

Aspires Housing Group of Calgary

Minutes: Business Meeting Thursday February 7, 2019, 7-9 p.m.
The Ability Hub, Green Room (3rd floor)
Child Development Centre
300, 3824 – 24th Avenue N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T3B 2X9

Guest Speaker: Ed Larkcom, Highcliffe Properties: Highcliffe Properties specializes in the design and construction of various types of accessible housing. Ed has worked closely with Red Deer agencies to custom-develop affordable rental accommodation to meet the needs of their tenant population including seniors, children and young adults. Ed presented an overview of several of his projects. He has kindly shared his Powerpoint presentation (attached)

Each house or building is run by its own provider (agency) The design of each new building is iterative and evolves with each project maintaining or improving key design elements that have worked out well for tenants and staff. A good example of this is the provision of common space in a recent project. In the larger units and units adjacent to common spaces the provision of a safe social space has resulted in people feeling comfortable engaging socially but also retreat to their own apartment or room easily when they need to. A supportive friendly community has come into its own in this building.

Service providers look after the clients. Highcliffe Properties provides and looks after the buildings. Buildings are inspected by PDD/FSCD and AHS. All buildings must meet the newer more stringent B3 building code classification for assisted living facilities which addresses the demand for a more flexible range of care accommodation to provide safe and affordable housing options for seniors and persons with disabilities. New energy efficiency requirements have come into effect with the most recent building code and Ed has worked successfully with the Red Deer Building Authority and Fire Marshalls to interpret and meet or exceed the new code requirements for safety, energy efficiency while incorporating functional accommodation for tenants. All B3 buildings also require a NFPA 13 (National Fire Protection Association) sprinkler system and full two stage fire alarm systems.

Red Deer has a land policy which developers must adhere to. In new communities, developers must provide PS sites which are set aside for community benefit – this could be a playground, daycare, churches, community centres etc. If unsold, after one year the property reverts to R1 and can be sold for single family housing. Highfield has been able to access these sites while they are still reserved for PS use. Calgary does not yet have a similar program in place, however interested parties may contact the OLSH office (Office of Land and Services Housing) to learn about potential City of Calgary land available.

Ed develops buildings with a cost to tenant approach which factors in spaces such as common areas, amenity space including storage for tenants. Rent varies between buildings and number of tenants in a space (e.g. 3 bedroom versus 1 bedroom), building size, and age. Highcliffe has developed a debt service ratio formula to determine project parameters. Actual rent rates are set by the agency. Ed followed up after the meeting to clarify that in his experiences with his

Red Deer properties, rent varies from about \$650/month plus utilities in the smaller buildings such as triplexes and duplexes to about \$900/month plus utilities in the newer apartment style buildings. The Calgary market will be different than Red Deer.

For families who are interested in learning more about Ed Larkcom's projects send an email to Ed Larkcom, Highcliffe Properties: rivendell@telusplanet.net

Business Meeting:

1. **Additions to the agenda**
2. **Review and approval of minutes** from October 4, 2018
3. **Sinneave Family Foundation Update** – Barb Potter, Chief Operating Officer, Sinneave Foundation. As the Aspires group has grown significantly in the last 12 months Barb's presentation focused on Sinneave, The Ability Hub, connections to The Aspires Group of Families and how we work together.

Presentation Notes

- a. Sinneave Family Foundation: A charitable not-for-profit focused on improving the transition to adulthood for individuals with autism working with individuals, families, the community and at the systems/policy levels. Sinneave is Calgary based with a national reach through formalized program partnerships across Canada and also has a robust project management office. By facilitating supports around projects we can help to move them forward. Housing is one of the three outcome areas that Sinneave is focused on (the other two are Employment and Continued Education.) We are looking to track people living independently in a supported way in the community to help us understand where the successes are and demonstrate at policy level where the needs are. In **2018** Sinneave has worked collaboratively within our networks of agencies to create the following outcomes for individuals with autism: 126 Individuals Employed, 108 individuals Returned to School and 16 individuals living in supported independent living situations.
- b. The Ability Hub: The physical space: 17,000 sq. feet of leased space on the UCalgary Campus , designed to be sensory aware. Work at the Hub includes:
 - The Resource Centre (information and navigation)
 - Monthly family workshop series
 - Employment and pre-employment programming
 - Skills coaching sessions (Launch + Skills)
 - Autism related community training sessions
 - Advisory committees and collaboration with like minded individuals and organizations
 - Hosting/ supporting conferences and events.
 - Much of our work is also done outside the walls of the Ability Hub in local communities and across Canada.
- c. Aspires Housing Group of Calgary: A parent-formed group with a primary focus on family driven housing solutions for adults with autism and other disabilities. Mutual support and networking are key to family engagement.

How we work together:

Aspires; The voice of families.

- Families identify independent living needs/provide ideas
- Feedback contributes to Sinneave program development (Launch+Skills is an example of the Aspires families having a voice in some aspects of this new program – helping to support the transition to supported independent living)
- Learn from a variety of guest speakers related to independent living
- Leverage community based networks

Sinneave:

- Provides administrative support to Aspires business meetings
- Leverage networks in affordable and low income housing, government and service supports
- Convene stakeholders to explore a range of sustainable models
- Offer project coordination to specific projects and support project due diligence
- Document new models to share with the broader community and follow longer term outcomes to understand sustainable models
- Continue to build networks in low income/affordable housing and support service providers
- Connect/build Provincial Government relations (PDD/funding, Housing)

4. **Project updates and new developments** – John Seigner, Director of Housing
- a. Horizon Housing Society's Glamorgan Project: Horizon Housing, an affordable housing provider in Calgary reserved several one-bedroom units in their new 161 rental apartment building in S.W. Calgary. All Horizon Housing tenants must be affiliated with an agency approved by Horizon Housing. Horizon Housing provides the building as landlord and the agency is responsible for the tenant's support needs. Sinneave Foundation introduced Monarch House to Horizon Housing. Monarch House designed a 'skinny package' to provide light supports to ASD individuals who do not receive any PDD funding and are able to live on their own. The light support package includes a weekly telephone check-in and a once-monthly social event at a cost of \$59 per month. Clients may purchase additional supports at reasonable cost as needed. At this point in time Horizon Housing has no further inventory ear-marked for Aspires clients however we anticipate continuing to work together with Horizon Housing and Monarch House as inventory becomes available either at Glamorgan House or in future projects. To date nine Aspires clients have moved into The Glamorgan Project.
 - b. Sisters of Charity: a former nunnery located in the Kensington neighbourhood in Calgary. The Sisters wanted to sell the property to an organization rather than to developers. March of Dimes Canada were interested in purchasing the building and providing wraparound services to a group of Aspires families. The project was most suited to those individuals eligible for PDD funding who would need 24/7 support and benefit from a congregate living model. With families engaged in the project potential March of Dimes has been working to receive accreditation in Alberta from PDD. At this time March of Dimes has informed families they will not be continuing to pursue the purchase of the property because:
 - March of Dimes Provincial Accreditation has not yet been approved therefore March of Dimes are not yet able to provide the wraparound services and
 - The capital impact of bringing the building up to current code compliance and regulatory changes to current zoning make the purchase no longer feasible.
 - March of Dimes is interested in continuing to work with Aspires families to consider other options once they are accredited.

- c. Norfolk Housing: Two Aspires tenants (one with a cat) are living in Norfolk Housing in Kensington. Norfolk is a socially conscious, community minded rental housing organization operating in the Kensington area. 50% of their units are market rental units and 50% are affordable rental units. The market rental units subsidize the income scaled units. Norfolk has recently purchased another building also in the Kensington. John will be meeting with them soon to talk about the possibility of additional units for Aspires members.
 - d. Homespace: affiliated with the Calgary Homeless Foundation. Homespace works with agencies to develop, design and build projects for each agencies unique needs. They have a 3 storey template apartment building which fits on a single family lot.
 - e. Individual success stories: We want to hear from families if they have a success story they would like to share. In the past year we are aware of: 3 individuals who moved to Calgary and needed a place to live. One has moved into the Glamorgan project and one is sharing an apartment with another Aspires member, and report doing very well. At least one individual has moved in with a supportive living room mate.
 - f. Projects in development: There is a continued need for housing for individuals with mid-level support needs and Sinneave is interested in helping facilitate/coordinate solutions to suit this group as well.
 - g. Need for long-term oversight committee Richard Conte: Now that several of our Aspires members are getting settled in the Glamorgan project, there is a need for people to provide some oversight in the form of a family/parent group to monitor how things are going. The Glamorgan families may look to setting up a forum to facilitate 'one voice' in discussions/suggestions with the landlord (Horizon Housing) and in order to pursue solutions to any shared issues as they arise.
5. **Social update**: Planning for an **April 7, 2019 spring potluck** is underway. At the last potluck we had the largest turn-out ever with 50 people in attendance. As our group continues to grow we need to get more organized. Help is appreciated with food/entertainment organization, set up, and cleanup.
 6. **Sinneave and Aspires Surveys**: (Barb Potter). Sinneave is working on two surveys: An Aspires survey to check in with families and a Sinneave survey to families.
 7. **Family Round table**: With over 45 people in attendance we asked families who were attending their first Aspires meeting to introduce themselves, provide a brief description of their adult child's support needs and what type of living arrangement they might be interested in.
 8. **Future meeting date**: March 7, 2019.