

10

WOMEN'S SHELTER DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Community and Health Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated September 1, 2011, from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services, with an amendment to add the following recommendation:

- 1. Council formalize the name 'Belinda's Place' for the proposed new women's shelter in Newmarket.**

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Council support the inclusion of a donor recognition feature in the garden of the proposed new women's shelter in Newmarket to establish a permanent place to acknowledge the contributions of the community.

2. PURPOSE

This report provides an update on the progress of an emergency shelter/transitional housing facility in Newmarket for women without children and gives information about the success in raising funds to support the capital cost of the project. As well, the report shares new information about community based support of the ongoing operating costs.

3. BACKGROUND

Council directed staff to explore an opportunity to develop the Region's first emergency shelter for women without children

At its meeting of January 21, 2010, Council directed staff to investigate the feasibility of a site at 16850 Yonge Street in Newmarket for the development of an emergency shelter and transitional housing facility for homeless women without children.

The site is owned by the Town of Newmarket and the Town has agreed to lease the property to the Region, or its housing corporation, Housing York Inc., for a period of up to 99 years. Newmarket has also offered to waive all municipal fees and charges associated with the project's development.

A community-based committee was challenged to raise funds to contribute to the capital and operating costs of the facility

A group of committed community representatives from a broad array of sectors in York Region (the Community Team) initiated the drive to make this project a reality by presenting their research on the need for such a facility to Committee in September 2009.

To demonstrate their commitment to the establishment of a facility for women, the Community Team pledged to raise \$1 million towards the capital cost of the project as well as to support ongoing operating costs.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

Community fundraising efforts have been very successful

To date, the community fundraising efforts have been successful in raising funds to support the capital cost of the project. These funds result from many hours of hard work by community members who recognize the need for these services and want to contribute to making the facility a reality. Events have included information tables at Home Shows, the Aurora Street Festival, and other community venues, a Wine and Cheese evening hosted by a local business, the Magna Hoedown and charity golf tournaments.

A verbal update on the amount raised will be provided at Committee.

A major commitment has been received towards the operating costs of the project

The Community Team is also very pleased to advise that Magna International has recently committed \$1 million over 4 years to the project to fund an endowment to offset the ongoing operating costs of the facility. Development of a process to manage those funds and establish operating protocols has begun.

A donor recognition feature is proposed to be incorporated in the project's design

Council's approval is sought to recognize these significant contributions from the community. The project's design team has been asked to make donor recognition a focus of the contemplative garden being developed around the foundation of the old Quaker Meeting House, a heritage feature of the site. It is intended to create some form of recognition space as a permanent feature of the garden.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

On April 22, 2010 Council approved Clause 6 of Report No. 4 of the Finance and Administration Committee which allocated \$5 million from the Region's *Investing in Ontario, 2008 Act* funding for the development of this project. An additional \$1 million was approved, in principle, by Council on May 19, 2011 to provide for the purchase of additional property to make the project viable.

As with all the Region's other shelter programs, there will be an operating budget impact when the facility is completed that will be addressed through the business plan and budget cycle.

The documented success of the community's fundraising efforts and the contributions from the Town of Newmarket will mitigate the impact on the Region's financial resources.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Women residing in any of the local municipalities that make up York Region can benefit from this new service as it is centrally located and accessible by YRT/VIVA services.

7. CONCLUSION

The need for a shelter for homeless women without children has been well documented. The efforts of many community volunteers that will assist with the development and operation of the facility, together with the in kind contributions from the Town of Newmarket, demonstrates a true partnership to begin to address this service gap.

For more information on this report, please contact Sylvia Patterson, General Manager, Housing and Long Term Care at Ext. 2091.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.