

Roehampton Residence Community Liaison Committee

Meeting #12 - VIA WEBEX: August 11 2021, 5:30 – 7:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Purpose: To identify ways in which the CLC and Roehampton Residence can work together on initiatives and to share general updates of the Roehampton program

Land Acknowledgement and Reflection: I acknowledge the land I am standing on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississauga's of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. I also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississauga's of the Credit and the Williams Treaty signed with multiple Mississauga's and Chippewa bands.

1. Purpose & Agenda Review by Hellen Haziprodrumu

2. Meeting Attended by:

- Nicole Williams: Manager – Expansion Sites
- Hellen Haziprodrumu -SSA – Roehampton
- Sonya Van Kruistum: Site Leader – Roehampton
- Rev. Joseph: Manor Road United Church
- Wilmar Kortleer: School Board Trustee
- Dennis: 900 Mount Pleasant Road
- Philiz Goh: Mid Town Community Care Group
- Deb Whalen-Blaize: Church of the Transfiguration
- Frank White: Eglinton Place Condo Corp
- Judy Dennison: Litton Park Tennant's Association
- Jane Auster: South Eglinton Ratepayers' and Residents' Association
- Philiz Goh: Mid Town Community Care Group
- Laura Inglis: 900 Mount Pleasant Road
- Rev. Stephen Milton: Lawrence Park Community Church
- Adam Saunders: Mid-town Safety Group
- Lancelyn Rayman-Watters: EPRA
- Catherine Curran: Park Rate Payer's Association
- Traian Rusu: Sprint Senior Care

3. General Community and Shelter Updates

Shelter and Covid updates -- Nicole Williams, Roehampton Residence Manager

- Roehampton has been very busy over the past month:

Programming:

- The Community Care Team attended on site at Roehampton and held a 'icecream social...this was the first on site event since COVID. The event was outside on the 3rd floor deck and was well attended by clients and community members. This was also an opportunity for the community to see the donations and work done on the deck with planting, and patio furniture; which were all from donations..a big thanks to all.

- Food Services at Roehampton also provided a Caribbean meal in celebration of Caribana.
- TVs are being installed in all shelter rooms which will help greatly with clients feeling less isolated and having to be indoors.

Incidents:

- In the last review period, there were no major incidents

Harm Reduction:

- There was an increase in overdoses within Toronto with 299 occurring over the long weekend, this has also impacted the shelter system with increased overdoses occurring as well within city shelters, including Roehampton.
- In addition, the Police posted a warning about particular drugs that were found in the neighborhood
- Harm Reduction support and resources have increased to offset the potential risk for those who use, and we are very happy to report that soon we will have on site the SHOP peer team.
- All staff on site at the Roehampton have had Naloxone and CPR training, therefore they are trained to administer Naloxone and provide CPR. Training is tracked, and when necessary recertification occurs. CPR training has been a challenge during Covid with only on-line recertification being available.

Questions:

How are things progressing regarding a Safe Consumption Site at Roehampton?

- There was some past conversation within the SSHA Division about introducing Safe Consumption Sites, but there is still further evaluation and requirements needed to proceed with this.
- Roehampton is considered a safe use site, as all shelters are required to be using a Harm Reduction approach is working with, supporting, and providing services to those who use substances.
- There will also be the introduction, as stated above of the SHOP program, which is peer based. The expectation is that with Peer Workers being on site they will be able to provide support, guidance, and resources from the lens of 'lived experience'.

What is happening regarding safe-supply?

- Currently shelters in the City do not provide drugs to clients.

Were there any overdoses?

- There were overdoses and one person still remains in hospital.

What other options are there for people?

- Clients have the opportunity to work with the on-site Counsellors who provide case management services, which primarily is assessment and referrals which the client has a choice of accepting or not.
- There is also Inner City Health which runs an on-site clinic with nurses, a doctor and psychiatrist which come in once a week to see clients; oxygen is also available if needed and administered by the nurses.

How do the staff become aware of overdoses?

- There are some that have been reported by other residents that either share rooms, or use with the person, or by staff check-ins, which occur regularly.

Hellen shared that for the September CLC meeting we have schedule a presentation on the current Opioid Crisis and how city shelters are dealing with it..Harm Reduction. There was positive feedback about this upcoming presentation, and there was encouragement to have more guest speakers / presentations.

COVID:

- Nicole happily advised there were no covid cases in shelters at this time, including Roehampton.

General Questions:**I had heard that there is a lease only until December 2021?**

- Nicole reminded the group that the building lease was signed in July 2020 and is a two-year lease, with an option for a third year. She advised that there are no current plans to close or relocate the program. Of course there are eventual plans to possibly open and/or relocate facilities, but for that there would need to be new sites identified and then a plan for ramping down services; should this occur any clients at Roehampton would be relocated.
- As new sites are developed or opened they are based on a Housing First and Harm Reduction basis, and taking into consideration healthy spacing for staff and clients within the facility.

I had heard that Roehampton was going to be developed into a large condo?

- Nicole advised that was the plan by the developer pre-covid, however as a result of covid those plans may have changed due to a number of factors. We have received no specific information about the development of the site by the owner / developer.

With the borders opening soon, will that effect the type of persons that you will be working with?

- Prior to covid there was a large population of refugees using the shelter system, but that has dramatically decreased with covid and border / travel restrictions. With the result of covid there has been a marked increase single adults entering the shelter system.
- We do suspect should the borders open and travel restrictions be lifted we will see the number of refugees entering Canada, and coming to Toronto increase.

Will the opening of the borders make the drug supply safer?

- Possibly, that is the hope. It was identified that when the borders closed that the drug supply became more lethal.

Donations:

How can we help?

- Committee members shared that they would like to know how they could help over Thanksgiving and Christmas which is coming soon. The group was assured they will be advised.
- Nicole shared that we did receive a large donation to set up a clothing donation room for the clients. Currently the space is not well organized or set up since it was in one of the hotel rooms, but with the donation we will be setting it up to feel like a 'shopping experience' for the clients needing items.
- We will also message to the group if there are specific clothing needs to the clients, and especially with the colder weather coming.

School Trustee Meeting Update -- Wilmar Kortleever, Shared Services Liaison, TDSB

- There were no issues presently with the classes being on line
- There are currently only day camps and day cares in buildings.
- There have been no major incidents over past weeks
- Sept 8th is the start date for classes, with staff arriving on site August 30th.
- CST still doing Outreach at a number of locations with focus on Northern and Eglinton

Midtown Community Safety Group

- We find that we have to spend a lot of time fact checking information that is given by politicians to ensure that it is accurate
- Some of the more recent concerns are scooters on sidewalk (used a lot by food delivery services) which make us concerned for safety on sidewalks, in particular for seniors
- There are really no to little concern about Roehampton at this time
- In the past two weeks we have noticed an uptake in the number of needles in the area, not knowing if it is from Roehampton Residents.
- While there is the increase in needles more recently, it is nowhere near what it was a year ago, but at the same time there is some anxiety with the schools opening
- Our group is having discussions about questions regarding where is money better spent for the residents at Roehampton. For example, should more be invested in housing or harm reduction?
- A current area of concern is Cow Bell Lane, which has been identified as a location for criminal activity; most of the concerns about this area are from the condo that is right beside the area
- What MTSG would like to see is resources where it is needed or targeted policing. We have noticed that there have been more police officers that are on bikes in the area which is good to see.

Nicole, in response:

- CST has responded to overdoses for people that they do not know, or from Roehampton
- If there are incidents in the community, we get notifications from CST and/or the community, and check if any of the incidents involved Roehampton residents and if so, follow up occurs based on the Good Neighbour Policy
- We also follow up if we are informed of a resident from Roehampton using in the community and remind them of the Good Neighbour Policy AND the proper disposal of items and the risk of overdose

Question:

Circle K was identified as a problem spot for clients, what has been done about this area?

- Nicole responded to advise we have regular meetings / conversations with the Manager/staff.
- She also advised that we recently received an email from the BIA on behalf of Circle K that increased support was needed, but when Nicole met with them, they stated said the support being received by the city/CST at present is adequate and they were thankful of the good relationship that exists.
- Nicole assured the group that they are in regular contact/communication with Circle K, and they contact us if there is any issues on site.
- Plus, the CST team visits this site numerous times a day and our security checks in with them on a regular basis from 7p-7a.

4. Facilitated Discussion: All CLC Future

- a) What do we want to do?
- b) Move to meeting bimonthly?
- c) Invite new members?
- d) Do we increase the size of the group or rotate person out of the group?
- e) Do we need to review the groups objectives and broaden the focus to the community more broadly?

Stephen

- Many groups seem to be like an echo chamber and go no where. When I think of Circle K...we brought this issue forward and this was responded to. This is a result of the group and it seems that we are accomplishing things. These may not be the outcomes that everyone wants, but still worth something getting out there as an achievement
- Interested in harm reduction and supportive housing
- There is work still that we can do
- There could be more opportunities to welcome other persons into the group?
- Perhaps we could open up community drop ins that people had wanted to open and which people used pre-covid?

Nicole:

- We are planning a BBQ for the community (September) Will have to monitor for numbers, given Covid and so will likely start small and then grow from there.

John J:

- There are a lot of people returning to work.
- There will be more people in need for a length of time (including those that may have never faced these types of needs pre COVID).
- Perhaps a community study for increased need for a shelter in the community would be something that we could advocate for. We could advocate for a study and develop a strategy, specific to our community.
- I think that there is a lot that the community can offer and there are people that would like to build relationships with the residents and welcome into the community.

Examples of Projects:

- Thorncliffe Park want to raise money for back packs for kids as cooperative of 6 churches
- Regardless of whether Roehampton is here, a committee is great to continue community needs

Suggestion: It could grow from Roehampton CLC to Community CLC

- Think that this is for Roehampton, and it seems that issues related to homelessness will not resolve soon and so this group is needed?
- Perhaps we can keep it for Roehampton and then expand as well, in order to address other community needs that arise
- Perhaps we could invite more churches and businesses
- With the changes to COVID regulations this may equal more flexibility

Phyllis: This is my last meeting and, in the future, Sarah will cover. Nicole will connect over financial literacy course and thank you for your participation!

Nicole:

- It seems that the majority are wanting to continue with monthly meetings. Between this meeting and the next, please be thinking of both individuals and organizations that we can invite to participate.

Questions:

In the media there have been persons interviewed that say that the encampments are safer than shelters, and that there are assaults which make people feel unsafe. Is this true?

Nicole's Response...

- Assaults do happen in shelters at times and there have been some at Roehampton. Thankfully none have been severe, but this is taken very seriously and will result in follow up and possible discharge/restriction.
- SSHA a division within the City of Toronto provides a social service response to homelessness, we are not part of enforcement. The decision to evict persons from the encampments was made outside of SSHA. At all times, during any encampment clearing the Streets to Homes program staff are present to provide support/services to those in the encampments.
- The decision by the city to clear the encampments was based on the belief that while there are things that may occur in a shelter it is still safer then living rough outdoors in an encampment which have numerous risks such as overdoses,

assaults, and fire with no staff on site to assist or lend support when these incidents occur.

- FYI: People sleeping outside can request S2H to assist through calling 311, who will come to where the person is and assess their need for services. This included transportation to shelters. If you do encounter a person who is experiencing homelessness that is in medical distress, please do call 911, 311 is for accessing services.

5. Wrap-up & Next Steps

Hellen Haziprodromu, Supervisor Social Assistance/ All

- Next CLC meeting date – September 8, 2021, 5:30pm-7:00pm
- Process next steps – meeting notes to be shared with participants for review in draft, participants have 1 week to review before meeting and minutes and agenda will be confirmed at the start of each meeting.