
Charlottetown Area Office, 100 Capital Drive, Charlottetown, PEI C1E 1E7

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 31st, 2011

**CUPE Health Care Workers file FOIPP application
For Charlotte Court Affordable Seniors Housing P3 Project**

Charlottetown - "On Thursday, March 24th, the Canadian Union of Public Employees' (CUPE) Provincial Health Council, through my office, filed a Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP) Application with the Department of Community Services, Seniors' and Labour, seeking details on the Charlotte Court Affordable Seniors Housing P3," says Bill McKinnon, National Representative for CUPE.

The Charlotte Court Seniors Housing P3 was part of a media event on June 14th, 2010 when the Ghiz Government announced the signing of a contract with APM/Killam Properties to build, own and operate, a new government subsidized, affordable seniors apartment building to replace the present Charlotte Court provincial seniors' housing complex on North River Road, in Charlottetown.

"The Charlotte Court P3 was announced, and then changed without the promised consultation with the residents of the present Charlotte Court Seniors Housing. These residents had, and still have, concerns about the design of the new building, which I have had the pleasure of discussing with a number of Charlotte Court residents. For example, the original plans called for a full basement, with storage, accessed by an elevator. However, new plans that came out in August of 2010 changed the full basement to a 'slab on grade' with a small storage space at the south end, accessed only by stairs. How do seniors with mobility problems get to and from their storage space with stairs as the only option? One of the residents told me, tongue in cheek, "I can get to the storage because I can fall down the stairs, but I can't fall back up!"

Other concerns include: having only one laundry facility on the 2nd floor, while residents requested laundry rooms on each floor; residents wanted proper senior friendly bathrooms designed for people with mobility and safety concerns, however, they remain as standard bathrooms; the issue of escape options in the event of fire, in a multi-floor plan, for people with mobility issues (wheelchairs, etc), rather than a single floor design as in the present housing for seniors, also fell on deaf ears.

Finally, the developer's new plan design (which was not part of the June 14th, 2010 plans disclosed) now has a second phase that does not appear to have anything to do with affordable housing. Phase 2 calls for, what appears to be, a completely for-profit apartment building to be built on the footprint of the existing building off North River Road. This Phase 2 plan includes larger units (up to 1,450 sq ft) with a full basement with elevator access, storage and underground parking. CUPE's FOIPP request (copy attached) includes any RFP and/or contracts signed by government and the developer, as well as any records relating to the sale of this prime piece of real estate without public consultation," concluded McKinnon.

For more information, please contact Bill McKinnon at (902) 439-1055.

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