

Request for Women's Advisory Committee Consideration

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda Item
(Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon at least 5 working days prior to the meeting) | <input type="checkbox"/> Added Item
(Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon at least one day prior to meeting) | <input type="checkbox"/> Request from the Floor |
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Date of Meeting: April 1st, 2021

Subject: Inviting Home for Good Project to Present to Councillors

Motion for Women's Advisory Committee to Consider:

That the Women's Advisory Committee recommend that the Executive Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council invite Home for Good Project members to present the findings of their housing research project in order to provide an understanding of gendered housing issues specific to HRM.

Reason:

The Women's Advisory Committee has identified housing security for women (e.g., homelessness and shelters, and affordability) as a key issue arising from the community. In order to learn more about gendered housing issues, the Women's Advisory Committee received a presentation from the Home for Good Project on February 4th, 2021.

The Home for Good Project ("the Project") is a research collaboration between Alice House, Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia, The Marguerite Centre and YWCA Halifax. The Project investigated the barriers women face when trying to access safe, secure and affordable housing in Halifax. The Project was the first of its kind and highlighted the lack of gender-based analysis in relation to housing research.

The presentation shed light on numerous detrimental housing issues women face in HRM, including:

- Women carry the burdens of debt from poverty, instability and prior relationships which can be a barrier to securing safe and affordable housing.
- There is a clear link between the Child Welfare System and homelessness. Mothers forced into homelessness are at greater risk of having child protection intervene in their family. This link is unaddressed in existing policies and programs.
- Women may experience stigma, discrimination and harassment from landlords due to their gender and other intersecting facets of their identity such as racial identity, sexual orientation, income and past interactions with public housing.
- There is no coherent and integrated "Housing System" for women to access when looking for housing support.

Understanding these issues is vital for HRM to properly exercise its powers with respect to housing as provided by its Charter.

Outcome Sought:

Provide the Halifax Regional Council with vital information about gendered housing issues based on local research conducted by the Home for Good Project.

Haneen Al-Noman, Member of Women's Advisory Committee
Holly Mathias, Member of Women's Advisory Committee