

Potton Residences faces changes and challenges at their annual general meeting



THE SCOOP

MABLE HASTINGS

On Wednesday, Feb. 18, the Potton Residences senior apartments held its annual general meeting at the Mansonville Town Hall, with over 40 people in attendance.

With rumours circling about the future of the apartment building, the community was encouraged to attend the assembly where accurate information was shared and community involvement encouraged.

Potton Residences president and acting volunteer manager Caroline Brown welcomed the group that had gathered and introduced Christine Meunier, a community organizer for the Memphremagog regional health and social services centre, who chaired the meeting.

Meunier explained that her involvement and support as a community or-

ganizer in Potton for the last four years is aimed at encouraging community partnership in finding positive solutions for projects like the Potton Residences and other projects that benefit the community.

Her goal is to bring the community together by informing and encouraging citizens who are available to exchange and share their experiences and skills to assist in finding solutions to promote and maintain projects such as housing for seniors in the community.

The Potton Residences opened in 2009 with 18 apartments (nine with the Accès-Logis program for low income households) funded by the SHQ (the Quebec housing corporation), the Municipality of Potton, and private and business donations. Originally designed as apartments for autonomous seniors aged 75 years and older, in 2011 the Residence board of directors lowered the minimum age to 55 in an attempt to increase the occupation rate. Currently 11 of the 18 units are filled.

It is difficult, and almost impossible to rent all of the apartments to seniors as anticipated at the time of construction even by reducing the minimum age to 55.

Many residents have relatively shorter stays due to health issues and end up relocating to other seniors' residences where more services are provided. Due to low occupancy, the



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A large crowd gathered at Mansonville Town Hall to discuss the future of the newly-renamed Potton Gardens, formerly the Potton Residences.

residence is running at a deficit for the current fiscal year.

As it is no longer certified by the regional health and social services agency, the Potton Residence is obliged to change its name, as under the terms of the government's recently passed Bill 16, only certified residences can use the term "residence" in their name.

The buildings will now be known as Les Jardins de Potton - Potton Gardens.

Janitorial services can be maintained and meals have been reduced from 7 meals (lunch) to 5 meals a week.

The stakes are high. The community as a whole and the new board of directors will need to work towards increas-

ing revenues, negotiate new agreements with the SHQ, maintain the Accès-Logis program and the rent subsidies for low-income households. It is essential that the board, with the assistance of the community, guarantee the continuity of this project.

Potton has always been a community that strives to "take care of its own." With a large number of concerned Potton residents in attendance at the meeting, it was clear that seniors are a priority.

Together, in true Potton fashion, plans for the recovery and future of seniors' housing is already on the minds of many.

New lease forms now mandatory

Record Staff
SHERBROOKE

As of Tuesday, residential leases now have to be signed using new lease forms. The Quebec housing board, the Régie du logement, announced that a regulation amending mandatory lease forms and the particulars of a notice to a new lessee came into force, rendering the old forms invalid.

The main purpose of the amendments integrated into the new forms is to ensure that they comply with new legislative provisions in force over the last few years and to inform tenants and landlords of their new rights and obligations.

The regulation also provided an op-

portunity to modify the forms to make them more user-friendly. Their graphic presentation was improved to facilitate comprehension and ease of use.

The main amendments include:

- the reduction of the lease cancellation notice period from three to two months for one of the reasons provided for by law, particularly in the case of violence, death, or a senior admitted to a private seniors' residence or a residential and long-term care centre, and the right of the lessee or the lessee's successors to pay only for the services of a personal nature provided to the lessee or a child, where applicable, before cancellation of the lease;
- the list, description and cost of services provided by the lessor to seniors

who live in a private seniors' residence, particularly those required by their state of health (Schedule 6);

- end of the separate distribution of Schedule 6 (obligation to purchase the lease of a dwelling that includes Schedule 6);

- changes to the notice to a new lessee, mainly by adding a reference to the services of a personal nature or the personal assistance services provided to the lessee;

- addition of two model notices: Notice of Rent Increase and Modification of Another Condition of the Lease;

- Tenant's Reply to a Notice of Rent Increase and Modification of Another Condition of the Lease;

- the possibility for a lessee to cancel

the lease in cases of sexual aggression or violence;

- Additional details to protect the rights of spouses in a civil union.

As of Tuesday, it is no longer possible to use the former forms. However, those already signed will continue to be valid until their non-renewal, although it is recommended that you sign a new lease. No refunds will be given for unused forms.

The new mandatory lease forms are available at the offices of the Régie, including at 200 Belvedere Street N. in Sherbrooke) along with Quebec Publications sales outlets. The forms still cost \$1.99. For more information, visit the board website at www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca or call 1-800-683-2245



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