



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Options for 702 Kennedy Road

Date:	November 10, 2015
To:	Community Development and Recreation Committee
From:	General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration
Wards:	Ward 35
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

The report responds to Community Development and Recreation Committee's request for information on the options to ensure that the property at 702 Kennedy Road, formerly operated as Second Base Youth Shelter, continues to be used to accommodate a shelter program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, recommends that:

1. Community Development and Recreation Committee receive this report for information.

Financial Impact

The recommendation in this report has no financial impact.

Equity Impact

The emergency shelter system in Toronto serves equity-seeking groups such as seniors, people with disabilities, individuals with mental health issues, the working poor, Aboriginal peoples, people who identify as LGBTQ2S and other vulnerable groups. Effective operation of the shelter system, including a range of shelter programs, is important in ensuring that temporary accommodation is available to a variety of equity seeking groups and contributes to the City's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of October 15, 2015 Community Development and Recreation Committee requested the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, and the Chief Corporate Officer to report to the November 25, 2015 committee meeting on options for the City to ensure that the current Second Base Youth Shelter property at 702 Kennedy Road in Ward 35 continues to be used to accommodate a shelter program, including the option of the City purchasing the property.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.CD7.4>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The property at 702 Kennedy Road in Ward 35 accommodated the 60 bed Second Base (Scarborough) Youth Shelter (SBYS) until the shelter ceased its operations in October 2015. Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA) has issued a Request for Expressions of Interest to solicit proposals by community agencies to operate a youth shelter in Scarborough to replace the capacity lost with the closure of SBYS. The new youth program will not operate out of 702 Kennedy Road, which has been vacant since SBYS's closure.

Following discussion at Community Development and Recreation Committee on October 15, 2015 the Committee requested staff to report to the next meeting on options to ensure that the property continues to be used to accommodate a shelter program.

COMMENTS

The building at 702 Kennedy Road was purpose built as a shelter in the early 1990s. SBYS ran its youth shelter program out of the property continuously from its opening in December 1993 for almost 22 years until October 2015. SBYS owns the building which is situated on land leased from the adjacent Grace Church, Scarborough.

Staff have reviewed the zoning for the property and SBYS's and Grace Church's considerations for the future disposition of the property. Staff have confirmed that a shelter continues to be a permitted use of the property at 702 Kennedy Road and that two different not for profit organizations with experience in provision of housing and homelessness services have been in discussions with SBYS; the Salvation Army has expressed an interest in purchasing the property for long-term use as a co-ed adult shelter; YWCA Toronto has offered to purchase the property for long-term use as a transitional shelter program for women and children.

Regulatory Framework

Staff consulted with officials in City Planning, Toronto Building and Legal Services to determine whether a shelter is a permitted use of 702 Kennedy Road following the closure of SBYS.

The property was originally zoned Place of Worship and Institutional under the former City of Scarborough Kennedy Park Zoning By-law No. 9276. That zoning was established by the former City of Scarborough through By-law No. 22425, enacted in October 1989, specifically to accommodate the SBYS. As the City of Scarborough was not in the shelter business and its zoning by-laws therefore had no provisions relating to shelters, the new zoning for SBYS was crafted rather specifically to permit only a youth shelter as an institutional use, in addition to the place of worship uses on the site.

Since 2003, 702 Kennedy Road has been subject to the City of Toronto's Municipal Shelter By-Law No. 138-2003. The By-law provides for a municipal shelter to be a permitted use in all zones or districts, provided that the lot is on a major or minor arterial road and is at least 250 metres away from another municipal shelter, hostel or crisis care facility. Kennedy Road is an arterial road under the By-law. A shelter operated by the City directly or for the City by an agency through a purchase of service agreement meets the definition of a municipal shelter in the By-law.

The Municipal Shelter By-law No. 138-2003 supersedes the former City of Scarborough Kennedy Park Zoning By-law No. 9276. An adult shelter is a permitted use at 702 Kennedy Road.

Long-Term Use of the Site

Staff understand that at least two separate organizations have engaged in active discussions with SBYS and Grace Church, Scarborough about the acquisition of the building at 702 Kennedy Road to accommodate a shelter program.

The Salvation Army expressed an interest in establishing a long-term co-ed adult shelter program at the site. The Salvation Army is a well-established and major provider of shelter services, with demonstrated organizational and financial capacity to operate a shelter program at this address.

More recently, YWCA Toronto has offered to purchase the property as a permanent replacement location for its Beatrice House transitional shelter program, which was forced to close earlier in 2015 when the property it was leasing from the Toronto District School Board was sold for redevelopment. YWCA Toronto is an established shelter and housing provider with a good track record of service provision, partnership with the City, financial and organizational capacity.

Subject to the submission of a satisfactory business case, program model and budget, either of these programs would be acceptable to SSHA. Funding for the Beatrice House program continues to be included in SSHA's base operating budget for shelters whereas new funding would need to be identified within SSHA's operating budget for the Salvation Army.

The building at 702 Kennedy Road was purpose built as a shelter. Purchase and ownership of the building by a shelter provider will provide the shelter program with security of tenure and ensure the site's continued use as a shelter.

Given the above, the City is not currently pursuing the purchase of the building at 702 Kennedy Road.

CONTACT

Karen Smith
Director, Hostel Services
Shelter, Support and Housing Administration
Tel: 416-392-5417
Email: ksmith@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Phillip Abrahams
General Manager
Shelter, Support and Housing Administration