



## MINUTES

Social Determinants of Health Advisory Committee – Everyone Matters

Thursday, February 1, 2018

1:00 p.m.

Committee Room 3, City Hall  
66 Charlotte Street Port Colborne

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### Attendees:

Co-Chair Lori Kleinsmith, Bridges CHC  
Co-Chair Angie Desmarais, Councillor  
John Maloney, Mayor  
Sherry Hanson, Supervisor, By-law  
Enforcement Division  
Chris Healey, Staff Sergeant, NRP  
Scott Lawson, Fire Prevention Officer  
Christine Clark-Lafleur, Port Cares  
Neal Schoen, Chair – East Village  
Neighbourhood Improvement Task Force  
Judy Cassan, Bridges CHC  
Scott Luey, CAO

### Regrets:

Jeffrey Sinclair – Niagara Region

### Guests:

Adrienne Jugley, Commissioner of  
Community Services – Niagara Region

### Minutes:

Nancy Giles, EA to Mayor and CAO

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### 1. Call to order

Co-Chair Lori Kleinsmith called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

### 2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Neal Schoen  
Seconded by John Maloney

That the agenda for the February 1, 2018 meeting of the Social Determinants of Health Advisory Committee be approved.  
CARRIED.

### 3. Approval of the November 1, 2017 minutes

Moved by Angie Desmarais  
Seconded by John Maloney

That the minutes for the November 1, 2017 meeting of the Social Determinants of Health Advisory Committee be approved.  
CARRIED.

### 4. Business Arising

Introductions were made around the table. CAO Luey explained that Nancy would be there to take minutes but not necessarily do all the work of the committee.

## **Report to Council – Change in Terms of Reference**

St. Catharines Housing Plan – item went to council, council approved letter to be sent to City of St. Catharines

### **5. Affordable Housing**

#### **Adrienne Jugley – Commissioner of Community Services – Niagara Region**

Lori mentioned that the committee is trying to lay some groundwork in Port Colborne for affordable housing initiatives. We are looking for updates from the Niagara Region.

Adrienne Jugley introduced herself and spoke about the Niagara Region's involvement in affordable housing.

Affordable housing is everyone's responsibility. There is a National Housing Strategy – communication about this strategy remains at a high level but we hope to hear more specifics later this year. Affordable housing is a significant contributor to improving social determinants of health and reducing poverty. Niagara Region has been appointed by the province as the service manager for housing and homelessness services – the administration of these responsibilities are divided between Niagara Regional Housing (NRH) and Community Services. Niagara Region and local area municipalities are also examining opportunities to support the development of affordable housing through the provision of incentives.

There is also some work underway on land policy (e.g. inclusionary zoning, secondary suites, intensification, limiting condo conversions). The Planning Department at the Region is also mandated to consider affordable housing within the development of its Master Plan.

Niagara Region is currently updating the Housing and Homelessness Action Plan (HHAP) and hopes to have this completed by the end of 2018 for Council approval.

Adrienne is hoping the Region can bring the HHAP and Planning Department strategy together, so Niagara Region will be able to quickly leverage funding opportunities once the funding details associated with the National Housing Strategy are announced.

National Housing Strategy – they are still working out details with the Federal Government and the Provincial Government and what the matching contributions will be – there is some concern that the funds available will still be far less than is required (originally committing \$11 Billion over 10 years for all of Canada).

National Housing Strategy includes loans to not-for-profit housing providers. In some cases, land can be used for matching contributions.

Christine from Port Cares noted that Port Cares closed a deal to buy 53 Nickel Street to build self-sustainable family and single units. This was supported through local donations. Port Cares is hoping to bring other opportunities to the community.

Adrienne said that it is anticipated that the non-for-profits will lead the charge to build affordable housing – provision of ‘affordable’ new rentals are difficult for for-profit developers as it is challenging to make a profit and keep rents low while offsetting the capital costs of new development. Vacancy rate is 1.5% across Niagara – landlords can now charge, at turnover, higher rents and find tenants willing to pay. There is some increased pressure on the shelter system, as clients are staying longer, finding it more difficult to find affordable places to live.

Lori struggles with, what some describe as affordable rental units being built because they are not really affordable for our low income residents. Lack of stock drives up the price.

Adrienne advised that there is a Development Charges Rebate Program currently promoted by the province, open to application to specific municipalities in Ontario (8 LAMs have been identified as eligible to apply in Niagara) – The City can apply and chose to make the Region our administrator..

The Region has entered into an agreement, with the province through the “Home for Good” program to increase the amount of supportive housing available in Niagara. There is currently a plan to build 8 new units for supportive housing in Port Colborne for those struggling with chronic homelessness.

Adrienne talked to NRH – there are no capital projects for new social housing development planned for Port Colborne in its current capital plan.

NRH has a Home Ownership Program to help low income families with a down payment for a house. This is a program that could be helpful to Port Colborne residents.

Niagara Renovates Program – 9 people participated last year from Port Colborne. Councillor Desmarais mentioned that she had heard it is difficult to navigate the program. Difficulty getting quotes and if work wasn't done properly, there is no one to police it. Adrienne mentioned that the program is designed to make the property safe, not just to renovate. Adrienne suggested someone from NRH could be asked to come to a future meeting to address these concerns. If we get a specific concern, let her know.

Sherry asked if it would be beneficial if there was a property standards order against them. Adrienne stated that the program has limited funds so fixing up a whole house is not feasible. If the resident finds the application process challenging, it might be helpful for the individual to have an agency or advocate to work with them.

Some municipalities have considered providing municipal lands to support affordable housing development. If the municipality had land available, it could enter into an agreement with a developer to keep rents low.

Parking requirement adjustments/reductions are sometimes made by municipalities to support affordable housing development.

There is work happening in social assistance – recommendation at the province to increase the income amounts in the Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Programs as the current amounts are entirely inadequate to allow residents to afford current rental rates in any community in Ontario.

Some are identifying an increase in families in shelters – families are stating that they simply can't find affordable housing. In Port Colborne, committee members noted that there is an issue with seniors in need of housing.

Representative on the NRH Board – there is currently a 'community member at large' vacancy – Currently 5 Regional Councillors and 4 members of the public. We could look at the vacancy and see if someone from Port Colborne would apply to be on the board.

Neal Schoen left the meeting at 2:05

Lori asked about rooming/lodging houses and the work that has been happening locally to look at ways to improve the living conditions and safety of residents in these unregulated facilities.

Adrienne – working group is still active – meeting next Monday to review different regulatory options. Once the working group has completed its review, it will go back to the CAO group with a recommendation – a local by-law and licensing component may be the best option. Lori asked if the province is still considering provincial regulations. While a bill has been proposed by MPP Forster related to this sector, it is unclear if it will achieve final reading before the end of this term of government. If not, it would have to be reintroduced in the next government and it is unclear if this will be a priority for Queen's Park.

Lori thanked Adrienne for attending the meeting.

### **City Policies**

A copy of all city policies related to affordable housing was distributed. Dan or Evan will be asked to come to the next meeting.

### **6. New Business**

Vulnerable Seniors – need to have a conversation especially during extreme cold weather

Lori asked about the warming centre. Angie advised that it wasn't very well attended. It is not a policy. The city will be looking into whether this will be continued. We could ask the Fire Chief to come to the next meeting.

**7. Action Items**

None.

**8. Next Meeting**

Thursday, May 3, 2018 1:00 p.m.

**9. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:36 p.m.

DRAFT