

**RainCity Housing  
Supportive Housing at 749 School Road, Gibsons  
Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting Notes  
March 16, 2021**

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

- The moderator welcomed the group and acknowledged that the site being discussed at this meeting sits on the traditional unceded territory of the Squamish Peoples.
- The moderator led a round of introductions and reviewed the meeting agenda.

**2. Update on Current Conditions**

- **Updates from RainCity Housing:**
  - o The RainCity Housing representatives thanked CAC participants for being at the meeting and reported:
    - The building opened last week and the tenancing process began last Wednesday. Three people per day are moving into the building.
    - Tenants are settling in and RainCity Housing is looking forward to welcoming more people until all units are filled.
- **Updates from BC Housing:**
  - o The BC Housing representative added that artist Simon James and apprentice Cheryl Rivers created the artwork for the building exterior.

**3. Roundtable Discussion**

**a) Challenges or Concerns**

- The Facilitator asked Community Members if they had any challenges or concerns to bring forward to the group.
- **Comments from Gibsons Elementary:**
  - o The Gibsons Elementary representative stated it would have been helpful to have received a phone call or email regarding the timeline for tenant move-in so that they would be better prepared to pass along information to members of the community, send a welcome letter to the building, and provide information for tenants and RainCity Housing staff regarding traffic, crosswalks, and COVID rules pertaining to school grounds, such as wearing masks.
  - o Gibsons Elementary expressed a desire to receive information about any updates moving forward in order to respond to members of the community from a place of knowledge.

- Gibsons Elementary will send a letter to RainCity Housing regarding COVID rules and will follow up on plans to organize a gallery of student artwork for the building.
  - **Response from RainCity Housing:**
    - The nature of the occupancy permitting process means that tenancing may need to be initiated quickly by the operator without much advance notice.
    - RainCity Housing received a letter from the School Board welcoming the tenants and would be happy to receive a letter from Gibsons Elementary.

- **Community Discussion:**

- Several Community Members stated that they are hearing negative feedback about the housing from neighbours and on social media. Community Members noted that most of the feedback they are hearing is incorrect or based on rumours. It was proposed that there be a protocol for dealing with community concerns and preventing the potential spread of false information.
- An inquiry was made by a Community Member as to whether a project partner could be interviewed by a local paper to provide information about supportive housing.
- A Community Member suggested it would be useful to have demographic information about tenants so that when false statements are made, real information can be provided in response.
  - **Response from RainCity Housing:**
    - An interview is a possibility moving forward.
    - There are online resources available that provide information about supportive housing, such as [Let's Talk Housing](#) and the [RainCity Housing website](#). It is recommended that members of the CAC direct people to these and other resources describing the services provided to tenants.
      - **Action Item #1:** RainCity Housing will provide links to online resources that could be shared with people in the community.
    - While demographic information about tenants is protected under the Privacy Act and cannot be shared, RainCity Housing would like everyone to keep in mind that tenants are people in our community. It would be helpful to encourage members of the public to consider the services they would want offered to loved ones if they were in need.
  - **Response from the Facilitator:**
    - The Facilitator added that meeting notes from each CAC meeting will be posted to the RainCity Housing website and could serve as an additional resource to help provide information to people over time.

**b) Opportunities**

- The Facilitator asked the group whether they had any ideas for bringing the community together, recognizing there are currently limitations due to COVID.
- **Update from RainCity Housing on Community Initiatives:**
  - RainCity Housing expressed appreciation to Gibsons Elementary and the School Board for the idea of bringing in rotating installations of artwork made by elementary school students.
    - **Action Item #2:** RainCity Housing will send to Gibsons Elementary the dimensions for the wall that will display the artwork.
  - RainCity Housing stated a lot of positive community support for supportive housing has been received, though this support can sometimes be overshadowed by negative comments. Welcome packages that include items such as gift cards for groceries are being provided to tenants through the support of Mayor and Council and local community businesses and organizations.
    - It was mentioned that when tenants walk into their room and see the welcome packages, it calms feelings of anxiety and confirms that there are members of the community who care.
- **Additional Ideas from Community Members:**
  - Several Community Members made suggestions for additional items that could be contributed to the building to welcome tenants (e.g., a bouquet of flowers, lap quilts), asked if there were any other items needed, and sought input on how to drop off donations.
    - **Response from RainCity Housing:**
      - Flowers in the dining area, which is not operating due to COVID, would be lovely to have until this area can be opened to people.
      - RainCity Housing has been in touch with the Sunshine Coast Quilters' Guild. The Guild is making 40 quilts for tenants.
      - Other items that would be appreciated include towels, bed linens for single beds, and coffee.
      - RainCity Housing would prefer an initial phone call prior to receiving donation drop-offs in order to navigate COVID restrictions. Smaller quantities of donations are preferred due to storage limitations.
        - **Action Item #3:** RainCity Housing will include the phone number for the building in the meeting notes so that anyone interested in donating items can call ahead.
- **Questions from Community Members:**

- A Community Member asked how many people have moved into the building so far.
  - **Response from RainCity Housing:**
    - Twelve people have moved in so far.
- A Community Member inquired whether the units are non-smoking and if so, where tenants would go to smoke.
  - **Response from RainCity Housing:**
    - Smoking is permitted in the building, but not in common areas. In addition, there is a designated floor where all units are non-smoking.
- A Community Member asked if tenants are allowed pets.
  - **Response from RainCity Housing:**
    - Pets are allowed and there is a pet policy that is agreed upon when tenants move in.
- A Community Member asked for clarification on the goals and strategy of supportive housing, specifically whether there is a time limit on tenancy.
  - **Response from BC Housing:**
    - It is standard across all supportive housing that tenants can stay in their homes for long as they need the supports provided.
    - As tenants gain independence, they will be supported in moving to other housing that meets their needs and goals (e.g., through subsidized housing or programs such as Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters).
- A Community Member asked whether any supportive housing projects in British Columbia have a tenant from the building as a member of the CAC.
  - **Response from BC Housing:**
    - Tenants have participated in CACs in the past, resulting in some good outcomes. It is possible that we could bring someone in as the building opens.
  - **Response from the Facilitator:**
    - There is a designated seat on the CAC for a tenant from the building. It is best practice to wait until the CAC becomes established to fill this seat to ensure the CAC is a safe space for everyone. Good relationships have been formed by including people with lived experience.
- A Community Member asked how the frequency of CAC meetings will be determined and what the process is for requesting that items be added to the agenda.
  - **Response from the Facilitator:**

- For the first six months the CAC will meet on a monthly basis. We seldom find that CACs need to meet once a month after the first six months. Meeting frequency will be determined by a roundtable discussion at the six-month mark.
- The Committee will follow the standing agenda and items from members can be brought to meetings for discussion.

**4. Next Steps and Action Items**

- The next meeting will be scheduled in approximately one month's time.
- The notes from this meeting will be shared with CAC members and will be posted to the RainCity Housing website.
- Action items have been described in the table below:

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible</b>
1. Provide CAC members with links to online resources that could be shared with people in the community.	RainCity Housing
2. Send to Gibsons Elementary the dimensions for the wall that will display artwork from elementary students.	RainCity Housing
3. Include the phone number for the building in the meeting notes so that anyone interested in donating items can call ahead	RainCity Housing The number for the building is: 778.462.2212
4. Share tenant application form with CAC members.*	BC Housing

\* Action item carried forward from last meeting.