



REPORT
Peel Living
For Information

DATE: March 6, 2013

REPORT TITLE: **2012 RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**

FROM: Mwarigha M.S. , General Manager, Peel Living

OBJECTIVE

To provide a summary of community engagement initiatives and activities undertaken at various Peel Living sites in summer 2012, and an update on some of those planned for summer 2013.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The tenant experience for residents is enhanced by events/community initiatives that occur at various Peel Living properties – particularly during the summer months.
- This report highlights several events/community initiatives held in summer 2012 with a focus on two key outcomes accomplished through these events/initiatives: community engagement and partnerships.
- A newsletter appended to the report provides a more detailed and illustrative overview of the events.
- Preliminary plans for summer 2013 community events/initiatives that have adopted community safety as a driving theme.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

Throughout the year, Peel Living undertakes various events and initiatives to enhance the overall tenant experience. These spring/summer events take place in selected communities based on the principles of community engagement, partnership, and tenant ownership. These major events aim to generate longer term community building impact.

Resident responses to Peel Living's 2011 *Quality of Life* survey identified safety as an area of concern and acknowledged that they play a role in making their building and their communities safe. These results suggest a collaborative approach to addressing safety, an approach that can be developed through planning community engagement events focusing on community safety.

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2. Summary

a) Summer 2012 Community Events/Initiatives

Peel Living's summer 2012 community events/initiatives -

- A Fusion Garden intended to improve the overall well-being of residents was planted at Nance Horwood Place (529 Main Street North, Brampton, Ward 5).
- A new playground and play space that meets safety standards and engages children in learning and play was built at Gardenvue Court (20 Ceremonial Drive, Mississauga, Ward 5). The build involved 40 resident volunteers and 250 community participants.
- Painting and minor repairs were completed by over 1,000 volunteers to enhance the living environments of 138 homes in Peel Living's portfolio over a 5 day period in July as part of the Refresh 2012 program.
- A "thank you" resident picnic was held at Manorbridge (160 Murray Street, Brampton, Ward 5) to acknowledge residents' cooperation with building elevator renovations and to recognize the 10 "Solutions Group" volunteers. The 60 residents in attendance also learned about the programs Supportive Housing in Peel (SHIP) offers at Nance Horwood Place.
- A fundraising BBQ was held at Whillan's Gate (22 Beech Street, Brampton, Ward 1) bringing over 50 residents together to raise money for their annual Christmas party. Brampton Clean City also donated bicycles to children living at Whillan's Gate.
- "Summerfest", held annually at the Acorn community (85, 99 and 121 Acorn Place, Mississauga, Ward 4), brought over 100 residents together to build relationships through participation in a BBQ, garage sale, games and entertainment by an African dance troupe.
- A Habitat for Humanity build day at Hoskins Square (Brampton, Ward 7) brought together over 50 Peel residents and Residential Property Management staff to celebrate completion and handover of affordable housing to the successful families.

A more detailed and illustrated overview of these community events/initiatives is provided in a newsletter in Appendix I.

b) Outcomes

Although each community event/initiative had a unique focus or goal that achieved a specific outcome for the intended community (e.g. build a playground, fundraise), three themes were common to all the events: community engagement, partnerships, and tenant ownership.

i) Community Engagement

The events created a safe and welcoming space for community members to:

- work together to achieve an end goal
- share individual strengths and learn new skills from one another
- celebrate community successes
- interact and socialize with old friends, new acquaintances and community partners
- offer support to one another thereby improving the overall community capacity

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ii) Collaboration and Partnerships

Each event involved community residents, Peel Living staff and at least one additional community partner, organization, corporation or volunteers. This approach of developing collaborative partnerships was pivotal to the success of the events in that:

- Peel Living staff and communities achieved the intended outcomes (including encouraging engagement among Peel Living communities).
- Community agencies (such as Supportive Housing in Peel) used these opportunities to promote their mandates, programs and services.
- Corporations/local businesses created awareness and received recognition from communities thereby contributing to business marketing strategies.
- Volunteers from Peel Housing communities, neighbours and Peel Region at large contributed their sweat equity in the various projects.

Peel Living's summer 2012 events involved the following partner organizations:

- Public Works Department, Region of Peel
- Boys and Girls Club of Peel
- KaBOOM
- Foresters Life Insurance
- Strategic Planning, Policy and Partnerships Division, Region of Peel
- Health Services Department, Region of Peel
- Residential Property Management, Region of Peel
- Service System Management, Region of Peel
- SHIPP
- YMCA
- Local African dance group
- Brampton Safe City
- Habitat for Humanity

iii) Tenant Ownership

Peel Living supported activities that fostered tenant leadership/ownership to enhance community spirit and renewal.

3. Summer 2013 Community Initiatives

Planning for summer 2013 is underway and Peel Living is proposing to focus on "community safety" with events geared to promoting non-violence. Peel Police has committed to be a partner in the upcoming summer initiatives.

The 2013 summer events will provide opportunities to educate and inform residents, engage community partners, initiate community conversation about safety and generate ideas that the community can build on to contribute to creating a safer space for all.

Among a number of events, they will include the following:

- **Promoting Non-Violence Amongst Youth**

Preventing youth violence is a priority for Peel Living, the Region of Peel and Peel Police. Peel Living will work with local youth-led initiatives in the Region, as part of a robust strategy to address the root causes of youth violence. Staff intends to connect with key youth-focused initiatives, including: Brampton's annual Alliance

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Against Violence Youth Concert, and Peel's Youth Violence Prevention Advisory Committee working groups.

- **Events Promoting Non-Violence Amongst Youth**
Discussion is underway between Residential Property Management staff and Human Services' Community Partnerships Division staff to consider summer 2013 initiatives that will promote non-violence and community safety.
- **Hot Summer Nights in Caledon** (BBQ involving Peel Living's Stationview community, the Caledon Fire Department and Ontario Provincial Police)
This joint BBQ event provides a familiar and safe space for Stationview residents to build relationships with one another thereby supporting community engagement and encouraging growth of cohesiveness and capacity. Residents can also interact with Caledon professional service providers entrusted to preserve the safety and well-being of Caledon residents and communities.
- **Refresh 2013**
The Refresh program in Peel has been successful for the past two years. With 70 properties in Peel Living's portfolio there continues to be opportunity for this initiative which brings communities together to complete painting and minor repairs that will help promote safe, well-maintained living environments and enhance the overall tenant experience. 2013 events will emphasize creating safe spaces in communities and will seek collaborations with other stakeholders that can further support this theme (e.g. Brampton Safe City; Peel Police).
- **Fire Drills Followed by a Community Social at Seniors Buildings.**
Practice fire drills will equip residents with the skills necessary to respond confidently to an emergency situation. The community social will encourage residents to build community relationships and to understand and take ownership of their role in creating community safety. The event is also an opportunity to provide education and knowledge transfer to a large group of residents simultaneously

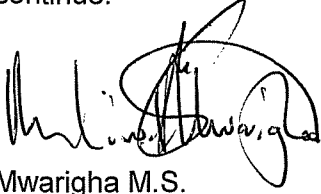
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CONCLUSION

Staff will continue to plan for a successful series of events for summer 2013. Regular reporting to the Board to highlight these events and to offer an update on tenant experience outcomes will continue.



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Approved for Submission:



D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer

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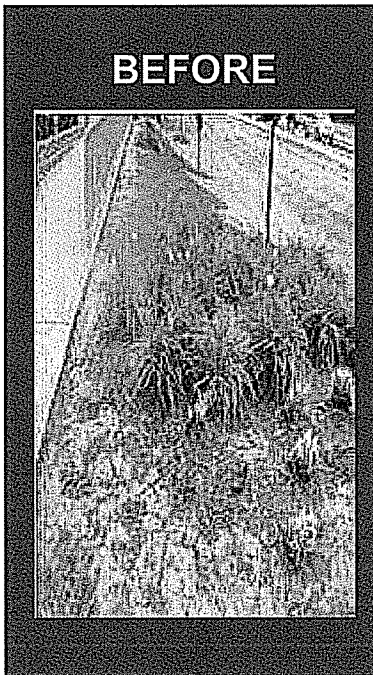
c. Legislative Services



Peel Living's 2012 Community Initiatives

“Enhancing the Tenant Experience”

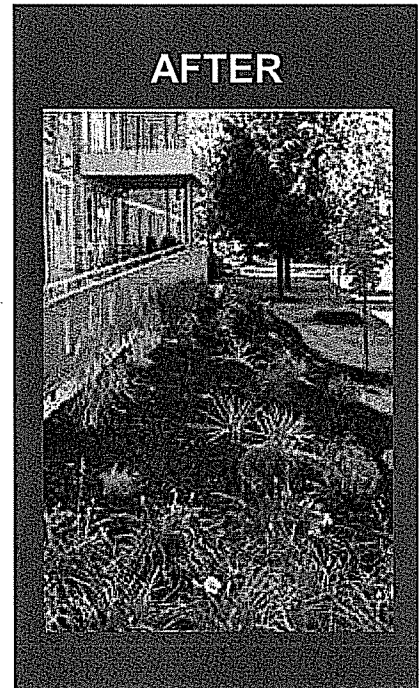
New Fusion Garden® at Nance Horwood Place



As part of an initiative to improve wellness and optimize the well-being of residents, Human Services and Public Works staff, along with assistance from residents, designed and installed a Fusion Garden at Nance Horwood Place.

Six yards of Peel compost were donated by Waste Management to add nutrients to the soil and retain moisture, and a three inch layer of mulch was added to help reduce future weed growth.

This Fusion community garden is low maintenance, drought tolerant and colourful throughout the seasons to meet the needs of residents. Creating this fusion garden was a rewarding experience for all involved and tenants of Nance Horwood Place now have a beautiful new landscape to enjoy year-round.



Features of the garden include:

- Dwarf Korean lilac and lavender border the walkway and create a welcoming fragrance for anyone entering the building.
- Emerald cedars between the large windows add an element of elevation and soften the landscape.
- Amour stone and river rock help minimize erosion.
- A mass planting of various luxuriously coloured peonies give a burst of colour in the early summer months.

New playground for residents at Gardenview Court

The Gardenview Court community worked together to realize a dream of a new playground. This Peel Living property's previous play space was removed a number of years ago as it was no longer safe. On July 28th, 250 volunteers participated in a six hour playground build at Gardenview Court on Ceremonial Drive in Mississauga. Many of the volunteers had little to no construction experience – but what they did have was a desire to give children a safe place to play!

The community rallied together and created a planning committee to develop a 2500 square foot playground with an additional space that has gazebo, sandbox, raised garden beds, asphalt games (hopscotch, four square) and a map of the world. The play space is expected to have a lifespan of 15 years.

The committee consisted of 10 residents, staff from Peel Living and Boys and Girls Club of Peel as well as representatives from both KaBOOM! and the funding partner Foresters Life Insurance. "The moms and dads who had been asking for a new playground, jumped on board and met every week to call all of the sponsors and help plan every aspect of this new playground," said Sheri Wiggins, Property Manager.



The playground build was one of many North American projects funded by Foresters Life Insurance and KaBOOM!, an American non-profit group dedicated to encouraging safe play for children since 2006. "We will continue to foster our relationship with KaBOOM! and hope to build more playgrounds at other Peel Living sites in the future," said Sheri.

2012 Refresh Project - Making a difference in Peel one home at a time



July 9 to 13 more than 1,000 volunteers joined forces to refresh 138 homes throughout Peel. Annually, the Refresh Project creates a strong sense of community, restores local pride and improves the living conditions for Peel residents.

Thank you to Peel Regional Council for approving the financial commitment that allowed the Refresh Team to implement a more extensive initiative in 2012.

The Refresh Project was lead by the Strategic Planning, Policy and Partnership Division in Human Services in partnership with the Residential Property Management and Service System Management Divisions.

Watch the Refresh Project highlight video at
www.ephraimsplace.com/refresh

Manorbridge Resident Picnic

As a thank you to residents for their patience during the Manorbridge elevator renovation and as a token of thanks to the 10 volunteer tenants of Solution Group, the first-of-its-kind Manorbridge Resident Picnic took place on Aug. 14.



Live music, dancing and a variety of foods prepared by the residents themselves helped ensure that all 60 participants enjoyed a delicious meal as well as a boost in community spirit. Through events such as this picnic, Residential Property Management is engaging Nance Horwood Place, Peel Manor and Manorbridge to form a community of shared programs, activities, social events and friendships. Feedback from the event was overwhelmingly positive and residents now feel more educated about some of the programs that SHIPP offers at Nance Horwood Place.

Celebrating Summerfest in the Acorn Community

On Aug. 11 more than 100 residents from the Acorn community, along with Boys and Girls Club, Peel Living and YMCA staff celebrated Summerfest – an annual event that brings the community together to enjoy a bbq, garage sale and this year, an African dance performance. This important community initiative provides an opportunity for staff and residents to meet in a social setting and get to know one another outside of the usual channels. Next year, the Acorn community will host its 12th annual Summerfest event, which will build on this year's success and continue to strengthen relationships between tenants, staff and Peel's community partners.

Whillan's Gate BBQ Fundraiser

On June 30 the Whillan's Gate Social Club hosted a BBQ fundraiser to help fund activities and events within the building that enhance community engagement and improve tenants' quality of life. More than 50 people attended the BBQ, which raised more than \$400 that will help subsidize this year's Christmas party. Brampton Safe City donated bicycles to children in the building who did not own a bicycle and all remaining bikes were painted and sold by the children to raise additional funds. Residents volunteered their time and energy in organizing the entire event along with clean up following the festivities.

Habitat for Humanity and Peel Living build affordable housing for Peel's families



On Aug. 27, 10 Residential Property Management staff, volunteered at Habitat for Humanity's Hoskins Square in Brampton to help build affordable housing for Peel's families. Staff put their many talents and skills to work alongside the families and the build boosted staff morale and strengthened the Region's partnership with community agencies. On Nov. 5 a second build will take place and staff volunteers are eager once again to make a positive difference in the lives of Peel's families, one nail at a time.