To: Chair and Members of the Social and Public Health Committee

From: Joe-Anne Priel
General Manager
Public Health and Community Services

Lee Ann Coveyduck
General Manager
Planning and Economic Development Department

Telephone: 905-546-4839
Facsimile: 905-540-5608
E-mail: jpriel@hamilton.ca

Telephone: 905-546-4339
Facsimile: 905-546-4364
E-mail: lcoveydu@hamilton.ca

Date: November 3, 2005

Re: Update on the 1994 Roomers and Boarders Task Force (City Wide) (SPH05066/PED05215)

Council Direction:

On April 26, 2005 the Social & Public Health Services Committee directed staff to revisit the 1994 Joint Report of the City of Hamilton and Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth Roomers and Boarders Task Force and report back on the status of recommendations. The purpose of the 1994 Task Force was to address safety, security and health issues of people living in rooming/lodging houses.

Rooming houses, also known as lodging homes, have long been an important source of private affordable rental accommodation for tenants who are often socially isolated, living in poverty and struggling with the risks of absolute homelessness. Rooms are usually rented by low income single person households who often must deal with issues such as mental and/or physical disabilities, drug addictions, social isolation, limited education or employment skills and other issues that arise from the complications of living in poverty. In Hamilton, rooming houses are located primarily in the downtown core and in the east end of the Lower City. Many are in close proximity to social and community services.

Rooming houses differ from residential care facilities (RCF), formerly known as second level lodging homes, in that RCF’s provide shelter and care of people with developmental disabilities, mental health issues, acquired brain injuries and the elderly. Some RCF beds are subsidized under the Residential Care Facility Program (formerly known as the Domiciliary Hostels Program) funded through the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The Residential Care Facilities program was established in
response to the “de-institutionalization” movement in the 1970’s. From a licensing perspective, RCF’s are subject to a different Schedule under the City’s licensing by-law.

As indicated in *Keys to the Home: a Housing Strategy for Hamilton*, licensed rooming house stock in Hamilton is slowly decreasing. Data collected between 1992 and 2003 by the City’s Building and Licensing Division indicated that the number of licensed rooming/lodging houses dropped 23%.

Staff have reviewed the recommendations of the 1994 Roomers and Boarders Task Force Report, attached as Appendix “A” to Report SPH05066/PED05215. Also attached as Appendix “B” to Report SPH05066/PED05215 is a Recommendation Status Chart that outlines the City’s initial responses as well as current status of Task Force recommendations.

The 1994 Task Force presented 28 recommendations, which dealt with the following themes: Comprehensive Definition, Annual Inspections, Social Supports, Education and Implementation. Many of the proposed actions involved increased awareness of rooming house issues and enhanced co-ordination among community agencies that provide support services for roomers living in lodging homes.

Most of the recommendations were implemented wholly or partially and some were not. While it is difficult to establish specifically why certain recommendations were not actioned as they occurred over eleven years ago, it is likely that other imperatives (e.g. amalgamation) focussed attention away from this issue. The issue of resources was likely a factor as well.

**Information: Findings and Recommendations of the 1994 Task Force**

**Comprehensive Definition Recommendations:**

The first recommendation of the report centred on the need for one comprehensive definition of a Lodging House, as there were discrepancies between how it was defined in the then Licensing By-Law 93-069, Zoning By-Law 6593 and the Ontario Fire Code. The Task Force recommended the definition of Lodging Houses be changed to conform to the Ontario Fire Code definition.

As was the case in 1994, inconsistent definitions of what constitutes a lodging or rooming house remain. Licensing By-law No. 01-156 replaced previous licensing by-laws to license, regulate and govern various businesses. Within By-law 01-156, lodging or rooming houses are defined as:

> “Any house or other building or portion thereof in which four or more persons are harboured, received or lodged for hire, and where lodging rooms are without kitchen facilities for the exclusive use of the occupants.”

Zoning By-law 93-069 was replaced with Zoning By-law 05-200 which states a lodging house is:
“Shall mean a dwelling containing one or more lodging units designed to accommodate four or more residents. The residents may share common areas of the dwelling other than the lodging units, and do not appear to function as a household.”

However, in the context of Ontario Fire Code regulations, a rooming house is defined as a building where at least three unrelated single persons can each rent a room that may include cooking facilities, and does have shared washroom facilities.

The Task Force also recommended that, as a “housekeeping” item, Health By-Law 4798 be repealed as it was drafted many years ago and certain provisions of the by-law have been eclipsed by other legislation. Although this by-law still exists, Public Health Inspectors primarily utilize the Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA) to inspect premises used or intended for use as a boarding or lodging house. While the HPPA does not specifically define boarding or lodging homes, Public Health Inspectors use the lodging house definition outlined in Licensing By-law 01-156.

Annual Inspections Recommendations:

The Task Force included 10 recommendations in the area of inspections. The Task Force stressed that proactive, annual inspections of rooming house property standards is a potential solution to maintaining rooming house stock while ensuring the minimum standard of living is retained. A number of the recommendations have been addressed under Licensing By-law 01-156 as well as Property Standards By-law 03-117.

City of Hamilton licensing By-law 01-156 states, “no person shall operate a lodging house without a license under this by-law for the keeping and operating of that house”. Licensing By-law 01-156 and property standards By-law 03-117 reflect several recommendations put forth by the Task Force, namely:

- The owner or operator of a licensed lodging house must post a notice signed by the owner-operator giving his or her name, address and telephone number along with a list of emergency numbers (fire, police, health and building inspections).
- Each lodging home resident must be supplied with a separate lockable mail box.
- Renewals and inspections are spread out throughout the year as licenses expire on the anniversary date of application, not year-end.
- Before a license is issued, all owners or operators must attend a training session conducted by or on behalf of the City.
- Owners-operators must obtain a Certificate of Compliance every three years, at which time property standards are inspected.

A rooming or lodging house owner/operator must obtain building and fire department approval as well as police clearance prior to being issued a license. Annual requirements of approval from the fire and police departments must be met for licenses to remain valid; however, Building & Licensing Division approval by property standard inspection to issue a Certificate of Compliance is mandated every three years. Inspectors advise their counterparts in other departments when there is a problem outside their jurisdiction. Inspection and enforcement of the by-law are contingent on the licensing and inspection schedule.
Aside from scheduled inspections, by-law enforcement is complaint based. In order for an infraction to be investigated, the onus is on tenants or citizens to make complaints.

**Social Supports Recommendations:**

Many factors influence the health and well-being of roomers. Some of the most fundamental elements include: living conditions, relationships with proprietors and other tenants as well as available social supports that aid daily living. Besides offering lower rents than most other rental stock, lodging or rooming houses provide housing for many “hard to house” tenants.

For people coping with multiple issues, locating and securing suitable accommodation can be challenging. As a way to assist those facing housing barriers, the Task Force presented recommendations that included the establishment of a lodging/rooming house rating system to assist tenants and agency discharge planners. While initial discussions took place to develop an assessment tool, a rating system has not been developed or implemented.

Other social support recommendations of the Task Force focused on the formation of a community agency committee to address rooming/lodging house issues. Initially following the Task Force report, staff from various community agencies met to discuss the service barriers faced by roomers. In 1994, several meetings took place to focus on issues facing those being discharged from shelters, hospitals, correctional facilities and rehabilitation centres. While a community agency committee did not formally continue to meet on a regular basis since that time, there has been ongoing work within the community to address the range of discharge issues, including housing. The City’s Community Outreach team and the Hospital-Shelters working group are examples of the collaboration and co-ordination between community agencies assisting vulnerable individuals, some of whom may be rooming house tenants.

**Education Recommendations:**

Under the education recommendations, the Task Force offered several measures to highlight and advocate for the rights of roomers. The avenues for raising awareness include rights and responsibilities pamphlets, community information forums and landlord training sessions. The Tenants Rights pamphlet was started in 1994 and is still utilized today. The Roomers and Boarders Committee (a coalition of roaming house tenants and housing advocates) produce the pamphlet in conjunction with the local legal clinics and the Housing Help Centre. It outlines the rights and responsibilities of roomers and landlords as dictated by relevant Provincial legislation, such as the Tenant Protection Act, and local by-laws. Pamphlets are available at the Housing Help Centre (HHC) as well as local legal clinics.

Another measure suggested by the Task Force to raise awareness of rooming house issues was to hold an information forum for service providers who are likely to be
working with tenants in rooming/lodging homes. Representatives from local agencies met on a regular basis for approximately one year following the release of the Task Force Report. These meetings allowed the service providers to share information and address various barriers facing roomers. Since the mid-nineties, large-scale community meetings or information forums to discuss rooming house issues have not occurred.

Under Licensing By-Law 01-156, lodging/rooming house operators/landlords are required to attend a training session in order to obtain a license to operate their premises. However, due to the low number of lodging/rooming house applications, training sessions for operator/landlords have not occurred since 1994-1995. As part of the curriculum in the training sessions for Landlords, the Task Force recommended that a synopsis of relevant legislation be given to Landlords. It was also suggested that this legislative summary be distributed to landlords at the time of licensing or renewal of license. Currently, Building and Licensing staff answers questions from owners on an ad-hoc basis. While training is not currently provided, landlords are provided with a copy of Licensing By-Law 01-156 at the time of licensing application and renewal. Staff from the Health Protection Branch, Building and Licensing Division and Fire Departments are working together to develop a safety manual for rooming/lodging home owners, tenants and social service agencies. There are opportunities for further collaboration between City departments to address housing issues.

The Task Force recommended that the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) be investigated as a source of funding to undertake necessary building repairs, and that rooming house landlords be educated about the availability of this program. The City delivers the federal rental RRAP program funded by Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to assist landlords (including rooming house owners/operators) who wish to renovate their properties. The RRAP program can improve living conditions for roomers while supporting landlords. Consequently, RRAP is a viable form of assistance for rooming house owners. Since 2000, there has been a decline in funding allocated to the City by CMHC. For instance in 2000, the amount of monies issued for rental RRAP was $1,414,103 whereas the amount issued for 2004 was $490,604. The initial allocation for 2005 rental RRAP is $200,000, but City staff is negotiating with CMHC to increase this allotment as demand for this program exceeds the funds available. By restoring funding to the 2000 allocation, more RRAP monies would be available to owners/operators, thus improving the physical condition of rooming house stock.

**Implementation Recommendations:**

The Task Force recommended that:

- The City/Region hire a full-time staff person who would be dedicated to the co-ordination of all affected City/Region departments and divisions
- Establish an ‘Implementation Sub-Committee’ to follow-up on the activities of the City/Region Staff by receiving feedback from stakeholders; oversee the implementation of the identified recommendations and co-ordination of services.
- Once the Implementation Sub-Committee completed its term, form a Roomers and Boarders Advisory Committee to continue to monitor the implementation of
the Task Force recommendations. The Advisory Committee was to report to the Health and Social Services Committee.

Subsequent to the release of the Roomers and Boarders Task Force Report, an Implementation sub-committee was formed. Although a full-time staff person was not hired specifically to co-ordinate the implementation activities, a Regional staff person was dedicated to facilitate and guide the sub-committee as they addressed the report recommendations. While the sub-committee is no longer active, a community-led group, the Roomers and Boarders Committee continues to meet regularly.

**Current Status:**

The present Roomers and Boarders Committee is a coalition of rooming house tenants, housing advocates and legal representatives. The committee is not an official City committee and does not report to City Council, nor does the membership include a staff representative from the City. The committee has made presentations to the Food, Shelter and Housing advisory committee of Council regarding their ongoing concerns about rooming house issues. Their longevity and dedication to rooming house issues leave the committee well positioned to work with community stakeholders, including the City Of Hamilton to address the complex issues and concerns facing rooming house tenants, landlords and service providers.

Two departments within the City Of Hamilton deal with lodging house issues, specifically, Public Health and Community Services (PHCS) and Planning and Economic Development (PED). PHCS administers many programs including those related to the provision of shelter including support and outreach services as well as health inspections. PED administer rooming/lodging house licenses and property standards.

Under current licensing requirements, rooming house operators must have a property standards inspection completed prior to obtaining an initial license, upon renewal of that license every three years, and upon any transfer of license. Aside from scheduled inspections, by-law enforcement is complaint based. In order for an infraction to be investigated, the onus is on citizens or tenants to make a complaint.

There has been much concern voiced by the Roomers and Boarders Committee and by other community stakeholders advocating on behalf of rooming house tenants that the physical condition of much of the rooming house stock is very poor. As well, the community has voiced concern that there is a lack of follow up to complaints made about property standards and licensing issues. While we do not have a clear picture as to the extent of problems, a number of people have cited limited resources as an issue regarding the City’s capacity to follow up on complaints. Furthermore, community advocates underscore that there are real and perceived obstacles that may prohibit rooming house tenants from filing complaints, thus pointing to a need for a more proactive rather than complaints based approach to by-law enforcement.

As stated in *Keys to the Home: a Housing Strategy for Hamilton*, "At the crux of the matter is whether enforcing property standards will help preserve the stock or
ameliorate the quality-of-life for the tenants who live there, or whether City involvement (e.g. ensuring all rooming houses are licensed and inspected regularly) would contribute to rooming house owner-operators closing shop, taking units off the market and contributing to homelessness”. Keys to the Home contains several recommendations to deal with the issues and concerns about affordable housing in our community. The following Council approved recommendations in Keys to the Home (HCS04037(a)) are specifically dedicated to rooming houses:

That City Housing Hamilton explore the feasibility of developing a “single room occupancy” (SRO) dwelling as a pilot project in partnership with one or more community based stakeholders.

That the Building and Licensing Division of the Planning and Development Department report to the Planning and Economic Development Committee on the feasibility of proactive and harmonized enforcement of the City’s rooming house stock as a way of enhancing and preserving this stock of housing premised on licensing fees covering the full cost of proactive inspections.

In particular, implementation of the second recommendation above from Keys to the Home will provide a vehicle for better understanding and potential resolution of issues relating to by-law enforcement and rooming house stock preservation so that tenants have safe, decent and affordable accommodation. Staff has established an interdepartmental committee to co-ordinate the implementation of the recommendations in Keys to the Home and will be liaising with the Building & Licensing Division to action the recommendation regarding the feasibility of proactive and harmonized enforcement of rooming houses. Staff will be bringing an information report to Social & Public Health Services Committee in the first quarter of 2006 on the status of implementation of the Council approved recommendations in Keys to the Home, including the above recommendations relating to rooming houses.

In addition to Keys to the Home, several initiatives are underway to increase supply and access to affordable housing in Hamilton. These include the new federal-provincial Affordable Housing Program, the Supporting Community Partnerships Initiative (SCPI) and the community based Affordable Housing Flagship under the City’s Social Development Strategy and its links to the Roundtable on Poverty Reduction. In total these initiatives will have a positive impact on the community to help improve housing conditions in Hamilton.
Representatives from the following stakeholder groups were consulted for this report:
Housing Help Centre
Roomers and Boarders Committee
Planning and Economic Development
Public Health and Community Services Department

Joe-Anne Priel
General Manager
Public Health and Community Services

Lee Ann Coveyduck
General Manager
Planning and Economic Development Department
Table of Contents

1.0 Recommendations ......................................................... i
2.0 Introduction ....................................................................... 1
3.0 Findings and Recommendations ........................................ 3
   3.1 Gaps in Definition ......................................................... 3
   3.2 Inspections ................................................................... 9
   3.3 Social Supports ............................................................ 12
   3.4 Rights and Advocacy ..................................................... 14
4.0 Implementation ............................................................... 16
5.0 Process ............................................................................ 17
6.0 Executive Summary ......................................................... 18

Appendix A: Explanation of “Housekeeping” Recommendations .... 20
Appendix B: Pamphlet for Distribution to Rooming House Tenants .... 22
Acknowledgements

Appreciation is extended to the following people for their contributions to this report:

Task Force Members

Councillor Dominic Agostino, Chairman
Councillor Bob Charters
Councillor Geraldine Copps
Dino Zuppa, Community Representative At Large, Co-Chairman
David King, Department of Health-Inspections (Region)
Rosemary Foulds, Social Services-Policy and Income Maintenance (Region)
Brian Allick, Building Department (City)
Douglas Rose, Licensing Division (City Clerk’s Department)
Jim Winn, Fire Department (City)
Victor Abraham, (Region and City)
P.C. Reg Downer, Police Department
Bill Medeiros, Rooming House Tenant
Rick Singh, Tenant
Sister Rita Bohnert, Food and Shelter Advisory Committee
Peter Van Leeuwen, Roomers and Boarders Committee
Suzanne Swanton, Housing Help Centre
Shelley Rempel, Housing Help Centre
John Winslow, Property Manager
Mike Ollier, McQuesten Legal and Community Services
Naïma LaForme, United Disabled Consumers
Sheona Wilson, Mental Health Rights Coalition

Contributors
Lodging and Rooming House Tenants who participated in Study Group and Task Force meetings
Sheila Stephen, Housing Help Centre
Dr. Joel Goldberg, Hamilton Program for Schizophrenia
Nigel Bull
Ralph Ellis
Andrea Newman
Kevin Walker
Ed Tyrell
Fred Luis
Roy Ward
Sarah Todd
Clerk’s Department: Mary Gallagher, Ann-Marie Tollis, Aranka Toth
MINUTES OF THE
JOINT MEETING OF THE ROOMERS AND BOARDERS TASK FORCE

The Roomers and Boarders Task Force met on Wednesday May 11, 1994 at 2:00 p.m., 15th Floor Committee Room, 119 King Street West.

Present: Chairman, D. Zuppa, Community Co-Chairman, B. Medeiros, R. Foulds, J. Winn, P. Van Leeuwen, J. Winslow, M. Ollier, N. LaForme, B. Allick, D. Rose, S. Rempel


Also Present: N. Bull

1. CALL TO ORDER

In the absence of the Chairman the Community Co-Chairman called the meeting to order.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 27, 1994

(Winslow/Medeiros) That the Minutes of the April 27, 1994 meeting of the Roomers and Boarders Task Force meeting be approved. CARRIED.

3. OLD BUSINESS

3a) Final Report

The Task Force reviewed the Final Draft of its report.

(Winslow/Medeiros) That the following changes be made to the Final Report:

Title Page: delete "Final Draft"
Acknowledgements check to see Rick Singh wishes to be listed as a rooming house tenant
Letter to Council last sentence be revised to read: "The spirit of co-operation is the reason this work was completed so quickly and effectively, recognizing the urgency of the situation."
Joint Meeting of the Roomers and Boarders Task Force

Recommendations

Minutes

May 11, 1994

These be revised to reflect changes made in the text.

p. 1, par. 2
revise to read "...in 1991, the Housing Help Centre..."

p. 2, box
goal: revise to read "... living in rooming/lodging..."

p. 3, box, par. 1
revise to read "... By-Law 6593..."

p. 3, box, par. 3
revise to read "...A lodging house means a lodging house as defined in the licensing provisions of the Municipal Act, where sleeping accommodations is provided for four or more lodgers, and for the purposes of this by-law are classified as follows: ..."

p. 7, Table
should refer to "Licenced" and "Unregulated"

p. 8, par under # 5
revise to read "...For a discussion..."

p. 10, par. 4
revise to read "...In its discussions, the Task Force considered the cost of inspections, and the current situation, where inspections are only done in response to a complaint and chose a middle course. The following is recommended:..."

p. 12, par. 1
revise to read "...are also important..." and "...service providers..."

p. 12, par. 2
revise to read "...in their accommodation..."

p. 15, # 1-3
revise to read:
1. In removing their right to pay rent into the court, instead of to the landlord, tenants will lose their ability to press for appropriate living conditions that meet standards prescribed by law.
2. When an agent pays rent, it does not support independent living in the community.
3. This would only affect Tenants who receive General Welfare Assistance and represents discrimination based on source of income which would be a violation of the Human Rights Code.
Joint Meeting of the Roomers and Boarders Task Force

Minutes

May 11, 1994

p. 18, Goal

revise to read "...To ensure the safety, security and health of people living in rooming/lodging houses..."

p. 18, Definitions

revise to read "...houses. More than half of the rooming, boarding and lodging houses inspected by the Fire Department do not fit the definition of a lodging house used by the City Building Department or Licensing Division..."

p. 18, par. 1

revise to read "...are also important..."

The recommendations will be revised to read as follows:

1. The definition of Lodging House in the Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 28, and the Zoning By-law 6593, be changed to conform with the Ontario Fire Code definition of Lodging, Boarding and Rooming Houses. The definition of a Lodging, Boarding and Rooming Houses is given on page 3 of the report.

2. That owners of unregulated houses be required to apply for a licence, once the definition of a lodging house is changed, if they qualify as lodging houses.

3. That Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 28 be reviewed and eliminate duplication with other local by-laws.

4. That Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 28, section 2(j) be revised to remove references to sex and age.

5. That the Health By-Law 4798 be repealed and the re-written Health By-Law be implemented.

6. The Licensing of Lodging houses, by the Licensing Division, be maintained. Renewals should be spread evenly throughout the year, with inspections occurring at the time of renewal.

7. That the Fire, Health and Building Departments send reports, as requested by the Licencing Division prior to the issuance of a licence and upon renewal. The inspections leading to the reports should be conducted evenly throughout the year.
8. That resources be allocated or increased to permit annual inspections by the Licensing and Health Departments. These inspections should be conducted evenly throughout the year.

9. That Licensing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 8, be revised to require the owners or operators of a lodging house to obtain a Certificate of Compliance, pursuant to the Property Standards By-law 74-74, from the Building Department for each lodging house, commencing in 1995, upon first renewal of those with an existing licence, when a new licence is issued, when a licence is transferred and every third anniversary thereafter.

10. Increase the licence fee to $250 to offset some of the cost of annual inspections.

11. That a list of emergency numbers (fire, health, building inspections) be posted by the owner or operator of the lodging/rooming house with the licence.

12. That all operators must attend a training session before a Licence is issued (first renewal, new applications and transfer of licences). The penalty for not attending would result in a delay in licence renewal and may result in a show cause hearing before the Licensing Committee. As part of this training session, an information package be provided to Landlords by the Licensing Division. There will be financial implications in conducting the training.

13. The Licensing Division should co-ordinate the first session with the Health Department, Social Services Department, Building Department and the Fire Department. Subsequent sessions are to be carried out by the latter four. Community agencies should be invited to participate in planning this session.

14. Licensing By-Law 93-069 be revised to require the landlord to provide each Lodging House Tenant be provided with lockable personal mailboxes.

15. That the revised Licensing House By-Law 93-069 ensure all proper information is posted for the Tenants’ use by sending a letter from the Licensing Division to all Licensed Lodging homes and doing followup inspections.

16. The Housing Help Centre explore a rating system for posted listings of Rooming/Lodging houses over and above the minimum as an aid to residents and discharge planners. To be effective, this listing would need to be circulated and updated on a regular basis.
Joint Meeting of the Roomers and Boarders Task Force

17. Staff from the following agencies: the Departments of Social Services (Home Management) and Public Health Services (Nursing), Home Care, Family Services, Catholic Family Services (Budgeting), St. Matthew’s House, Wesley Urban Ministries, the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the Mental Health Rights Coalition, St. Matthew’s House, the Housing Help Centre, the CMHA and area correctional facilities, and the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital, meet together to look at how their procedures may create barriers to services for people who live in Rooming/Lodging houses. This could be organized by the Department of Social Services.

18. That the Department of Public Health Services and Social Services, St. Matthew's House, the Housing Help Centre, the Canadian Mental Health Association, other mental health agencies and mental health planning agencies including the District Health Council and the Regional Psychiatry Planning Board meet with staff from area Correctional Facilities and the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital to discuss discharge planning as it affects the rooming house community, particularly the three month followup period.

19. The Department of Social Services and Health Services co-ordinate an in service meeting of front line health and social services workers and inspections staff. Front line MCSS workers should be involved as well. The purpose of the meeting should be to

1. share information about the role and responsibilities of each in the safety, security and health of people living in Rooming/Lodging houses.

2. develop and implement strategies for collaboration between workers, and should be planned in conjunction with Recommendation 22.

20. That the Continuing Legal Education pamphlet on rights of Roomers and Boarders together with an insert listing contacts for service be distributed to tenants living in rooming houses.

21. That this information be made available in places where rooming/lodging house tenants meet, and to people who work with rooming/lodging house tenants.

22. That an information forum take place for service providers who are likely to be working with tenants in rooming/lodging houses.
Joint Meeting of the Roomers and Boarders Task Force

23. The information to be communicated to landlords include an advisory that rooming/lodging houses are subject to the Landlord and Tenant Act, the Rent Control Act, the Rental Housing Protection Act, the Municipal Lodging Home Bylaw and may possibly be affected by Bill 120.

24. That a synopsis of the legislation be prepared for distribution to licensed landlords at Landlord training and/or at time of licensing or renewal of licence.

25. That the Federal Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program be investigated as a source of funding to landlords who need to bring their rooming/lodging houses up to standard.

26. That the Department of Social Services be requested to apply for funding from the Canada Department of Employment and Immigration to hire a staff person for one year to co-ordinate all effected City/Regional Departments and Divisions.

27. An Implementation Sub-Committee comprised of 5 members of the Task Force, with staff support, be formed for one year. The purpose of the Sub-Committee would be to follow up the activity of the City/Region staff and receive feedback from inspectors, licensers, tenants, landlords and all involved City/Regional Departments and Divisions.

28. Upon completion of the Implementation Sub-Committee's term, a Roomers and Boarders Advisory Committee be formed to report to Health and Social Services Committee. The Advisory Committee would continue to monitor the implementation of the recommendations, meeting four times annually.

4. CLOSING REMARKS

Task Force Members were invited to make any closing remarks they wished.

On motion (Ollier/Winslow) the meeting adjourned at 3:40 P.M.

CARRIED.

___________________________
Chairman

___________________________
Secretary
1.0 Recommendations

Comprehensive Definition

1. That the definition of Lodging House in the Licencing ByLaw 93-069, Schedule 28, and the Zoning By-law 6593, be changed to conform with the Ontario Fire Code definition of Lodging, Boarding and Rooming Houses. The definition of a Lodging, Boarding and Rooming Houses is given on page 3 of the report.

2. That owners of unregulated houses be required to apply for a licence, once the definition of a lodging house is changed, if they qualify as lodging houses.

3. That Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 28 be reviewed and eliminate duplication with other local by-laws.

4. That Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 28, section 2(j) be revised to remove references to sex and age.

5. That the Health By-Law 4798 be repealed and the re-written Health By-Law be implemented.

Annual Inspections

6. That the Licensing of Lodging houses, by the Licensing Division, be maintained. Renewals should be spread evenly throughout the year, with inspections occurring at the time of renewal.

7. That the Fire, Health and Building Departments send reports, as requested by the Licencing Division prior to the issuance of a licence and upon renewal. The inspections leading to the reports should be conducted evenly throughout the year.

8. That resources be allocated or increased to permit annual inspections by the Licensing and Health Departments. These inspections should be conducted evenly throughout the year.

9. That Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 8, be revised to require the owners or operators of a lodging house to obtain a Certificate of Compliance, pursuant to the Property Standards By-law 74-74, from the Building Department for each lodging house, commencing in 1995, upon first renewal of those with an existing licence, when a new licence is issued, when a licence is transferred and every third anniversary thereafter.

Roomers and Boarders Task Force
10. That the licence fee be increased to $250 to offset some of the cost of annual inspections.

11. That a list of emergency numbers (fire, health, building inspections) be posted by the owner or operator of the lodging/rooming house with the licence.

12. That all operators must attend a training session before a Licence is issued (first renewal, new applications and transfer of licences). The penalty for not attending would result in a delay in licence renewal and may result in a show cause hearing before the Licensing Committee. As part of this training session, an information package be provided to Landlords by the Licensing Division. There will be financial implications in conducting the training.

13. That the Licencing Division co-ordinate the first session with the Health Department, Social Services Department, Building Department and the Fire Department. Subsequent sessions are to be carried out by the latter four. Community agencies should be invited to participate in planning this session.

14. That the Licencing By-Law 93-069 be revised to require the landlord to provide each Lodging House Tenant be provided with a lockable personal mailbox.

15. That the revised Licencing By-Law 93-069 ensure all proper information is posted for the Tenants' use by sending a letter from the Licensing Division to all Licensed Lodging homes and doing followup inspections.

Social Supports

16. That the Housing Help Centre explore a rating system for posted listings of Rooming/Lodging houses over and above the minimum as an aid to residents and discharge planners. To be effective, this listing would need to be circulated and updated on a regular basis.

17. That staff from the following agencies: the Departments of Social Services (Home Management) and Public Health Services (Nursing), Home Care, Family Services, Catholic Family Services (Budgeting), St. Matthew's House, Wesley Urban Ministries, the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the Mental Health Rights Coalition, St. Matthew's House, the Housing Help Centre, the CMHA and area correctional facilities, and the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital, meet together to look at how their procedures may create barriers to services for people who live in Rooming/Lodging houses. This could be organized by the Department of Social Services.
18. That the Department of Public Health Services and Social Services, St. Matthew's House, the Housing Help Centre, the Canadian Mental Health Association, other mental health agencies and mental health planning agencies including the District Health Council and the Regional Psychiatry Planning Board meet with staff from area Correctional Facilities and the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital to discuss discharge planning as it affects the rooming house community, particularly the three month followup period.

19. That the Department of Social Services and Health Services co-ordinate an in service meeting of front line health and social services workers and inspections staff. Front line MCSS workers should be involved as well. The purpose of the meeting should be to:

1. share information about the role and responsibilities of each in the safety, security and health of people living in Rooming/Lodging houses.

2. develop and implement strategies for collaboration between workers, and should be planned in conjunction with Recommendation 22.

Education

20. That the Continuing Legal Education pamphlet on rights of Roomers and Boarders together with an insert listing contacts for service be distributed to tenants living in rooming houses.

21. That this information be made available in places where rooming/lodging house tenants meet, and to people who work with rooming/lodging house tenants.

22. That an information forum take place for service providers who are likely to be working with tenants in rooming/lodging houses.

23. That the information to be communicated to landlords include an advisory that rooming/lodging houses are subject to the Landlord and Tenant Act, the Rent Control Act, the Rental Housing Protection Act, the Municipal Lodging Home Bylaw and may possibly be affected by Bill 120.

24. That a synopsis of the legislation be prepared for distribution to licensed landlords at Landlord training and/or at time of licensing or renewal of licence.
25. That the Federal Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program be investigated as a source of funding to landlords who need to bring their rooming/lodging houses up to standard.

Implementation

26. That the Department of Social Services be requested to apply for funding from the Canada Department of Employment and Immigration to hire a staff person for one year to co-ordinate all effected City/Regional Departments and Divisions.

27. That an Implementation Sub-Committee comprised of 5 members of the Task Force, with staff support, be formed for one year. The purpose of the Sub-Committee would be to follow up the activity of the City/Region staff and receive feedback from inspectors, licensers, tenants, landlords and all involved City/Regional Departments and Divisions.

28. That upon completion of the Implementation Sub-Committee's term, a Roomers and Boarders Advisory Committee be formed to report to Health and Social Services Committee. The Advisory Committee would continue to monitor the implementation of the recommendations, meeting four times annually.
2.0 Introduction

The issue of housing conditions in Lodging and Rooming Houses is one which has come to the attention of Regional and City Councils before. At one time, Lodging houses were inspected annually in the City of Hamilton. In 1978, this practice ceased, when City Council directed Building Department staff to do inspections only in response to complaints. Since then, there have been few complaints about Lodging and Rooming Houses, but concerns about quality of houses has come from a number of groups.

In 1987, the Regional Food and Shelter Advisory Committee formed an ad hoc working group which completed an investigation of Rooming Houses and rooming house tenants in Hamilton. This study made recommendations designed to improve conditions. (Rooming House Task Group Ad Hoc working Group of Food and Shelter Advisory Committee) In 1991, the Housing Help Centre completed the Hamilton City Core Community Development/Rooming House Needs Assessment. To follow up, a Roomers and Boarders Committee was formed to address the issues raised. The Roomers and Boarders Committee presented three concerns to the Region’s Health and Social Services Committee in 1993:

1. annual inspection of Lodging houses,
2. the provision of adequate support services, and
3. education about rights and responsibilities of Tenants and Landlords.

At the same time, Regional Government has been increasingly concerned about affordable housing and sustainable development in this community. Both were the subject of special Task Forces struck by the Regional Chairman. The Housing Task Force pointed to the need for made in Hamilton-Wentworth solutions to housing problems. It also identified people with special housing needs who were not well housed in the community. These included people with psychiatric and/or physical disabilities.

A study of housing costs of General Welfare Assistance clients, showed the majority of single tenants spend more than 50% of their benefits on shelter. The number of single people receiving General Welfare Assistance is also growing (over 10,000 people in 1994). There are many other single people in the community who have limited incomes. A number live in lodging and rooming houses and spend a large proportion of their income on rent. It is important too, that health, safety and building standards be maintained.

The Sustainable Development Task Force identified quality of life issues as part of its vision statement for the Regional Municipality. The health and well being of community members is to be addressed by a shift to health promotion and disease prevention by addressing factors in the physical and socio-economic environments and individual and community lifestyles that effect personal health and well-being. Many of the issues the
Task Force considered about lodging and rooming houses extended beyond building standards to include quality of life issues.

In this context, a Task Force on Roomers and Boarders was deemed timely by the Councils of the City of Hamilton and the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth. The Task Force held its inaugural meeting in December 1993 and worked to produce this report by May of 1994.

The Task Force adopted the following Terms of Reference:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To ensure the safety, security and health of people living in rooming/lodging houses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Priority be devoted to tasks which are within the power of the Task Force to accomplish, (rather than those which rely on changes to provincial legislation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sub groups of the Task Force should meet to look at specific issues and prepare recommendations for the full Task Force to review. Sub groups should include some Task Force Members not familiar with the issues, so they can learn more about them. They may also raise questions which put a different light on the issue, thus helping in resolving issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Recommendations from the Task Force will have the support of all members.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first challenge faced by the Task Force was the differences in definitions and terminology. A discussion of the implications of this issue follow immediately.
3.0 Findings and Recommendations

3.1 Gaps in Definition

There are several definitions and terms in use in the community:

The Building Department inspects Lodging Houses, as defined in the Municipal Zoning By-Law 6593 As Amended, on a complaints basis:

"A lodging house means a dwelling in which four or more persons are lodging for gain, with or without food and without separate cooking facilities, by the week or more than a week which is licensed as a lodging house." (81-27)

The Licensing Division of the Clerk's Department inspects Lodging Houses, as defined in Municipal Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 28, on a complaints basis:

"A lodging house means a lodging house as defined in the licensing provisions of the Municipal Act, where sleeping accommodations is provided for four or more lodgers, and for the purposes of this by-law are classified as follows:

(c) "ordinary lodging house", which means a lodging house primarily intended or used as a dwelling, where persons are harboured, received or lodged for hire by the week or more than a week, but not for any period of less than a week, and are accommodated without any separate kitchen, kitchenette or kitchen sink, but excepting a hotel, private hospital, public or private home for the aged, children's home or boarding school". ((a) and (b) define hostel and second level lodging home, not considered in this study.)

The Fire Department inspects Lodging, Boarding and Rooming Houses, as defined by the Ontario Fire Code, annually. A Rooming House is when lodging is provided for more than 3 persons who share cooking or bathroom facilities.

The Housing Help Centre lists rooms for rent as defined by the landlord offering the room.
The City of Hamilton licences just over 50 lodging houses. The Fire Department inspects over 100 premises on an annual basis. The Housing Help Centre has developed a data base which includes Lodging Houses, Rooming Houses and Rooms. Information from the data base permits comparison of Licensed Lodging Houses and those not regulated by the City. The Task Force reviewed the information to find out the differences between the two groups. In the discussion below, Lodging Houses are referred to as Licensed Houses. Rooming Houses and Rooms are referred to as Unregulated.

The Map on the following page shows the distribution of Licensed and Unregulated Houses. There are parts of the City where both are quite concentrated, particularly along Barton Street and James Street and around McMaster University. Along James and Barton, the number of Licensed and Unregulated facilities is roughly equal. The majority of the houses around the university are unregulated.
The table below illustrates the difference between licensed and unregulated houses. On average licensed lodging houses are larger and have lower rents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Licensed</th>
<th>Unregulated</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Houses</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rooms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># recorded</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>1,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average/House</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># recorded</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average ($/month)</td>
<td>$270</td>
<td>$275</td>
<td>$273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Recorded</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House/Semi</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tavern</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Rise</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Rise</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storefront</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unregulated houses are most frequently located in houses (2/3 of those recorded). Licensed houses are most commonly located in houses, but 30% are part of a tavern.

The graph following illustrates the number of licensed and unregulated houses by size. Unregulated houses tend to be smaller or larger than licensed houses. This data does not suggest significant qualitative differences between licensed and unregulated houses.
Finally, some inspections were undertaken. Personnel from the Licensing Department inspected six of the unregulated facilities, with the following results:

- 2 were found to be subject to licensing and have applied since the inspection
- 3 were not subject to licensing because there were less than four tenants resident
- 1 was not inspected because it was not possible to gain entry

The Fire Department investigated 12 addresses, with the following results:

- 3 were found to be boarding houses as defined by the Ontario Fire Code
- 8 were found not to be boarding houses as defined by the Ontario Fire Code
- 1 address did not exist

There are extensive differences in the number of houses, based on definition. An ideal solution would be to have a uniform definition of a boarding house to apply to all situations. The Task Force recommends local action be taken to change the definition:

1. The definition of Lodging House in the Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 28, and the Zoning By-law 6593, be changed to conform with the Ontario Fire Code definition of Lodging, Boarding and Rooming Houses. The definition of a Lodging, Boarding and Rooming Houses is given on page 3 of the report.
2. That owners of unregulated houses be required to apply for a licence, once the definition of a lodging house is changed, if they qualify as lodging houses.

The Task Force also learned about overlaps in by-laws which permit duplication of services. This situation has arisen mainly because of changes to the by-laws and new provincial legislation which have been introduced over time. While this might be seen as housekeeping issues, any review of by-laws should eliminate overlaps and duplication:

3. That Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 28 be reviewed and eliminate duplication with other local by-laws.

4. That Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 28, section 2(j) be revised to remove references to sex and age.

5. That the Health By-Law 4798 be repealed and the re-written Health By-Law be implemented.

For a discussion of these by-laws and the needed changes, please see Appendix A.

Having dealt with the issue of definitions, the remainder of this report will refer to Rooming/Lodging Houses.
3.2 Inspections

As has already been noted, inspections by the Health, Building and Licensing Departments are done only in response to a request or complaint. The Fire Department does annual inspections for fire code conformity. There are few requests for inspections of rooming/lodging houses.

Each Department has a procedure to follow to ensure standards are enforced, which includes court action and fines. Further, inspectors advise their counterparts in other Departments when there is a problem which is outside their jurisdiction. In the Task Force’s opinion, this system of controls and networking is adequate to keep on top of the situation, provided the complaints mechanism is used or there are annual inspections.

There are several reasons tenants in Rooming/Lodging houses do not complain. First, tenants generally are reluctant to complain because they are concerned about their security of tenure. This is particularly true of people who live in Rooming/Lodging houses. Second, tenants who participated in the Task Force told the Task Force the people who live in Rooming/Lodging houses often do not have a high opinion of themselves, and feel they may not have the right to complain. Third, generally complaints tend to come from tenants living in apartment buildings where there are tenant associations. This allows a degree of anonymity which is often not possible for tenants in Rooming/Lodging houses.

Because of this situation, the Task Force concluded that complaints-based inspections are not adequate to maintain standards in Rooming/Lodging houses, nor are they adequate to ensure the safety, security and health of people living in Rooming/Lodging houses.

It would seem the insurance industry may have reached the same conclusion. Task Force members looked into the issue of insurance for lodging and rooming houses. One factor used in setting the insurance rates is the regulatory climate in which the lodging and rooming houses operate. The re-introduction of annual inspections could help landlords in negotiating their insurance policies.

For these reasons, the Task Force recommends the re-institution of annual inspection of lodging and rooming houses by the Licensing, Health and Building Departments:

6. The Licensing of Lodging houses, by the Licensing Division, be maintained. Renewals should be spread evenly throughout the year, with inspections occurring at the time of renewal.
7. That the Fire, Health and Building Departments send reports, as requested by the Licencing Division prior to the issuance of a licence and upon renewal. The inspections leading to the reports should be conducted evenly throughout the year.

8. That resources be allocated or increased to permit annual inspections by the Licensing and Health Departments. These inspections should be conducted evenly throughout the year.

The Task Force looked at the cost of inspections, to compare with the licence fee ($150/year), and to understand the impact on Departmental budgets. The inspections by the Licensing Department are in the neighbourhood of $75 per house.

The Building Department's cost depends on the method used to complete the inspection. One method is to require a Certificate of Compliance for each lodging/rooming house. The basic cost of this certificate is $220, plus $20 per resident. To apply this charge, Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 8, would need to be revised to require a Certificate of Compliance. If the By-Law is not revised, an annual inspection is estimated at $210 for each house. The second method does not include the costs of enforcement, so the $210 should be viewed as a minimum fee.

The Health Department estimates that regular inspections would cost in the range of $100 per inspection per premises based on an annual minimum of four (4) inspections per year. These costs are exclusive of additional enforcement costs (i.e. litigation costs). Four inspections per premises per year will keep enforcement costs down as is generally the case with ongoing proactive regulatory activities. Should a minimum inspection frequency of once a year be implemented, attendant enforcement costs would be considerably higher.

In its discussions, the Task Force considered the cost of annual inspections, and the current situation, where inspections are only done in response to a complaint and chose a middle course. The following is recommended:

9. That Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 28, be revised to require the owners or operators of a lodging house to obtain a Certificate of Compliance, pursuant to the Property Standards By-law 74-74, from the Building Department for each lodging house, commencing in 1995, upon first renewal of those with an existing licence, when a new licence is issued, when a licence is transferred and every third anniversary thereafter.

10. Increase the licence fee to $250 to offset some of the cost of annual inspections.
Coupled with the recommendation to change the definition of a lodging house, the Task Force believes these recommendations will bring a consistent practice of standards inspection.

The Task Force looked for opportunities to educate landlords and tenants to help achieve the goal of tenant safety and security. Some of these can be addressed through the inspections and licensing process. The Task Force recommends the following additions to Licencing By-Law 93-069:

11. That a list of emergency numbers (fire, health, building inspections) be posted by the owner or operator of the lodging/rooming house with the licence.

12. That all operators must attend a training session before a Licence is issued (first renewal, new applications and transfer of licences). The penalty for not attending would result in a delay in licence renewal and may result in a show cause hearing before the Licensing Committee. As part of this training session, an information package be provided to Landlords by the Licensing Division. There will be financial implications in conducting the training.

13. The Licensing Division should co-ordinate the first session with the Health Department, Social Services Department, Building Department and the Fire Department. Subsequent sessions are to be carried out by the latter four. Community agencies should be invited to participate in planning this session.

Tenants who participated in the Task Force said lockable personal mail boxes were critical to tenant safety and security. This would help to ensure tenants receive their mail, especially any cheques they receive. The Task Force recommends:

14. Licencing By-Law 93-069 be revised to require the landlord to provide each Lodging House Tenant with a lockable personal mailbox.

The Task Force also recommends:

15. That the revised Licencing By-Law 93-069 ensure all proper information is posted for the Tenants' use by sending a letter from the Licensing Division to all Licensed Lodging homes and doing followup inspections.
3.3 Social Supports

The Task Force recognizes the health and well-being of tenants in Rooming/Lodging Houses depends on a number of factors. Housing quality and safety are important. Social networks and basic life skills are also important. As has been discussed earlier in this report, tenants who live in Rooming/Lodging Houses are reluctant to seek assistance. Tenants and service providers on the Task Force identified two obstacles.

First, most agencies have admission criteria and waiting lists. This is a barrier for everyone who seeks service (clearly waiting lists are not the first choice of service providers either). Some people who move into Rooming/Lodging houses have been discharged from the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital or a Correctional Facility where they have had access to some services. When they move, they may urgently need services, in order to be able to live in the community. First, they need to establish an address. Selecting suitable accommodation is a challenge for some because many of these tenants have not been living in the community and may not be aware of what is available in the community. Second, these new tenants may urgently need to develop skills (e.g. budgeting, food preparation, opportunities for socializing) to live in their accommodation. Finally, over time, there may be need for support services to sustain these tenants in their homes (for instance, to help someone with a psychiatric disability to avoid a crisis, and thereby keep their housing).

These services are needed in a context of provincial mental health reform and financial restraint. There is a concern about reductions to follow up and outpatient services. This points to a need to rethink how services might be provided to Rooming/Lodging House Tenants. To address these issues, the Task Force recommends the following:

16. The Housing Help Centre explore a rating system for posted listings of Rooming/Lodging houses over and above the minimum as an aid to residents and discharge planners. To be effective, this listing would need to be circulated and updated on a regular basis.

17. Staff from the following agencies: the Departments of Social Services (Home Management) and Public Health Services (Nursing), Home Care, Family Services, Catholic Family Services (Budgeting), St. Matthew's House, Wesley Urban Ministries, the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the Mental Health Rights Coalition, St. Matthew's House, the Housing Help Centre, the CMHA and area correctional facilities, and the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital, meet together to look at how their procedures may create barriers to services for people who live in Rooming/Lodging houses. This could be organized by the Department of Social Services.
18. That the Department of Public Health Services and Social Services, St. Matthew's House, the Housing Help Centre, the Canadian Mental Health Association, other mental health agencies and mental health planning agencies including the District Health Council and the Regional Psychiatry Planning Board meet with staff from area Correctional Facilities and the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital to discuss discharge planning as it affects the rooming house community, particularly the three month followup period.

Second, tenants in rooming/lodging houses typically learn about services through the people they meet in their daily activities. It is usually after building a relationship with people that they begin to discuss their needs. Front line contacts are therefore very important in providing information, support and advocacy for people who live in rooming/lodging houses. The Task Force recommends the following:

19. The Department of Social Services and Health Services co-ordinate an in service meeting of front line health and social services workers and inspections staff. Front line MCSS workers should be involved as well. The purpose of the meeting should be to

1. share information about the role and responsibilities of each in the safety, security and health of people living in Rooming/Lodging houses.

2. develop and implement strategies for collaboration between workers,

and should be planned in conjunction with Recommendation 22.
3.4 Rights and Advocacy

Tenants and Landlords of Rooming/Lodging houses enjoy the rights and responsibilities of the Landlord Tenant Act. Legal rents may also be established through the Rent Registry. The Task Force agreed both tenants and landlords should be aware of their rights and responsibilities. The challenge is to communicate the information. That Task Force concluded strategies to educate rooming/lodging house tenants and landlords need to be targeted to increase the chances of being effective. The following is recommended:

20. *That the Continuing Legal Education pamphlet on rights of Roomers and Boarders together with an insert listing contacts for service be distributed to tenants living in rooming houses (A copy of the pamphlet has been provided in Appendix B).*

21. *That this information be made available in places where rooming/lodging house tenants meet, and to people who work with rooming/lodging house tenants.*

22. *That an information forum take place for service providers who are likely to be working with tenants in rooming/lodging houses.*

23. *That the information to be communicated to landlords include an advisory that rooming/lodging houses are subject to the Landlord and Tenant Act, the Rent Control Act, the Rental Housing Protection Act, the Municipal Lodging Home Bylaw and may possibly be affected by Bill 120.*

24. *That a synopsis of the legislation be prepared for distribution to licensed landlords at Landlord training and/or at time of licensing or renewal of licence.*

25. *That the Federal Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program be investigated as a source of funding to landlords who need to bring their rooming/lodging houses up to standard.*

The Task Force also looked at the issue of having the Social Services Department pay rent directly to Landlords. This is a voluntary arrangement which is available to people who receive General Welfare Assistance. In the view of the Task Force, direct payment of rent is not in the interests of the health and well being of tenants for a number of reasons:
2. When an agent pays rent, it does not support independent living in the community.
3. This would only affect Tenants who receive General Welfare Assistance and represents discrimination based on source of income which would be a violation of the Human Rights Code.
4.0 Implementation

The Task Force is very interested in participating in the implementation process. To this end, the following is recommended:

26. That the Department of Social Services be requested to apply for funding from the Canada Department of Employment and Immigration to hire a staff person for one year to co-ordinate all affected City/Regional Departments and Divisions.

27. That an Implementation Sub-Committee comprised of 5 members of the Task Force, with staff support, be formed for one year. The purpose of the Sub-Committee would be to follow up the activity of the City/Region staff and receive feedback from inspectors, licensers, tenants, landlords and all involved City/Regional Departments and Divisions.

28. That upon completion of the Implementation Sub-Committee's term, a Roomers and Boarders Advisory Committee be formed to report to Health and Social Services Committee. The Advisory Committee would continue to monitor the implementation of the recommendations, meeting four times annually.
5.0 Process

**Inaugural Meeting**
The Task Force was structured to include municipal employees, community members and municipal politicians. At the first meeting, members were invited to present issues of concern. The Task Force struck a sub-committee to develop Terms of Reference and a work plan for discussion at the second meeting.

**Second Meeting**
The terms of reference and work plan were approved. There were four general areas of concern:

1. To examine the impact of the gaps in definitions and to recommend strategies to address these issues.
2. To recommend strategies to permit regular inspection of Lodging houses.
3. To recommend strategies to improve social supports to people living in Lodging houses.
4. To heighten the rights and advocacy potential of the existing system.

Members agreed to meet in study groups between full Task Force Meetings to address issues two through four. The study groups were to clarify issues and develop recommendations. Tenants living in lodging/rooming houses were encouraged to participate in study group meetings.

**Third Meeting**
The Task Force examined the extent of the impact of gaps in definitions at its third meeting. It also began to review the recommendations of the study groups. The study groups agreed to meet again between full Task Force Meetings to refine their recommendations.

**Fourth Meeting**
The Task Force gave final approval to the recommendations. It also reviewed and commented on a draft of the final report. A Sub-Committee was struck to prepare the final draft between the fourth and fifth meetings. A second sub-committee took on the task of recommending a strategy for monitoring followup to the recommendations.

**Fifth Meeting**
The final draft was presented to the Task Force. The report was approved for presentation to the Health and Social Services Committee of Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Council and the Finance and Administration Committee of Hamilton City Council.

Roomers and Boarders Task Force
6.0 Executive Summary

This Roomers and Boarder Task Force was created in 1993, in response to a request from the Roomers and Boarders Committee. The Roomers and Boarders Committee presented several issues of concern, and asked they be dealt with by a Task Force. The Task Force held its inaugural meeting in December 1993 and worked to produce this report in early 1994.

The Task Force adopted the following Terms of Reference:

Goal
To ensure the safety, security and health of people living in rooming/lodging houses.

Principles
1. Priority be devoted to tasks which are within the power of the Task Force to accomplish, (rather than those which rely on changes to provincial legislation).
2. Sub groups of the Task Force should meet to look at specific issues and prepare recommendations for the full Task Force to review. Sub groups should include some Task Force Members not familiar with the issues, so they can learn more about them. They may also raise questions which put a different light on the issue, thus helping in resolving issues.
3. Recommendations from the Task Force will have the support of all members.

Definitions
One of the challenges which faced the Task Force was deciding which Definition of a Rooming/Lodging House should be used in preparing its recommendations. The City of Hamilton licences just over 50 lodging houses. The Fire Department inspects over 100 rooming/lodging houses for Fire Code violations. The Housing Help Centre has over 100 addresses in its data base of rooms. On average licensed lodging houses are larger and have lower rent than unregulated houses. More than half of the rooming, boarding and lodging houses inspected by the Fire Department do not fit the definition of a lodging house used by the City Building Department or Licensing Division. Because of these differences in definition, it could be quite common for tenants to have the impression the standards were being enforced unevenly. The Task Force decided to recommend local measures which would bring more consistency in definition.

Inspections and Standards
At one time, Lodging houses were inspected annually by the Fire and Building Departments. This changed in 1978, when inspections by the Building Department were done only in response to a request or complaint. The Fire Department continued and continues to do annual inspections of lodging and rooming houses. Since this change, the Inspectors have received very few complaints from tenants living in Rooming/Lodging houses. Landlords might also find it easier to negotiate insurance if their buildings were inspected regularly. Because of this situation The Task Force supports the annual report which address the need for annual inspections.
Social Supports
The Task Force recognizes the health and well-being of Tenants in Rooming/Lodging houses depends on a number of factors. Housing quality and safety are important. Social networks and basic life skills are also important. The Task Force made recommendations to further improve the services which are available in the community.

Rights and Advocacy
Tenants and Landlords of Rooming/Lodging houses enjoy the rights and responsibilities of the Landlord Tenant Act. Legal rents may also be established through the Rent Registry. Strategies to educate rooming/lodging house tenants and landlords need to be targeted to increase the chances of being effective.
Appendix A

Explanation of "Housekeeping" Recommendations
Explanation of "Housekeeping" Recommendations

3. That Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 28 be reviewed and eliminate duplication with other local by-laws.

Licencing By-law 93-069, Schedule 28, sets out the interpretation, licencing requirements, miscellaneous requirements and the conditions for inspection of lodging houses in the City of Hamilton. Some of the miscellaneous requirements, such as room size, are specified in the Ontario Building Code, and is thus unnecessary in Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 28.

4. That Licencing By-Law 93-069, Schedule 28, section 2(j) be revised to remove references to sex and age.

It is the Task Force’s understanding that collection of information about age and gender is a violation of Human Rights. To be consistent with the provincial code, owners of lodging houses should not be required to collect this information.

5. That the Health By-Law 4798 be repealed and the re-written Health By-Law be implemented.

Health By-Law 4798 directs the Health Department to inspect Rooming Houses. It was drafted many years ago. Since it was passed, some provisions have been eclipsed by other legislation. Recognizing this, this by-law was revised by City of Hamilton staff, at the direction of City Council. It is the Task Force’s understanding the revised by-law has not been passed. This recommendation supports passage of the revised by-law.
Appendix B

Pamphlet for Distribution to Rooming House Tenants
### Task Force Recommendation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comprehensive Definition:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Change the definition of Lodging House in the Licensing By-law 93-069 and Zoning By-Law 6593 to conform with the Ontario Fire Code definition of Lodging, Boarding and Rooming Houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Owners of unregulated houses be required to apply for a license, once the definition is changed, if they qualify as lodging houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Licensing By-Law 93-069 be reviewed and eliminate duplication with other local by-laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Licensing By-Law 93-069 be revised to remove references to sex and age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Health By-Law 4798 be repealed and the re-written Health By-Law be implemented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation - Regional &amp; City Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. While a new licensing By-law 01-156 and a new zoning By-law 05-200 were enacted, inconsistent definitions of what constitutes a lodging or rooming house continues to exist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Enactment of By-law 01-156 required that unregulated or unlicensed lodging house owners were required to obtain a license.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Following amalgamation, by-laws were harmonized to eliminate duplication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. By-law 01-156 which replaced licensing By-law 93-069 does not contain references to sex or age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Health By-Law 4798 was not repealed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Inconsistencies remain between lodging or rooming house definitions as found in licensing By-law 01-156, Zoning By-law 05-200 and the Ontario Fire Code.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Owners of lodging houses as defined in By-law 01-156 are required to obtain a license.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Licensing By-law 01-156 and property standards By-law 03-117 address lodging home issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. City Of Hamilton by-laws use gender and age neutral language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Public Health Inspectors use the Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA) to inspect premises used or intended for use as a lodging house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Recommendation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Inspections:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The Licensing Division maintains the licensing of lodging homes – licensing renewals should be spread evenly throughout the year, with inspections occurring at the time of renewal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Fire, Health and Building Depts. should send reports, as requested by the Licensing Division prior to license issuance and upon renewal. Inspections leading to the reports should be conducted evenly throughout the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Resources should be allocated or increased to permit annual inspections by the Licensing and Health Depts. These inspections should be conducted evenly throughout the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Licensing By-Law 93-069 be revised to require owners – operators of a lodging house to obtain a Certificate of Compliance from the Building Dept., pursuant to the Property Standards By-Law 74-74,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Recommendation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commencing in 1995, upon first renewal for those with an existing license, when a new license is issued, when a license is transferred and every third anniversary thereafter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The license fee should be increased to $250 to offset some of the cost of annual inspections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. A list of emergency numbers (fire, health, building inspections) be posted by the owner-operator of the lodging/rooming house with the license</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. All operators must attend a training session before a license is issued (first renewal, new applications and transfer of licenses). The penalty for not attending would result in a delay of license renewal and may result in a show-cause hearing before the Licensing Committee. As part of the training sessions, an information package must be provided to Landlords by the Licensing Division. There will be financial implications in conducting the training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Recommendation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The Licensing Division will co-ordinate the first training session with the Health, Social Services, Building and Fire departments. Subsequent sessions are to be carried out by the latter four. Community agencies should be invited to participate in the planning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Revise By-Law 93-069 to require the landlord to provide each Lodging House Tenant with a lockable personal mailbox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Revise By-Law 93-069 to ensure all proper identification is posted for the Tenants’ use by sending a letter from the Licensing Division to all Licensed Lodging homes and doing follow-up inspections.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Social Supports:**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16. Exploration, by the Housing Help Centre, of a rating system for posted listings of Rooming/Lodging houses as an aid to residents and discharge</td>
<td>16. The Housing Help Centre initiated discussion about development of a rating tool to assist agency discharge planners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Recommendation</td>
<td>Implementation - Regional &amp; City Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>planners. To be effective, this listing would need to be circulated and updated on a regular basis.</td>
<td>17. Staff from various community agencies met for approximately one year to discuss ways to address service barriers faced by roomers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Staff from various community agencies meets to look at how their procedures may create barriers to services for people who live in Rooming/Lodging house. This could be organized by the Dept of Social Services</td>
<td>18. For approximately one year following the release of the Task Force Report, several community agency meetings took place to focus on issues facing those being discharged from shelters, hospitals, correctional facilities and rehabilitation centres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Staff from various community agencies meets with staff from area correctional facilities and the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital to discuss discharge planning as it affects the rooming house community, particularly the three-month follow-up period.</td>
<td>19. Staff from various community agencies met for approximately one year to discuss rooming/lodging house issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Hold in-service meeting of front line MCSS, health, social service and inspections staff. The purpose of the meeting should be to: ○ share information about the role and responsibilities of each in the safety, security and health of people living in Rooming/Lodging houses ○ develop and implement strategies for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Recommendation</td>
<td>Implementation - Regional &amp; City Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>collaboration between workers, and should be planned in conjunction with Recommendation 22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Distribute the Continuing Legal Education pamphlet on Roomers and Boarders rights with an insert listing contacts for service to rooming house tenants</td>
<td>20. An information forum, hosted by the City and Region took place following the release of the Task Force Report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. The Tenant's Rights pamphlet and insert be made available in places where rooming/lodging house tenants meet and to people who work with rooming/lodging house tenants</td>
<td>21. Information issued to landlords included legislative requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. An information forum to take place for service providers who are likely to be working with tenants in rooming/lodging houses.</td>
<td>22. An information forum, hosted by the City and Region took place following the release of the Task Force Report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Information to be communicated with landlords to include an advisory that rooming/lodging houses are subject to Provincial and Municipal legislation.</td>
<td>23. Information issued to landlords included legislative requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Recommendation</td>
<td>Implementation - Regional &amp; City Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. A synopsis of the legislation be prepared for distribution to licensed landlords at landlord training session and/or at time of licensing or license renewal</td>
<td>24. An information package was given to each owner/landlord at the initial training session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Investigate the Federal Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) as a source of funding to landlords who need to bring their rooming/lodging houses up to standard</td>
<td>25. The possibility of utilizing RRAP for landlords was investigated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Implementation:

26. The Department of Social Services is requested to apply for funding from the Canada Department of Employment and Immigration to hire a staff person for one year to co-ordinate all affected City/Regional Departments and Divisions.

27. An Implementation Sub-Committee to be formed for one year.

26. Although a full-time staff person was not hired specifically to coordinate the implementation activities, a Regional staff person was dedicated to facilitate and guide the sub-committee as they addressed the report recommendations.

27. Subsequent to the release of the Roomers and Boarders Task Force

26. Currently, a staff compliment does not exist to deal specifically with rooming/lodging house issues.

27. The Implementation Sub-Committee no longer exists. The
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Force Recommendation</th>
<th>Implementation - Regional &amp; City Response</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The purpose of the group would be to follow-up on the activities of the City/Region Staff by receiving feedback from stakeholders; oversee implementation of recommendations and co-ordination of services</td>
<td>Report, an Implementation Sub-Committee was active for approximately one year.</td>
<td>original recommendation was for it to only function for one year following the release of the Task Force Report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Upon completion of the Implementation Sub-Committee term, a Roomers and Boarders Advisory Committee be formed to report to the Health and Social Services Committee. The Advisory Committee would continue to monitor the implementation of the Task Force recommendations.</td>
<td>28. The Roomers and Boarders Committee did not act in an advisory capacity to City Council.</td>
<td>28. While the Implementation Sub-Committee is no longer active, a community-led group, the Roomers and Boarders Committee continues to meet. The present Roomers and Boarders Committee is a coalition of rooming house tenants, housing advocates and legal representatives. It does not have official City Advisory Committee Status and does not report to council. Currently, there are two advisory citizen committees, Tenant Advisory and Food, Shelter and Housing, reporting to Council through the Social and Public Health Services Committee. While these committees deal with issues relating to affordable housing and tenant issues, generally, they do not focus exclusively on rooming house issues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Comprehensive Definition:

1. Change the definition of Lodging House in the Licensing By-law 93-069 and Zoning By-Law 6593 to conform with the Ontario Fire Code definition of Lodging, Boarding and Rooming Houses

2. Owners of unregulated houses be required to apply for a license, once the definition is changed, if they qualify as lodging houses

3. Licensing By-Law 93-069 be reviewed and eliminate duplication with other local by-laws

4. Licensing By-Law 93-069 be revised to remove references to sex and age

5. Health By-Law 4798 be repealed and the re-written Health By-Law be implemented

### Implementation - Regional & City Response

1. While a new licensing By-law 01-156 and a new zoning By-law 05-200 were enacted, inconsistent definitions of what constitutes a lodging or rooming house continues to exist

2. Enactment of By-law 01-156 required that unregulated or unlicensed lodging house owners were required to obtain a license.

3. Following amalgamation, by-laws were harmonized to eliminate duplication.

4. By-law 01-156 which replaced licensing By-law 93-069 does not contain references to sex or age.

5. Health By-Law 4798 was not repealed.

### Current Status

1. Inconsistencies remain between lodging or rooming house definitions as found in licensing By-law 01-156, Zoning By-law 05-200 and the Ontario Fire Code.

2. Owners of lodging houses as defined in By-law 01-156 are required to obtain a license.

3. Licensing By-law 01-156 and property standards By-law 03-117 address lodging home issues.

4. City Of Hamilton by-laws use gender and age neutral language

5. Public Health Inspectors use the Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA) to inspect premises used or intended for use as a lodging house.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Force Recommendation</th>
<th>Implementation - Regional &amp; City Response</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Inspections:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The Licensing Division maintains the licensing of lodging homes – licensing renewals should be spread evenly throughout the year, with inspections occurring at the time of renewal.</td>
<td>6. The Building and Licensing Division, Planning and Economic Department maintained the licensing of lodging homes. Renewal time frames changed following the release of the Task Force Report.</td>
<td>6. Renewals and inspections are spread out throughout the year as licenses expire on the anniversary date of application, not year end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Fire, Health and Building Depts. should send reports, as requested by the Licensing Division prior to license issuance and upon renewal. Inspections leading to the reports should be conducted evenly throughout the year.</td>
<td>7. A reciprocal agreement between City departments regarding inspection reports was implemented.</td>
<td>7. There is a reciprocal agreement between City departments regarding inspection reports. Building and Licensing reviews all reports before issuing a Certificate of Compliance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Resources should be allocated or increased to permit annual inspections by the Licensing and Health Depts. These inspections should be conducted evenly throughout the year.</td>
<td>8. No new resources were allocated to dedicate staff solely to rooming house inspections as a result of the 1994 Task Force Report.</td>
<td>8. Inspections are carried out as part of the Building and Licensing Division, Health Protection Branch and Fire Department mandate. Staff compliment are part of each department budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Licensing By-Law 93-069 be revised to require owners – operators of a lodging house to obtain a Certificate of Compliance from the Building Dept., pursuant to the Property Standards By-Law 74-74,</td>
<td>9. The Certificate of Compliance requirement was incorporated into property standards By-law 03-117</td>
<td>9. Under current licensing requirements, operators must have a property standards inspection completed prior to obtaining an initial license, upon renewal of that license every three years, and upon any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Recommendation</td>
<td>Implementation - Regional &amp; City Response</td>
<td>Current Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commencing in 1995, upon first renewal for those with an existing license, when a new license is issued, when a license is transferred and every third anniversary thereafter.</td>
<td>10. The license fee was not increased to $250.</td>
<td>10. Annual license fee = $135. Annual health &amp; fire inspection fees = $90 and $120, respectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The license fee should be increased to $250 to offset some of the cost of annual inspections</td>
<td>11. Along with the license certificate, owners-operators are required under By-law 01-156 to post emergency telephone numbers.</td>
<td>11. Along with the license certificate, owners-operators are required under By-law 01-156 to post emergency telephone numbers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. A list of emergency numbers (fire, health, building inspections) be posted by the owner-operator of the lodging/rooming house with the license</td>
<td>12. Mandatory training sessions for owner-operators of lodging homes was incorporated into By-law 01-156.</td>
<td>12. Under by-law 01-156, persons applying for a license must attend a training session conducted by or on behalf of the City, prior to license issuance. Due to the low number of lodging/rooming house applications, training sessions have not happened since 1994-1995. Building and Licensing staff answer questions from owners on an ad-hoc basis. Fire Department, Health Protection Branch, Building and Licensing Department staff are developing a safety manual for owners, tenants and agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. All operators must attend a training session before a license is issued (first renewal, new applications and transfer of licenses). The penalty for not attending would result in a delay of license renewal and may result in a show-cause hearing before the Licensing Committee. As part of the training sessions, an information package must be provided to Landlords by the Licensing Division. There will be financial implications in conducting the training.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Recommendation</td>
<td>Implementation - Regional &amp; City Response</td>
<td>Current Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The Licensing Division will co-ordinate the first training session with the Health, Social Services, Building and Fire departments. Subsequent sessions are to be carried out by the latter four. Community agencies should be invited to participate in the planning process.</td>
<td>13. Following the release of the Task Force Report, the Building and Licensing Division co-ordinated a training session in conjunction with community partners. Approximately 30-40 owners and landlords attended the session.</td>
<td>13. see 12 above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Revise By-Law 93-069 to require the landlord to provide each Lodging House Tenant with a lockable personal mailbox</td>
<td>14. The requirement of lockable mailboxes for every tenant was written into the revised By-law 01-156</td>
<td>14. Schedule 9 of By-law 01-156 indicates that individual lockable mailboxes are required for every tenant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Revise By-Law 93-069 to ensure all proper identification is posted for the Tenants’ use by sending a letter from the Licensing Division to all Licensed Lodging homes and doing follow-up inspections.</td>
<td>15. The By-law was changed to 01-156 which requires owner-operators to post the license certificate as well as his or her name, address and telephone number and the name, address, phone number of the employee or agent in charge of the premises.</td>
<td>15. Along with the license certificate, owners-operators are required under By-law 01-156 to post his or her name, address and telephone number and the name, address, phone number of the employee or agent in charge of the premises.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social Supports:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Force Recommendation</th>
<th>Implementation - Regional &amp; City Response</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16. Exploration, by the Housing Help Centre, of a rating system for posted listings of Rooming/Lodging houses as an aid to residents and discharge</td>
<td>16. The Housing Help Centre initiated discussion about development of a rating tool to assist agency discharge planners.</td>
<td>16. A rating system has not been developed or implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Recommendation</td>
<td>Implementation - Regional &amp; City Response</td>
<td>Current Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>planners. To be effective, this listing would need to be circulated and updated on a regular basis.</td>
<td>17. Staff from various community agencies met for approximately one year to discuss ways to address service barriers faced by roomers.</td>
<td>17. While the sub-committee is no longer active, a community-led group, the Roomers and Boarders Committee continues to meet regularly. City staff are not members of this committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Staff from various community agencies meets to look at how their procedures may create barriers to services for people who live in Rooming/Lodging house. This could be organized by the Dept of Social Services</td>
<td>18. For approximately one year following the release of the Task Force Report, several community agency meetings took place to focus on issues facing those being discharged from shelters, hospitals, correctional facilities and rehabilitation centres.</td>
<td>18. The City’s Community Programs Division, Mental Health/Outreach Services involvement with the Hospital-Shelters working group is an example of the collaboration and co-ordination between community agencies assisting vulnerable populations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Staff from various community agencies meets with staff from area correctional facilities and the Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital to discuss discharge planning as it affects the rooming house community, particularly the three-month follow-up period.</td>
<td>19. Staff from various community agencies met for approximately one year to discuss rooming/lodging house issues.</td>
<td>19. Currently, there are no planned in-service meetings for front line health, social service and inspections staff to deal specifically with roomer issues. However, Fire Department, Health Protection Branch, Building and Licensing Department staff are developing a safety manual for owners, tenants and agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Recommendation</td>
<td>Implementation - Regional &amp; City Response</td>
<td>Current Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>collaboration between workers, and should be planned in conjunction with Recommendation 22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Education:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Distribute the Continuing Legal Education pamphlet on Roomers and Boarders rights with an insert listing contacts for service to rooming house tenants.</td>
<td>20. The Tenants Rights pamphlet which included service contacts was developed by the Roomers &amp; Boarders Committee, local legal clinics and the Housing Help Centre.</td>
<td>20. The Tenants Rights pamphlet is still utilized. Housing Help Centre (HHC) staff periodically updates the pamphlets when new information is available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. The Tenant’s Rights pamphlet and insert be made available in places where rooming/lodging house tenants meet and to people who work with rooming/lodging house tenants</td>
<td>21. Tenant Rights Pamphlets were made available at the Housing Help Centre and distributed by HHC staff to tenants and landlords.</td>
<td>21. Tenant Rights Pamphlets are available at the Housing Help Centre (HHC) as well as local legal clinics. HHC staff distributes pamphlets to tenants and landlords.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. An information forum to take place for service providers who are likely to be working with tenants in rooming/lodging houses.</td>
<td>22. An information forum, hosted by the City and Region took place following the release of the Task Force Report.</td>
<td>22. A service provider forum is not planned but Health Protection, Building and Licensing and Fire Department staff are developing a safety manual for owners, tenants and agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Information to be communicated with landlords to include an advisory that rooming/lodging houses are subject to Provincial and Municipal legislation.</td>
<td>23. Information issued to landlords included legislative requirements.</td>
<td>23. A copy of licensing By-Law 01-156 is given to owners/landlords at the time of application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Recommendation</td>
<td>Implementation - Regional &amp; City Response</td>
<td>Current Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. A synopsis of the legislation be prepared for distribution to licensed landlords at landlord training session and/or at time of licensing or license renewal</td>
<td>24. An information package was given to each owner/landlord at the initial training session</td>
<td>24. Staff from the Health Protection, Building and Licensing and Fire Departments are working together to develop a safety manual for owners, tenants and social service agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Investigate the Federal Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) as a source of funding to landlords who need to bring their rooming/lodging houses up to standard</td>
<td>25. The possibility of utilizing RRAP for landlords was investigated.</td>
<td>25. The City delivers the federal RRAP program funded by Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to assist rooming house owners-operators who wish to renovate their properties. RRAP-Rental expenditures for 2004 was $490,604.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Implementation:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26. The Department of Social Services is requested to apply for funding from the Canada Department of Employment and Immigration to hire a staff person for one year to co-ordinate all affected City/Regional Departments and Divisions.</td>
<td>26. Currently, a staff compliment does not exist to deal specifically with rooming/lodging house issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. An Implementation Sub-Committee to be formed for one year.</td>
<td>27. The Implementation Sub-Committee no longer exists. The</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Recommendation</td>
<td>Implementation - Regional &amp; City Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The purpose of the group would be to follow-up on the activities of the City/Region Staff by receiving feedback from stakeholders; oversee implementation of recommendations and co-ordination of services.</td>
<td>Report, an Implementation Sub-Committee was active for approximately one year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Upon completion of the Implementation Sub-Committee term, a Roomers and Boarders Advisory Committee be formed to report to the Health and Social Services Committee. The Advisory Committee would continue to monitor the implementation of the Task Force recommendations.</td>
<td>28. The Roomers and Boarders Committee did not act in an advisory capacity to City Council.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>