



Toolbox Team Meeting Minutes

Jun 20, 2022

1:30pm - 2:30pm

Zoom

Introductions:

Present: Jenna Smith (West Island Network), Rachelle Cournoyer (Citizens for a Better Dorval), Giacomo Valzania (Groupe CDH), Lianne Berry (LI-BER-T House), Mélanie Safi (CIUSSS ODIM), Emily Simunic (West Island Network), Piotr Boruslawski (TQSOI), Alexandra Laham (TQSOI), Victoria Prentice-Funk (TQSOI)

General Project Updates:

- Overview of project
- Project outline
- Hiring of project assistant

Feedback on project:

Rachelle: Ambitious!

Jenna: Amazing, so helpful. Greatest asset is that everything is in one toolbox.

Building and development: this work is done by a GRT.

Section 5 & 6: feasibility checklist - could be a storytelling format and link to a GRT so that groups don't feel like they have to go through all these points on their own

Giacomo: GRT can support but private developers and other groups can support community groups seeking to develop community housing projects, under Quebec's new housing program as it is currently being outlined.

Social acceptability and political will: one important argument is presenting the needs of your communities, ex. going through CMHC portal to pull statistics and demonstrate the need.

Liane: does this project have any connection with the PIC 2 project? How do they fit into each other?

Good for these things to be coming up a lot, proves that we require them.

Piotr: PIC 2 will be working alongside a specific organization to support them with their project and will tackle a single barrier and seek to overcome it vs. the toolbox is publicly available and looks at a variety of barriers.

Emily Simunic: Looks very thorough!

Social acceptability

Giacomo: difference between people that live right next to the project vs community at large. For the second, general education about the needs and benefits of affordable housing. For the first,

engage them right away when the project is being conceived so that they feel included and not like it was forced on them.

Mélanie: contact Kate Coulter from Villa Beaurepaire, had a lot of issues with the issue and could provide some insight. Any tool could be useful.

Rachelle: good communication is key right off the bat, letting people and letting them know what their options are. In Dorval, referendums through neighbourhood resistance were because of density (height), and also weren't affordable housing projects.

Consultations and information exchange need to happen, ex. a meeting. Local leaders need to be involved in the project to make this happen.

Giacomo: a good strategy is by providing examples of affordable housing projects that were done in the past to address misconceptions.

For referendums: social housing projects are exempt from referendums - the difference between social and affordable housing projects might prevent this from applying.

Jenna: TQSOI to do some general sensitization and awareness raising when it comes to affordable housing.

Alex: include TQSOI as an "expert" and invite people to join the housing committee and our projects to contribute to this.

Rachelle: gentrification and housing market, corporate investment, how do we deal with this?
Public support

Rachelle: 2015 Dorval Master Plan - willingness to have 10% of new housing to be affordable housing. This is not being acted upon. How can we make this happen? Open question.

One project on the table but there is no funding.

Giacomo: hard question to answer. Zoning and upzoning are municipal tools that can be used. Looking at municipally owned land.

Rachelle: freeze on development for the Dorval Triangle to reserve it for a TOD project. Will accessibility concerns and other considerations be taken into account? Schools, parks and other amenities. Residents need to mobilize to make sure this is included through a lobbying campaign. People that are in the community need to have a chance to live there. Same for Pointe-Claire. Freezes are an opportunity to have our voices heard.

Jenna: In Montreal, had to table the project after 4 years because construction costs went up by millions of dollars. Advocacy is an important factor and groups did not have enough resources for this.

Tori: Coming together with support for the project.

Site & land selection

Rachelle: That is key information.

Piotr: in the WI, zoning is the barrier to land and meeting the restrictions is the issue. Modifying zoning has differing complexities and is hard to navigate across 7 municipalities in the SWI.

Rachelle: how can we ensure that areas that are being redeveloped include affordable housing?

Piotr: (going through tools such as levies, density bonusing, etc.)

Giacomo: right now, in the WI, we need to concentrate on mid-density zones along commercial arteries and develop them more than what they are now without attracting large developers - this is where community groups can see opportunities and low competition. Look at places that work and have services and are less exploited by private developers.

Extra support, coffee & connect

Rachelle: great idea on a bi-annual or quarterly basis if it's organized ahead of time.
Emily Simunic: connect people with each other so that they can meet on a needs-basis.

Next steps

- Please reach out with any questions or comments to vprenticefunk@tqsoi.org
- Follow-up meeting at the end of August or September

Stay tuned for more information and updates!