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# Fatima House Community Liaison Committee

## Meeting #2 Summary

December 8, 2020, 6:30pm to 8:00pm on WebEx

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### Overview

On December 8, 2020 the second meeting of the Community Liaison Committee for Fatima House (1059 College Street) was hosted on WebEx with four CLC members attending along with City staff and representatives of the shelter operator, Fred Victor.

Jane Farrow and Leah Birnbaum of the Dept of Words & Deeds facilitated the information session and prepared this summary.

Project website: [www.toronto.ca/ShelterExpansionSites](http://www.toronto.ca/ShelterExpansionSites); click on "Fatima House"  
Shelter operator: [www.fredvictor.org/what-we-do/housing/shelters/](http://www.fredvictor.org/what-we-do/housing/shelters/)

### Project Team:

- Dept of Words & Deeds, Community Engagement Facilitation
  - Jane Farrow
  - Leah Birnbaum
- Fred Victor, shelter operator:
  - Keith Hambly, CEO
  - Denise Knee, Senior Manager, Fatima House
  - Katy Scherer, Senior Manager Community Engagement
- City of Toronto Shelter, Support & Housing Administration (SSHA):
  - Jennifer McGowan, Supervisor, Stakeholder & Community Engagement
  - Leslie O'Reilly, Housing Consultant, Homelessness Initiatives & Prevention Services
  - Lynne McKee, Agency Review Officer, Homelessness Initiatives & Prevention Services
- Councillor Bailão's office:
  - Emily Summers, Constituency Assistant

### CLC Members:

- Khadija Ismail, Counsellor, Toronto Rape Crisis Centre/Multicultural Woman against Rape
- Erella Gagnon, moderator, Friends of Dufferin Grove listserv
- Peter Gorman, Warden at St. Anne's Anglican Church
- Melanie Smith, representative of Fatima's Neighbours residents' group
- Meg Marshall, Coordinator, BIA College Promenade (regrets)
- Cintia De Aguiar, real estate broker at College and Dufferin (regrets)
- Annabelle Bernard, Community Engagement Associate, Sistering (regrets)
- Marcie Ponte, Executive Director, Working Women Community Centre (regrets)

### Agenda:

6:15 - Tech check for participants

6:30 - Welcome and Introductions, including Katy and Denise, CLC roles

6:35 - Overview of meeting objectives, and CLC agenda

- Clarification of member names on CLC summaries
- Permission to share emails amongst CLC members privately

General Fatima House updates:

- Move-in date update
- Support/donations update

Terms of Reference updates:

- Introduction of Fatima's Neighbours group
- Members at Large clarification of process/roles

CLC Follow Up/Action Items:

- Community Resources Contact List - CLC to help create, maintain a contact list to help the community know who to contact in various scenarios or emergencies, listing services available locally and who/when to call
- Expanding the Bulletin email distribution list – any updates? Who can be added?
- Neighbourhood walkabouts update

7:50 - Next Steps

8:00 - Adjourn

**Next CLC Meetings:**

- Tuesday January 12, 2021, 6:30pm to 8:00pm
- Tuesday February 9, 2021, 6:30pm to 8:00pm

**Key Discussion Items**

- The move-in date may have to move to January to accommodate some minor construction delays.
- Some neighbours have formed a group called Fatima's Neighbours and will have representation on the Community Liaison Committee.
- There are two vacancies for Member at Large positions on the Community Liaison Committee.
- Fred Victor continues to enjoy offers of donations and support.
- Walkabout tours to meet people and businesses in the neighbourhood with Fred Victor staff and CLC members are planned but delayed due to COVID.

**Detailed Discussion**

**Fatima's Neighbours:**

Neighbours living within 500m of Fatima House have come together to form a group that will be represented on the CLC. The group currently has 42 members and has met virtually once. Melanie Smith represents them on the CLC and brought questions and ideas from the group for discussion at the CLC table.

**Move-in dates:**

Fred Victor staff report that there are some issues to be resolved in finalizing the construction before the residents and staff can move in. Move-in date may be pushed to January to avoid upheaval for shelter residents during the holidays.

**Donations and support:**

Pushing the move-in date impacts the delivery of some donated items such as welcome baskets. Donations can be coordinated through Katy Sherer at [kscherer@fredvictor.org](mailto:kscherer@fredvictor.org).

All offers of support are being tracked by Fred Victor staff and there has been a wonderful level of support. Fred Victor staff expressed gratitude for all the offers as well as for people's patience in being able to get involved given COVID.

**Walkabouts and neighbourhood/CLC introductions:**

Action item from last meeting was to organize walkabouts for Fred Victor staff to introduce them to business owners and other folks in the neighbourhood. These are delayed due to new lockdown measures and because the move-in date has pushed back.

**Action item: Fred Victor staff will follow up with individual CLC members to discuss how these walkabouts can be done safely.**

**Terms of Reference update:**

The Terms of Reference for the CLC have been updated to clarify the role of Members at Large. There are two vacancies for Members at Large on the committee.

*Members at Large: up to three members may be Members at Large. They are members of the broader community who are not affiliated with an existing or established community group and who express an interest in joining the CLC. People who wish to join as Members at Large will be asked to determine which community sector or group they will speak for and report back to. Approval for membership rests with Fred Victor in consultation with SSHA and the facilitation team. Expressions of interest for being a Member at Large can be sent to [clc.1059college@gmail.com](mailto:clc.1059college@gmail.com).*

The Terms of Reference is a living document and may be revised from time to time in consultation with the CLC. It is a public document and is available on the project website at [www.toronto.ca/ShelterExpansionSites](http://www.toronto.ca/ShelterExpansionSites); click on "Fatima House". The current version is dated December 7, 2020 and has been shared with CLC members to distribute as needed. CLC members are encouraged to suggest other potential members to join the committee and discussed some options for reaching out to relevant neighbourhood organizations to gauge interest.

**Sharing information about how to access services or call for assistance.**

The Dept of Words & Deeds sharing document from another shelter site about how to report a crime. Feedback from the CLC was that the presumption of crime in association with services for people experiencing homelessness is a bad connotation. The group decided they would rather focus on welcoming the shelter and working to address any issues as they arise. The

representative of the Councillor's office offered to share existing City-made flyers with details on when to call 211 or 311 to access services.

**Expand the bulletin email list:**

In order to share information about Fatima House more widely, CLC members will be inviting people in their networks to add their names to the email distribution list to receive Community Bulletins.

Action item: DWD to draft a note to send to Dufferin Grove listserv inviting people to join the list. CLC members to connect with their networks and let people know to send an email to [clc.1059college@gmail.com](mailto:clc.1059college@gmail.com) to join the list.

**General Communications:**

The group discussed ways for Fred Victor to introduce the service to the community and demonstrate ways for people to be in touch. There is a desire for open communication and for information to flow both ways.

Action item: Fred Victor staff to begin communicating with neighbours through CLC members and through the Dufferin Grove listserv.

**Q&A:**

CLC members shared what they are hearing in the community and relaying how Fatima House is being received or questions that are arising.

Q: Will there be an invitation to residents or folks with lived experience with homelessness to have a seat on CLC?

*Answer from Fred Victor:* Fred Victor is very open to the idea of inviting people with lived experience with homelessness to sit on the CLC. The priority is to get the residents moved in and settled into their new homes. Within Fatima House there are regular house meetings between staff and residents. Staff attend the CLC meetings and can bring ideas back and forth between the tables. The role of the CLC is to help with transitioning the service into the community while programming decisions take place within Fatima House through collaborative discussions between residents and staff. The CLC agreed to discuss this idea further once the residents have moved into Fatima House and programming options are more clear.

Q: Are there privacy or security concerns about sharing the address and location of the shelter?

*Answer from Fred Victor:* Fatima House is not a Violence Against Women shelter so the address is not kept private. Generally, people experiencing violence won't be sent to this shelter though they would never be turned away if there is space available. City and shelter staff do try to get people to the place that best meets their needs.

Q: Are the beds at Fatima House new shelter spaces or are they just replacing existing spaces from the Lombard site?

*Answer from Fred Victor:* They are not new shelter beds. This is a relocation of an existing service.

Q: Isn't it true that the shelter system is always full and it's impossible for new people to get in?

*Answer from Fred Victor:* Not always - it really varies, even from day to day. At the Lombard site there were three beds available this morning. Four women moved into housing and a couple more are hopefully on their way. Sometimes there is space – turnover happens quickly.

Q: Why is there a "Keep Out" sign in the parking area on Gladstone Ave?

*Answer from Fred Victor:* Thank you for bringing this to our attention. The site is not yet occupied by Fred Victor and the sign is associated with the current state of the property as a construction site. Once Fred Victor is occupying the site that sign will be removed.

Q: Could someone live at Fatima House indefinitely or is there a maximum amount of time they can stay?

*Answer from Fred Victor:* Generally there is a 90-day period but with COVID that is now routinely extended. There are sets of guidelines that we use to help move someone toward permanent housing. These are adjusted to suit people's individual needs. Yes, there are people who stay longer. The City nor Fred Victor would never require someone to move out because they'd been there a certain amount of time. Staff are always working with clients, advocating on their behalf and working on finding them permanent housing.

Q: Will there be clothes or other donation boxes outside, because there was a very sad incident of a Sistering client who fell in by accident and lost her life.

*Answer from Fred Victor:* No. There won't be any donation drop boxes on the property. Fred Victor does not obtain donations through those means.

Q: Can you share Fatima House's guidelines or rules for residents?

*Answer from Fred Victor:* There is a Community Relations Agreement that residents sign when they move in and we are happy to brief the CLC on the details of that agreement. House rules or guidelines are developed internally and are subject to discussion at internal house meetings between residents and staff. There is some flexibility to these in order to address the different needs of the women in the program. Fred Victor does not anticipate making those public.