

MAP HOUSING WORKING GROUP MEETING MINUTES

Thursday June 25, 2020 - 1:00 pm online

PRESENT:

James Grunau, Doug Peat, Barry Growe (Journey Home Community)

Derek Chu, Ryan Reid, Moe Zaqout (Kinbrace)

Richard Belcham, Tammy Johnson, (inasmuch)

Jenny Lam (Options)

Meaad Alharbi (SOS / ISS of BC)

Alexandra Dawley (MOSAIC)

Dustin Lupick (HSABC)

Joni Rose (MJEDC)

Nicole Stinson (BC Housing)

Caro Lander (Belkin House)

Jenny Moss (MAP)

Regrets: Scott Small (Catholic Charities Men's Hostel), Julia Wu (bc211)

Co-Chair: James Grunau

- James welcomed everyone – Brief introductions
- Outline of Agenda – Approved
- Approved: Minutes of May 28, 2020

Housing Working Group Co-chair appointments

James introduced the two nominees for the HWG co-chair positions: Derek Chu (Kinbrace) and Doug Peat (Journey Home). They were invited to speak:

Doug – it will be hard to fill James' shoes.

Switched from shelter provision in previous work experiences to transition housing at JHC
Has had plenty of collaborative work experience with faith groups and in the world of shelters.

Derek – has learned much more over last year – throughout the projects funded by MJEDC how all agencies connect and work collaboratively through the reporting.
This has evidenced the power of collaboration and he is a firm believer.
Excited to see the work continue and help RC's housing.

Question (Richard): how can you support collaboration and also stay neutral from your own agency?

Doug: Here at HWG he will remain neutral as a co-chair and James will take on the role of JHC advocate.
Look forward to serving MAP HWG

Derek: Since he has Ryan and Moe on the committee to support Kinbrace's vision he is happy to remain neutral to support MAP HWG mandate.

Question (Alexandra): Congratulations to both!

Doug you were a champion of Meanwhile Spaces project – but as of November 2019 it was established that the Meanwhile Spaces project would continue as a JHC one (not MAP) – what is your thinking about that in your new role as chair?

Doug: I was happy to see this project move to JHC with a stronger voice. He has switched hats and Barry (JHC) will advocate for Meanwhile Spaces as he appreciates that he can't promote personal ideas in his new role. His role is to ensure that all voices are heard and to promote collaborative decision making.

Declared Derek and Doug co-chairs for the next year.

Derek moved that we all thank **James** for his work over the years as HWG co-chair and all his successes with moving issues forward on RC housing. Everyone supported with thanks.

Agency updates related to housing

Nicole (BC Housing)

Announced the purchase of 2 downtown hotels - Howard Johnson and Buchan Hotel – Those hotels will provide housing for homeless folks – working with authorities to provide wraparound services.
James – and a couple of purchases in Victoria as well – Nicole affirmed.

Tammy (Inasmuch)

2 inasmuch single moms agreed to rent a suite, but one couldn't pay the rent.
Inasmuch supported the continuing renter in a discussion with the landlord to reduce rent to an affordable level - he agreed so that was a big win-win as the landlords have difficulty finding good tenants too.

Caro (Belkin House)

House refugees in 2 different ways:

Shelter – **she oversees** - very low refugee numbers – 3 males in men's shelter and possibly one female in the women's shelter.

Transition housing – 16 single men and 6 women who were RC's at least at the start. 3-month program but sometimes longer as they're on a program.

Richard (Inasmuch)

Congratulations to Moe for his new job at Kinbrace from MAP

Alexandra (MOSAIC)

As lead agency with MAP's **BC Housing Referral & Database Management Project**

Announced that the first Advisory Committee meeting was held on June 8. Finally moving on the project under the supervision of MJEDC's Joni Rose who brings lots of project management experience and support.

Ryan (Kinbrace)

Kinbrace has an opening for a single person or a couple in the near future. Please contact Ryan if you have anyone that needs housing. Also thrilled to have Moe with Kinbrace.

James (JHC)

JHC has a 2-bedroom unit coming up in 2 weeks' time for a family.

Must follow national occupancy standards for that - Contact Vanessa if interested

Richard (Inasmuch)

Also will have a unit at the end of the summer.

Question: Alexandra – asked Ryan about the possibility of Kinbrace housing someone who uses a cane?

Ryan: yes if they can manage all the stairs. (2 flights)

Doug (Journey Home)

- Still seeking funding for refugee claimant reception center – one of partners: Olivet where we have Welcome Houses on their property we are looking at ways of maximizing that resource.

- Meanwhile Spaces – COVID put that on hold

1 year 'meanwhile space' in Surrey - \$1,600 / month – 3 bedrooms/2 storeys

Mead (SOS)

Continuing to help with temporary supplement applications and had a case of a single male from Montreal who they helped find a space in shelter now – also managed to house a couple of families to long term housing all through virtual communication/video.

Question to Nicole from Derek: is BC Housing intake registry for their managed buildings starting up?

Nicole: Yes, it's open now – but of course subject to availability. Covers all housing under BC Housing's mandate, not just that run by them.

Joni left the meeting

Discussion regarding the IHAP funding through MJEDC

What Agency plans exist to apply for the funding (\$4.8m)?

We are still waiting for the RFP which is stalled because of COVID-19 but we had discussed approaching this collaboratively and bringing plans forward to other members at this meeting, or not.

Note: A collaborative approach will only work if we all share our plans.

What are members' thoughts – even though we don't know the Terms and Conditions of the RFP yet?

Tammy (inasmuch)

Inasmuch has been very transparent about plans (single male housing) – what do others want?

Derek (Kinbrace) + Alexandra (MOSAIC) + Doug (JHC)

Still discussing what we're hoping to do – no conclusions.

Doug – we need more information about the RFP before we can see which of our plans might fit.

James: agencies sound like they need more information – some agencies are looking in multiple directions and this is just one capital project available.

Question to Nicole: can you tell us what the dollar value of the Community Housing Fund is?

Nicole: The **Community Housing fund** – has a 10-year budget commitment from the Province – no cap on amount per proposal – would look at all applications.

Applications close in January 2021 and projects are being assessed as they come in.

In September there will be an assessment of which projects are work-ready and decisions made.

This is a rolling application process over 10 years.

Doug Question: is BC Housing looking at needs of RC's? We know they look at 'Hard to House' and supportive housing has been a priority. Is there a fit for RC's?

Nicole: this project is for populations that can live independently – so RC's would definitely qualify. There is not a particular target group but as a vulnerable group they would fit.

Question: James to Derek: Was there another capital call from ['Reaching Home'](#) coming out this fall? It was initially announced but no recent news.

James: so there are a number of funds and probably all agencies are working out where they fit best.

Nicole – there is a new thinking that encourages a multi-layered approach to funding projects so agencies would be encouraged to look at applying to more than one fund. You could apply for Federal funds AND BC Housing

Jenny (MAP)

Encouraged agencies to think about this in terms of working together to tackle diverse needs and issues – possibly meet to brainstorm how this could be done without duplication or leaving gaps.

Brainstorm on housing opportunities/possibilities to explore over the summer months.

- **A potential 2nd Housing Forum in the fall.**

Everyone received a one-pager concerning a potential Forum.

Invited Barry to talk about the need to plan forward for the end of the pandemic.

Barry (JHC) – need to come out of COVID with a plan. There is always a response to the emergency, but it can be another disaster if the post- emergency needs are not considered. E.g. Province has responded by providing housing for the homeless to keep them off the streets and safe from COVID – but what will happen afterwards? This includes refugee claimants.

Will there be housing for them, or are they expected to return to shelters, or are there options for long term housing? A forum could be the platform for discussing the post-COVID plan.

First forum brought together diverse participation and actionable items came forward. Doesn't need to be lengthy but needs to be long-term focused.

James – could we bring in the shelter sector to look at partnership with our agencies in refugee transition housing?

Barry - As more claimants go into shelters this appears a logical partnership. Shelters have filled the gap for RC's and it needs to be addressed.

James asked committee for their opinions, could this help resolve our funding possibility opportunities?

Tammy – thanks for sending the one-pager in advance.

- There are 4 topics – Meanwhile Spaces was one and that's beyond HWG, we agreed.
- How would the forum with the topics presented be any different than the focus groups we did for the report? Is this not a repeat?

Doug: 'Meanwhile Spaces' is about bringing transition houses to the table for everyone and would be relevant. Point 2 - Yes we have had many discussions but we're thinking this would be more targeted – because we're coming from a much stronger place to discuss with potential partners and funders.

Tammy: JHC was going to look at insurance and creating a JHC company.

And we have already been given funding for a huge project and there's possibility of more – why would specifically MAP HWG need to be entertaining other funders at this point?

Doug: we would like to bring private/public funding to the table – govt. likes to see this. sharing with shelter sector will make us much stronger.

Meanwhile Space insurance:– can report from JHC's Insurance agency that they will cover separately. Liability will land on an entity apart from any agency. (Community Contribution Corporation)

James – remember these are only suggestions – nothing concrete – just ideas to get discussion going.

Alexandra – appreciate James' point about the wording is 'potential' and 'suggested' ideas.

Great to see that Meanwhile Spaces is being identified clearly – it's beyond the scope of this group and now we need to move on.

Richard – concerned from a MAP Co-chair perspective is about a lack of transparency about issues – we rushed the last item about sharing our plans; and if we are looking at a forum we need to be sure what we are trying to do in a collaborative way. What are our expectations?

What's the point of another forum? Would province give more money?

We need more transparency.

Derek – we are trying to be transparent but have not got very far in these discussions to share anything substantive.

We would like to collaborate if possible

Derek also interested in bringing other non-govt. funders to the table at a forum.

Nicole – timely opportunity to consider a forum – more public awareness of vulnerabilities than before especially because of the pandemic. Could be an opportunity in the fall to bring in new allies to this work.

Build connections with **BCNPHA** – they do a lot of work with their members and support non-profit housing providers. They are aware of newcomer and refugee housing needs but they do a lot of outreach and education so it would be a good connection.

Good idea to think about post-COVID planning and forward thinking. Not project specific but looking for opportunities.

Richard – an educational forum would be a good idea – get a foundation / associations to come and hear the issues rather than be too project specific.

James felt it was a good idea since its 2 years down the road from the last one – is it a priority for HWG? Do we have the capacity? Not telling the group to do anything but putting forward an idea.

Barry – seeing a shift in the news – public and politicians are recognizing how many people are poorly housed or on the street. Pandemic has fomented this awareness.

Nicole – and with the awareness of racism and privilege people are looking around at where they should be helping.

Jenny asked about timing, resources, and administrative capacity. Is the idea for MAP to organize a forum?

James – just wanted to float the idea – then co-chairs would need to get a sub-committee going and think about resources and finer programming.

Would the shelter sector be interested in a forum about refugee claimant housing?

Caro – not sure if shelters can get involved – maybe better to piggyback at the HSABC conference?

James agreed – an activity would be possible.

Tammy keen to do same educational workshop – it was very useful.

James – is anyone interested in working on this over the summer?

Alexandra / Richard September a bit early
– maybe November better

Moe (Kinbrace) – next few months are going to be tough with things opening up and maybe borders opening. It could be not only busy with a second wave but also very different.

James is willing to work on this with co-chairs. Please communicate with Doug & Derek if you have any ideas over the next few weeks.

Will be in touch with MAP Executive in the next few weeks with plans.

Richard: Thank you to James on behalf of MAP for your leadership over tricky times – applause.

Jenny shared Provincial Proclamation

ADJOURNED - next meeting will be announced