

To the members of the Board of Directors

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FECHIMM's Executive Director **MARCEL PEDNEAULT WILL SUCCEED FRANCINE NÉMÉH**

FECHIMM's Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Marcel Pedneault as Executive Director. His solid experience in the local community and his rallying and mobilizing qualities caught the attention of the selection committee.

Marcel Pedneault has led the LaSalle-Lachine CDEC for nine years during which he was able to implement several social economy innovative projects. Among others, he took part in the Regroupement de Lachine which brings together under one roof seven local support organizations.

Founding member of the LaSalle-Lachine Community Housing NPO, an organization that aims at developing housing mainly for people with low and modest incomes, Marcel Pedneault also actively participated in other projects related to housing and cooperation. In recent years, he also acted as executive director of Forma'PME, a mutual training organization of Eastern Montreal (la mutuelle de formation de l'est de Montréal, Forma'PME).

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Season's Greetings

OUR BEST WISHES



FECHIMM's Board of Directors, management and staff offer you their best wishes for this holiday season.

We hope that 2016 will be a year of justice, peace and great collective achievements. Let's also wish for a year where everyone will find a decent roof and where the reduction of inequality, discrimination, and poverty will be a priority for our society and our governments.



**Please note that our offices will be closed
from December 24, 2015 to January 4, 2016 inclusively.**



ACCÈS LOGIS APPEAL FOR REINVESTING IN COMMUNITY HOUSING



The Association des groupes de ressources techniques du Québec (AGRTO), several organizations working in the housing sector, among which FECHIMM, and many municipalities have co-signed a letter asking the Québec government to reinvest in community housing.

Deploring the 50% cut of the amount allocated to the development of social and community housing through AccèsLogis in the last provincial budget, the co-signers of the letter feel that Québec should rather consider community housing as a priority.

The group gathered around the AGRTO wants to be granted a budget for developing at least 3,000 new housing units per year on a recurring basis. The authors of the letter believe this measure to be unavoidable in order to adequately meet the needs of households with low and modest income and help reduce poverty and social exclusion.

AGRTO recalls that the need for affordable quality housing for citizens with low and modest income is extremely important and present throughout Québec. According to the National Household Survey conducted by Statistics Canada in 2011, 479,750 Québec tenant households spend more than 30% of their income for housing.

Almost half of these households allocate more than 50% of their income on housing, a situation that is forcing some tenants to go without meeting their basic needs, including food.

Review of Montreal inclusion strategy A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, BUT MANY OBSTACLES REMAIN



FECHIMM welcomes the City of Montreal's review of its inclusion strategy, which aims at promoting the development of social and community housing. FECHIMM hopes that this example will inspire other municipalities in the Metropolitan Area.

FECHIMM particularly welcomes the decision to bring back the threshold for a residential project to be submitted to the inclusion strategy from 200 to 100 housing units as well as the proposed increase in the financial contribution to the contribution Fund, when it is neither desirable nor appropriate to include nearby onsite or offsite social and community housing.

"For a long time already, the social and community housing sector demands that the strategy be more binding, and we now see that the City of Montreal is going in this direction. However, the strategy is still not mandatory, and a contractor may well refuse to comply," says the executive director of the Federation, Francine Néméh.

According to Luc Brisebois, FECHIMM's president, social housing still trails behind the private sector. "Because the private sector has more resources at its disposal, especially financially, and does not face the same bureaucratic constraints as social housing, it is much easier for it to get hold of the few sites available to develop residential projects," he adds. "That is why the Federation insists that all the municipalities in its territory adopt a housing policy including, among other things, the creation of land trusts dedicated to the development of social and community housing.

MARCEL PEDNEAULT WILL SUCCEED FRANCINE NÉMÉH

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FECHIMM's new Executive Director holds a master's degree in social sciences and humanities from the Sherbrooke University. He also has recognized expertise in administration and organizational management, strategic planning, and development of financing strategies.

Marcel Pedneault will start his new position on January 13, 2016, and will benefit from the support of his predecessor, Francine Néméh, who will accompany him for a three week transitional period.

Francine Néméh's leaving is in no way related to differences regarding FECHIMM's positions and orientations. Her decision not to renew her contract was announced last summer, and is motivated by her desire to take on less responsibilities for the last years of her professional life and devote more time to her family.

2015 Education Seminar SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION



On November 20 and 21, nearly 200 co-operators took part in FECHIMM's 2015 Education Seminar. Under the theme "COOPERATIVE VALUES: TO BETTER DECIDE AND MANAGE OUR LIVING ENVIRONMENTS", the seminar was an opportunity to put forward the co-operative difference in housing and discuss ways of managing our cooperatives.

At the seminar opening, guest panelists and the facilitator, Mr. Gérald Larose, reflected on the role of housing co-operatives in a changing world, particularly in terms of sustainable development in view of the need for a lifestyle that reduces CO2 consumption.

With six workshops on the Saturday program, co-operators and other participants were also able to better understand the functioning of a housing co-operative, its bodies, and the principles that guide the management of a such an organization. The procedure for existing projects to develop new phases was also discussed. Comments from participants at the end of the event are mostly very positive, although many would have liked more time to explore the issues and some would have wanted to limit the number of participants per workshop.

The Seminar provided an opportunity for FECHIMM to deepen its collaboration with the resource groups (RG's), the other actors in the social and community housing. Representatives from Atelier Habitation Montréal, Bâtir son Quartier, Groupe CDH, Réseau 2000+ and ROMEL have collaborated in the preparation and delivery of the workshops.

Participants who could not attend this free event can make it up with training credits which provide substantial discounts on registration for workshops given at the Federation throughout the year. The new workshop program for the 2016 winter season, which includes certain issues addressed during the seminar, can be found as an Appendix to this newsletter. It is also available on fechimm.coop where members of housing co-operatives can register.

Replacing the Rent geared to income (RGI) subsidies QUÉBEC SPECIFIES THE TERMS OF THE TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO LOW-INCOME TENANTS



Last November 4, the Québec government adopted a decree which specifies the terms of the assistance that will be given to housing co-operatives and other organizations at the end of their operating agreement with CMHC in order to help households who lose their RGI subsidy to continue to pay a rent calculated according to their income.

As announced in the budget last spring, the provisional Support Program for housing organizations targets organizations which operating agreement with CMHC ended after March 31, 2015, and which granted rent geared to income subsidies (RGI's) during the year preceding the application.

The decree, published in the Gazette officielle du Québec of November 25, provides that the amount of financial assistance will correspond to 75% of the amount of RGI that a co-operative paid for the last full year for which it received funding from CMHC. As in the case of the RGI, it will be up to the co-operative to distribute the financial assistance received to eligible households.

According to the decree, housing co-operatives and other organizations eligible for financial assistance should submit their applications on the form prescribed by the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ) and forward it with all the required supporting documents. SHQ may require any additional supporting documentation it deems necessary for the application.

FECHIMM invites all eligible co-operatives and those that have already submitted a preliminary application for a temporary replacement of RGI subsidies to promptly contact SHQ's customer service if they need more information.

The financial assistance provided under this program will expire March 31, 2017, or at an earlier date if the \$6 million planned budget is exhausted.

Landlords new obligation Your cooperative must produce a RL-31 slip for all its tenants



All building owners who rented housing units for which rent was paid in 2015 will be required to provide a RL-31 slip to their tenants.

This RL-31 slip will provide tenants or subtenants information needed to claim the solidarity tax credit. The RL-31 slip must be sent, at the latest on February 29, 2016, to Revenu Québec and the tenant or sub-tenant registered on the lease of each dwelling on December 31, 2015.

To complete and submit the this RL-31 slip, your cooperative may use the online service Prepare the RL-31 slip on the Revenu Québec website on or after January 5, 2016, or it may use a software authorized by Revenu Québec for the production of RL-31.

For more information, consult the Guide to Filing the RL-31 Slip Information about a Leased Dwelling.

Solidarity partnership FECHIMM goes into partnership with Les Accorderies



FECHIMM entered into a solidarity partnership agreement with Les Accorderies in the Montréal area. With this agreement, FECHIMM agrees to promote the Accorderie concept with the tenant-members of its member housing co-operatives.

Les Accorderies' mission is to fight against poverty and social exclusion by strengthening solidarity among people of different age, gender, culture, and income. It offers its members to take part in an alternative economic system based on the creation of a new form of solidarity and collective wealth based mainly on the potential of the community members.

FECHIMM encourages the member-tenants of housing co-operatives to join this network which allows its members to develop, through the exchange of services and co-operation, the conditions for a real improvement in the quality of their lives.

There are three Accorderies in FECHIMM's territory. They are located in the Mercier - Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, Montreal-Nord, and Rosemont (underway) boroughs.

For more information, go to accorderie.ca.

Universal accessibility PHASE 2 OF THE ACTION PLAN IS BEING DRAWN UP



Following the completion of a Resource Guide on universal accessibility in 2015, it was decided to plan a phase 2 to this Action Plan to further promote universal accessibility in the co-operative housing sector, by facilitating the link between supply and demand for suitable housing.

First, FECHIMM wishes to conduct a survey of its member housing co-operatives in order to obtain a more comprehensive description of the available adapted, adaptable, and accessible housing units, and share the results with all co-operatives.

Improving the Guide by adding a more extended definition of universal accessibility, the rules of construction without obstacles, an appendix of possible typologies and the recommendations of housing co-operatives is also planned.

In 2016, FECHIMM also plans on offering an awareness workshop for its staff, the technical resource groups, and the groups of advisers at the SHQ.

In order to acquire the financial means to realize this plan, FECHIMM submitted an application for funding to the SHQ Programme d'aide aux organismes communautaires (PAOC) "one-off projects" section.

Sale of the of the Montreal Children's Hospital THE COMMUNITY WANTS TO BE HEARD

After the announcement of the sale of the Montreal Children's Hospital site to the Luc Poirier Investment firm, Peter McGill's housing and urban planning committee, which FECHIMM is part of, wishes to meet with the developer to better understand his intentions regarding the redevelopment of the site. The Committee also intends, during this meeting to provide information on its own planning vision for the site and express its enthusiasm in working with him as a key partner representing the interests of the community.

At Ville-Marie's borough council meeting on December 8, Denis Coderre, Montreal's mayor, confirmed his intention to include on the site components that can benefit the community, such as social housing, a significant green and recreational space, a community center, a cultural diffusion space and a French public library.

The committee also asked mayor Coderre to undertake consultations before the start of the project so that the community can be part of the site development process.

International Development FECHIMM INVESTS IN A WATER SUPPLY PROJECT FOR HOUSING CO-OPERATIVES IN KENYA



FECHIMM's Board of Directors agreed, at its meeting on December 5, to make a loan of \$ 10,000 to the Mark Goldblatt Water Fund. This fund, created this summer by Rooftops Canada and the National Co-operative Housing Union (NACHU) in Kenya provides loans to housing co-operatives who are members of NACHU in order to allow them to start local water supply and distribution businesses in areas where there is no municipal water system.

This five-year loan from FECHIMM to the fund administered by NACHU will pay 2% annual interest while contributing to the establishment of water distribution networks in Kenya.

For FECHIMM, this is a new investment in NACHU projects. In 2003 and 2006, FECHIMM took part in financing the construction projects of housing co-operatives in Kenya by loans totaling more

than \$ 35,000. This summer, the visit of NACHU representatives in Montréal helped strengthen ties between the two organizations

Rooftops Canada, the international development program for the co-operative housing sector and social housing in Canada will oversee the transfer of the funds from FECHIMM to NACHU.