

Gedney, Vanessa R MAH:EX

From: OHCS Housing Policy Branch OHCS:EX
Sent: Friday, March 9, 2018 10:28 AM
To: s.22
Subject: Ref: 234394 232177: Homelessness in Surrey

Ref: 234394

Dear Erin:

Thank you for your February 20, 2018, email addressed to Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, regarding the conditions at 135A. As the Executive Director, Housing Policy Branch, I am pleased to respond.

I would like to start by saying how sorry I am to learn about the worsening conditions in the homeless camp on 135A this winter. All British Columbians deserve a safe, affordable place to call home. Thank you so much for the important work that you do on 135A.

Given the urgent need to address homelessness in British Columbia, the Province is building on the successful modular housing program launched last fall. In February 2018, government committed to build 2,500 new homes with 24/7 support to help people who are struggling with homelessness. These homes will be on top of the 2,000 modular supportive homes we are delivering throughout the province.

I would be pleased to set up a call with some of my staff to hear your ideas on how to improve the conditions for individuals experiencing homelessness in Surrey, and how to make the most out of the new modular housing units in Surrey. Please contact my assistant, Christine Sergeant, at Christine.Sergeant@gov.bc.ca to arrange a time to discuss your ideas with staff.

Sincerely,

Trudy Rotgans, Architect AIBC, RPP
Executive Director
Housing Policy Branch
Office of Housing and Construction Standards
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

From: Erin Schulte s.22
Sent: Tuesday, February 20, 2018 4:23 PM
To: Minister, MAH MAH:EX
Subject: Re: 232177: Homelessness in Surrey

Goodness. This was 2 months ago. Had to remind myself what I had written.

So I have some ideas after speaking with the group of homeless on 135a over the past month on things that THEY believe could bring change with that population. I have spoken with over 100 members of the population and would love some time to sit and discuss these initiatives. As well, if the last time you were on 135a was the beginning of 2017 then you have not seen the conditions that they are currently living under. It

is a million times worse. As well, the facilities that will be made available this spring are not modular housing units, they are large Britco like structures. Vancouvers "modular housing" looks very different from where the homeless of 135a will be housed. Who do you suggest I contact to have this conversation with? I have written to my local MLA as well as with the MLA for 135a asking to meet but emails are never really responded to. This saddens me as well.

Anyways, thank you for all that you do and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,

Erin Schulte

s.22

From: Minister, MAH MAH:EX

Sent: February 20, 2018 11:35 PM

To: s.22

Subject: 232177: Homelessness in Surrey

Ref: 232177

Erin Schulte

Email: s.22

Dear Erin Schulte:

Thank you for your email asking me to tour the Whalley strip in Surrey to see the living conditions of the homeless population. I apologize for the delay in responding.

I visited 135A Street last spring, and I saw firsthand the conditions that you have referred to. I was saddened by the lack of support and response from the previous government.

In the Budget 2017 Update, our new government announced funding to construct 2,000 modular supportive housing units for people who are homeless. This includes \$291 million for construction over two years and \$172 over three years to operate them and to provide 24/7 staffing and support services.

In January 2018, government announced funding for three temporary modular housing projects in Surrey. This will provide approximately 160 supportive housing units, which are expected to be fully operational in the spring. It will include individual rooms with private bathrooms, meal service, counselling, medical offices, 24/7 staffing and life and employment skills programming. These units will provide a solution to meet the urgent need of people experiencing homelessness. This housing will be replaced by 250 units of permanent affordable housing once additional sites have been identified and the additional modular homes with support services have been built.

Fraser Health, in partnership with the Lookout Housing and Health Society and BC Housing, will operate an Intensive Case Management team out of one of the modular housing sites. This team will assist people facing challenges with health, substance use, mental health, poverty, education and housing by connecting them to support services and treatment.

I commend you on the work that you are doing with the homeless community in Surrey and I share your concern over their current situation. Unfortunately, due to a heavily committed schedule, I regret that I am unable to come back to meet with you and tour 135A Street. However, I am encouraged by the progress our government is making to meet immediate needs and to provide permanent long term housing.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Selina Robinson

From: Erin Schulte [s.22](#)

Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2017 2:03 PM

To: Robinson.MLA, Selina <Selina.Robinson.MLA@leg.bc.ca>

Subject: Ms Robinson. I need your help.

I have been working with the homeless population on 135a for over 4 years now. I started out running a Soup Kitchen to feed them and over the years through their trust and love I have become somewhat of an advocate on their behalf.

I need you to come to Surrey. I need you to come to Surrey and let me take you on a tour of the Whalley strip and show you the hell that is 135a street.

No one in this province should be living in these conditions or should be being treated the way that they are. I need you to meet my homeless family, hear their stories of mistreatment and listen to their ideas on how we can end this dark strip of land. I am literally begging you to take some time out of your busy schedule to come and meet with me. I need you to see first hand what I am dealing with down there. I need your help desperately.

Please. It is starting to go below zero outside. I need your help more then ever.

Erin Schulte