

Township of West Lincoln Letter – RE – Support

To our honorable Mayor, council members and staff of the West Lincoln Community

We, the Legion Villa Project Development Committee, have presented to you, multiple times over the last number of years, the planned project indicating our commitment to this beautiful community of West Lincoln by way of adding additional affordable housing for the 55 and over age group that continues to grow in this area.

The West Lincoln area has been designated for some incredible growth over the next few years and we as an organization realized that there are specific areas of development that are missing in this Community.

Affordable housing ranks High on the List. (Another is a facility of assisted living and long-term care which we are not.) The challenge is that for 55+/seniors that have lived in this area for many years, there is no where in Smithville for them to continue living in their later years and remain in their chosen community. Sadly, they are forced to move outside of their community.

Our goal as you know, is to build 52 additional Affordable Housing units for our seniors and 55+ community to help address the dire need. With waiting lists of multiple years, the reality is that these units were needed years ago, and we are now working diligently and as efficiently as the systems will allow to get this project built.

The Board of Directors of the Legion Villa along with Branch 393 Legion had the foresight and initiative over 35 years ago, to start a Non-Profit to Build Villa I and Villa II to address the need back then. They successfully accomplished building, provided 2 very successful projects of Affordable Housing with the support of all levels of government at that time.

Well, here we are in 2025, already a few years into this project development, and entering the stage of applying for permits and have yet to have received any clear direction or communication from West Lincoln Township in the conversation regarding support by way of assistance with planning and permit fees and reimbursement of the fees already paid). This important part of the process is crucial to enable us be shovel ready and begin to build desperately needed affordable housing units.

It is of great concern to us, that as we submit this letter, we don't have a formal commitment from the Township of West Lincoln regarding assistance with development charges. We have been told that given this type of project, the Township funding would need to come from a fund called the Community Impact Program Fund. We then presented to you again, before the last budget, to appeal to the fact that this is something that our

local community council would at the very least want to take part in the funding of this project as it is being built within the West Lincoln Township borders. As all other levels of government have committed to support affordable housing, it is our hope that the Township of West Lincoln would be willing to waive any fees that would be required for this build. This project is fulfilling the mandate of increasing housing units within our community while also addressing the affordable housing crisis that exists.

The Township budget came out with \$15,000 in the CIP fund. We have been told that the funding for the waiving of development fees would most likely be coming from this fund. We as the, LV Project Development Committee are questioning the actions, the motivation and the support that will be shown by the very community where our proposed building will be built.

Perhaps you have come up with an alternative for where these funds would be designated to come from. Either way, it is imperative that we have some response from the Township of West Lincoln to let us know what support we can expect.

As we have not received any correspondence from the Township which in turn created the need to ask the questions, we are asking for clarification and commitment.

As we endeavor to fund this project along with support from the Community, we would like to be able to share, that we have indeed received support from the Township of the very community that this building will hopefully be built in.

Why is your support critical for this Legion Villa project?

- 1) Legion Villa is a non-profit charity with limited funds – government incentives allow the project to move through planning and approvals.
- 2) Financial support from all levels of government and private entities is critical to maintain deep affordability: **Less Debt financing = Lower Rent Rates**
- 3) CMHC and other Capital funding Programs need to see **FULL Municipal Partnership** which
 - a) De-risks the project (budget, approvals, timelines)
 - b) Significantly increases likelihood of funding application success

Legion Vila is bringing land equity, has worked diligently with a Project Manager thru the Region and has secured CMHC Seed Grant & Loan Funding, FCM grant, plus Town and Regional DC waivers through Prov. Bill 23. Legion villa is targeting new grants & private support going into 2025.

It is with all of this in mind that we appeal to you to once again, to review the needs of this Community, and understand that this is the only project for Affordable Housing in this area

at this moment. This committee has been successful in attaining every grant and loan available to a project like this. With the support of all levels of government confirmed we would like to be in a place of confidence that the West Lincoln Township will also be supporting us by waiving the fees for this project.

Legion Villa is a Non-Profit with limited available funds, has done years of planning and background work to make this project viable, thus far on a \$0 budget and because of the fantastic management of the organization in the last 30-35 years, have been able to qualify for the grants to date. Going forward, we do however, need the full support of our local community as well.

Our current request is:

Can we count on and be confident in the support of the Township of West Lincoln?

Sincerely

Project Development Committee of the Legion Villa

Rodger Vaughan (Chair) Nancy Neville, Peggy Cook