few members not speaking for the entire committee.

With thanks

Janet McLeod

DEPUTATION FOR Tenant services committee meeting
July 5, 2021

What department does a lot for us, and we forget to acknowledge them?

Our CSU Community Safety Unit is constantly working to protect us. The officers under the direction of Chief William Anderson and his Deputy Dave Zebeski, are amazing. CSU Officers, like Al Bitton and Vanessa Ward are examples of excellence, as are the men and women who are on patrol..

Their duties are the security and protection of the approximately 110,000 tenants in our 2100 buildings. They serve throughout the City. Just think they serve more people than most cities and towns in Ontario.

When we are angry, anxious and vulnerable we call them. They respond. They do not know what they will be getting into when they respond. It could be a mental health crisis, a family feud, a person high on drugs, a senior who is lonely and just needs someone to talk to, some youth who are afraid of the gangs in the area. They work closely with Metro Police.

They patrol areas near and in the buildings late into the night. They find people sleeping in the community room or stairwells, many high on drugs or so drunk that they can not stand up. They deal with each incident professionally, responsibly and with the utmost respect and care.

This is not by accident, they have gone through training and briefings. The Special Constables have great leadership.

This deputation is very different from four years ago, when I for one criticized this very unit in a very damning deputation. Some of my words were harsh, I am sure that Chief Anderson was angered. But I give him credit two weeks later, he agreed to meet with two other advocates and myself.

When we met he was still annoyed, but he gave us the time allotted and we came to understand each other. My motive was for better services for the safety of tenants that live in TCHC buildings and communities.

He took my words seriously and the scenarios presented. We have collaborated often. This was the start of a bigger and better CSU.

I have witnessed the changes.

Amazingly enough, we have a group of dedicated people who care about our safety. Those tenants who are creating issues in our buildings are troublesome. But when tenants see the CSU in their building they are relieved, they feel that they can sleep at night knowing that the CSU are around especially in high risk buildings and communities.. . They know that they are protected.

Toronto Police can not be everywhere but the extra support of having a CSU with special constables creates a sense of safety and security. Some of our tenants do not understand or appreciate what has and is being done for them.

Many tenants do not realize some of the hurdles that the officers have to deal with. Everything from being pushed and spat on and verbally abused, or to remove a person from the building that smells so bad that you could gag. Handling fights between tenants, noise complaints, lock outs and sudden deaths. They patrol dark areas surrounding buildings not knowing if they will be shot at.

These men and women are people with families and friends who love them and pray for their safety. Their job is to provide safety and security to the tenants.

I wrote this the evening before hearing of the death of a Metro Police Officer. My condolences goes out to our CSU officers and especially those who knew the police officer, when they worked at Metro Police..

They have succeeded. I live in a low risk building but when we see an officer our senior tenants smile and feel that these officers care about them. All tenants should thank these officers who make a difference in our communities.

Therefore, I believe that this Board should acknowledge The Chief and his Deputy on behalf of all the men and women who work in this unit

Thank you
Anita Dressler
Chair of Seniors Voice
Tenant Rep Sheppard Place
Member of STAC