

# TENANT AND PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT

METRO NON-PROFIT HOUSING ASSOCIATION

# The Idea

- ▶ The Urban Core Support network
- ▶ Participation and power as opposed to custodial housing
- ▶ “When people endure unstable living conditions, they lack rootedness and a pivotal place around which to conduct daily activities. They lack privacy, security and ownership, and a place to express a sense of personal identity and culture. *They need a place to call home.*”
- ▶ Having a home means having control over the circumstances of the home

# First Steps

- ▶ In all of our projects prospective tenants and prospective users of the service have been part of the initial planning
- ▶ Two prospective Stewart Place tenants were on the original Board and helped although neither in the end became tenants in the original building

# Initial Planning Participation - Housing

- ▶ Stewart Place “Residents Assistance Plan” and role of the recovery community
- ▶ Amethyst - 1) a women’s only building or a co-ed building 2) naming the building and its focus on a broadly defined recovery
- ▶ Cunard Street - requests from focus group participants
- ▶ Buddy Daye Street - working with the architect full size bathtubs and bold colours
- ▶ Focus Groups - tell us that buildings should be between 12 - 24 tenants



# Tenant Participation at the building level

- ▶ Building level meetings to discuss building issues not individual maintenance issues
- ▶ New Tenant Selection - One of most important decisions
- ▶ Budgeting
- ▶ Social gatherings with food
- ▶ Cunard Street too small a number and no common space

# Tenant Meeting in Dartmouth



# Building Design and Engagement

- ▶ The courtyard design assists the development of community



# Participants at the Housing Support Centre

- ▶ Began with focus groups and questionnaires
- ▶ Purest form of participant driven - A borrowed flat with an electric kettle and jar of instant coffee
- ▶ Low threshold could not operate without buy-in

# Housing Support Centre



The only rule in the Housing Support Centre.



# Housing support Centre 1996 - 2016

Old Borrowed Flat



2330 Gottingen Street



# The Coffee Shop



# Policy Level

- ▶ Participants and tenants have participated at the policy level in planning e.g. women only or co-ed building
- ▶ Representation on the Board
- ▶ Representation in the strategic planning process
- ▶ Current process on planning and changing our profile in community perhaps renaming



# Becoming part of MNPHA community

- ▶ Caring for each other
- ▶ Personal Directives
- ▶ “When *we* developed this property”

# Becoming part of the MNPFA family



Gordie let us tell his story

# Becoming part of the MNPHA Community



MNPHA had a delegation at the  
Pride Parade

# Becoming part of the MNPHA economy

- ▶ Hiring tenants for odd jobs
- ▶ Hiring tenants for regular janitorial positions
- ▶ Hiring tenants to support another tenant with keeping their apartment
- ▶ Hiring tenants to support staff positions

# Custodial staff person Fred



# Branching out

- ▶ United Way Questionnaire showed tenants felt more connected to community
- ▶ United Way Inspirational speakers
- ▶ Chair of Community Action on Homelessness, the Community Advocates Network and Board of Canada Without Poverty
- ▶ Humanities 101
- ▶ Choir - visit many settings - Human Rights Award

# Branching out



Wayne accepting an award



# The Future

- ▶ Morris House - an extension of our model of housing management to young adults in a more communal setting





# Results

- ▶ Making the right decisions
- ▶ Operating on a limited budget
- ▶ Helping people make their homes