



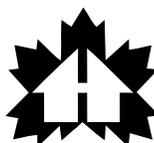
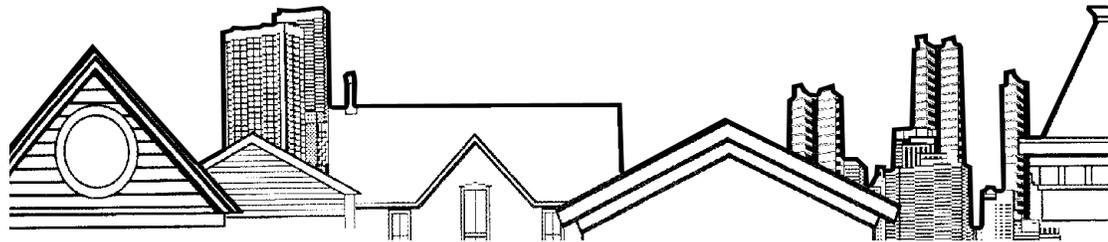
A

CT CASE STUDY

“TOGETHER INDEPENDENTLY”

A HOUSING CONCEPT TO AID THE COMMUNITY
INTEGRATION OF SENIORS AND DISABLED ADULTS

ACT - Affordability and Choice Today



Canadian
Home Builders'
Association

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HOME TO CANADIANS
Canada

AFFORDABILITY AND CHOICE TODAY (A•C•T) REGULATORY REFORM PROJECT

“Together Independently”

**A Housing Concept To Aid The Community Integration of Seniors
and Disabled Adults**

**Alphonse LeGresley, Principal
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Prepared for:

Federation of Canadian Municipalities
Canadian Home Builders' Association
Canadian Housing and Renewal Association
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

May 1999

Case study written by: **Word-Works Communications Services,
Kanata, Ontario**

This case study was funded by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation but the views expressed are the personal views of the authors and the Corporation accepts no responsibility for them.

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FOREWORD

The project documented in this case study received funding assistance under the Affordability and Choice Today (A•C•T) Program managed by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Canadian Home Builders' Association and the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association, together with the funding agency, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The A•C•T Program is administered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

A•C•T, which was launched in January 1990, was designed to foster changes to planning and building regulations and residential development approval procedures in order to improve housing affordability, choice and quality. In 1998, the A•C•T Program was recognized by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements as a “best practice” in improving the living environment.

Through A•C•T, grants are awarded to municipalities, private and non-profit builders and developers, planners and architects to undertake innovative regulatory reform initiatives in municipalities across Canada. Three types of projects are awarded grants under the A•C•T Program: Demonstration Projects, Streamlined Approval Projects, and Case Studies (of existing initiatives).

- *Demonstration Projects* involve the construction of innovative housing that demonstrates how modifications to planning and construction regulations can improve affordability, choice and quality.

- *Streamlined Approval Process Projects* involve the development of a method or an approach that reduces the time and effort needed to obtain approvals for housing projects.
- *Case Study grants* are awarded for the documentation of existing regulatory reform initiatives.

Change and innovation require the participation of all the players in the housing sector. A•C•T provides a unique opportunity for groups at the local level to work together to identify housing concerns, reach a consensus on potential solutions and implement action. Consequently, a key component of A•C•T-sponsored projects is the participation and cooperation of various players in the housing sector in all phases of each project, from development to realization.

All projects awarded a grant under the A•C•T Program are documented as case studies in order to share information on the initiatives and the benefits of regulatory reform with other Canadian communities. Each case study discusses the regulatory reform initiative, its goals and the lessons learned. Where appropriate, the cost savings resulting from modifications in various planning, development and construction regulations are calculated and reported.

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

In Shediac, N.B., Alphonse LeGresley conceived and built a unique house that addressed a genuine Canadian housing need. Unfortunately, the Moncton area civil engineer could not persuade anyone to live in his house. This report describes Mr. LeGresley's concept and suggests reasons why it did not succeed. Left unanswered is the question, "*Would it work elsewhere or under different circumstances?*"

The need Mr. LeGresley addressed is often expressed by advocacy groups for seniors and disabled persons. They say Canada needs more living arrangements that provide the limited support many seniors and disabled individuals need to live independently as part of their communities. Over a five-year period, Mr. LeGresley devoted countless hours and considerable personal capital to design and build a house that addressed this need.

Mr. LeGresley's concept, called "Together Independently", was a duplex-style dwelling in which the occupants of each half shared certain facilities but would otherwise live as if they occupied self-contained units. They would share a kitchen with two fridges, the metered electrical system, the water and sewer systems, the heating system, and could share a central vacuum system.

The clientele for whom he designed the house were seniors and disabled adults, able to live independently with someone nearby they could call on if they took sick or needed help with chores such as housework or shopping. Basically, his house would be occupied by a primary tenant/owner and another tenant

willing to act as a companion and helper to the primary occupant. They would share certain living costs, making this an economical arrangement for both.

The project proceeded in the three distinct phases. Mr. LeGresley explained his concept to groups representing seniors and the disabled, got their input and adjusted his design to accommodate needs. He explained his plan to municipal officials and obtained the single dwelling designation he sought because it was key to the project's economic viability. Then he secured financing and built the house.

Single family zoning status was of paramount importance. It would allow the house to be built anywhere, including single family neighbourhoods, which Mr. LeGresley judged would have the most appeal to his target clientele. There were also important cost savings attached to single family status. Unlike a duplex, the single family home needs only one hydro hook-up, just one sewer and water connection and does not require interior fire walls.

Mr. LeGresley succeeded in having local planning authorities bestow single family designation on his hybrid duplex design. The key to achieving compliance was the shared kitchen with a single stove.

In 1997, he built a model house in Shediac to demonstrate his concept. On December 5th that year, he held an open house that attracted considerable local media attention to the model. Subsequent to that event, he

advertised the house and promoted it directly to organizations interested in the needs of seniors and disabled persons. There was interest, but no one wanted to buy or rent the house. In late 1998, he decided to cut his losses and convert the dwelling to a true duplex. In early 1999, the make over was done and the two units were available for rent.

Why did Mr. LeGresley's dream implode? There are no definitive causes but, in retrospect, three shortcomings suggest possible reasons for its demise.

1. There was never an objective market analysis to determine the actual housing needs of seniors in the Shediac area or to measure the impact of competing alternatives, such as government-provided in-home support services to the elderly.
2. The need for tenant match-ups was another impediment. Each "Together Independently" unit required two people of compatible personality to live in a shared arrangement. In a small market, the number of people willing and available to enter such an arrangement was limited.
3. Limited financial and human resources was another obstacle to a possible successful outcome. Acting alone, A.L. Professional Services could not undertake the kind of media promotion in the Shediac and Moncton areas that might have aroused more interest in the concept and attracted more potential buyers or renters to the house.

Mr. LeGresley still has faith in his idea because he created "Together Independently" to fill a genuine housing need. He thinks it could succeed in a larger market, where the potential client base is larger. He also thinks his concept would probably gain single family status in other jurisdictions because all municipal building codes have much in common.

Whether "Together Independently" is a valid housing choice for seniors and disabled persons remains unknown. Certainly it did not seem to be an appealing option in Shediac, N.B. at the time it was built. Unless someone else revives Mr. LeGresley's dream, it will remain an intriguing possibility.

1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.1 Introduction

Things didn't work out as planned for Alphonse LeGresley, a civil engineer from the Moncton area of New Brunswick, but he still believes he was on to a good thing. He is convinced that "Together Independently", his unique response to a genuine housing need in Canada, could succeed under the right circumstances.

Although the outcome fell short of his expectations, Mr. LeGresley's project did, in fact, result in an innovative house design and the actual construction of a demonstration model. For that reason alone, this project is worthy of examination. Likewise are the reasons it came up short. Both failure and success can teach valuable lessons.

1.2 Project Incentive

The need Mr. LeGresley addressed is one frequently voiced by advocacy groups for seniors and disabled persons. They say the country needs more living arrangements that offer alternatives to costly and often unnecessary institutional-style care. Many seniors and disabled persons, they point out, are capable of living fairly independent lives as part of the community if there is some measure of support available to them.

Mr. LeGresley saw this requirement first hand in the early 1990s and this experience inspired "Together Independently".

"I had an aunt who didn't want to live alone in her home anymore because she felt insecure. As I thought about her situation, I came to realize there has to be a better solution for people like her than going into a senior citizen home. That can be quite expensive—the best ones cost a couple of thousand dollars a month. In the case of my aunt, she was still healthy and able to look after herself. All she wanted was someone near to help her feel more secure," he recalled.

Coincidental with these musings, Mr. LeGresley became aware of the A•C•T Program, that seeks, among other things, to stimulate innovative approaches to affordable housing. In a flash, he saw that a unique kind of house might answer the need of people like his aunt.

Although his aunt eventually moved to an apartment in a senior's complex, Mr. LeGresley pursued his idea. During the next five years, he devoted countless hours and expended personal capital to develop his concept, win acceptance for it, and build a demonstration house in the town of Shediac, N.B.

The only thing he could not do is persuade someone to live in the house, despite a year trying. The reasons for this outcome remain ambiguous. This study offers a retrospective from Mr. LeGresley that confirms his faith in the concept but concludes that a small market might not be the best locale for a project such as his.

1.3 Project Objectives

Mr. LeGresley's project was defined by a vision. He pictured a duplex-style house in which the occupants of each half shared certain facilities but otherwise lived as if they occupied self-contained units. They would share a kitchen, the metered electrical system, the water and sewer systems, the heating system, and possibly a central vacuum system. They would also split the costs of upkeep, snow removal and insurance.

Who was this house for? Mr. LeGresley saw his target market as individuals, particularly seniors, able to live independently but desiring someone nearby they could call on for help if they took sick or needed assistance with chores such as housework or shopping. He believed a house like this would also appeal to physically-disabled adults with requirements similar to seniors. Basically, his house would be occupied by a primary tenant/owner and another tenant willing to act as a companion and helper to the primary occupant. They would share certain living costs, making this an economical arrangement for both.

The shared features of his design would lower construction costs and Mr. LeGresley projected that these could be passed on as lower shelter costs. Each individual in this arrangement, he reckoned, would pay less than if each lived alone in a fully self-contained half of a duplex. He anticipated that this housing arrangement would appeal to persons on restricted incomes.

Once he defined his project, he had three objectives:

1. Win backing for the concept among seniors and support groups for the disabled.
2. Win the support of municipal planning and regulatory authorities.
3. Build the demonstration house. (He knew he needed a house in place so people would truly understand his concept and would appreciate how it would work in real life.)

Since Mr. LeGresley was on his own, with no partners or sponsors, he applied for an A•C•T grant to ease his financial load. He used these funds to pay out-of-pocket expenses for the preparation of plans drawings and a site survey; for presentations to interested groups; and for the open house.

1.4 Methodology

The project proceeded in the three distinct phases described in the objectives. Mr. LeGresley consulted with groups representing seniors and the disabled, got their input and adjusted his design. He explained his plan to municipal officials and obtained the single dwelling designation he sought because it was key to the project's economic viability. Then he secured financing and built the house.

1.4.1 Consultations

Before meeting with interest groups, Mr. LeGresley created two possible floor layouts for his concept and built a scale model of one of them. The scale model showed the basics of the concept – the living spaces that

included a common entry area, a common kitchen and, initially, a common bathroom.

The second layout option had separate bathrooms but its real purpose was to demonstrate the flexibility of the interior arrangements. Mr. LeGresley wanted his audiences to understand that the interior layout could be modified to accommodate the specific housing needs and preferences of potential occupants. He also hoped that a show of flexibility on his part would encourage his listeners to offer improvements he could incorporate into his design to enhance its market appeal.

Mr. LeGresley packaged his plans and model into a presentation that explained the rationale for the project and the potential social and economic advantages of such a house to both the primary occupant and the tenant. He presented his ideas to a pair of senior citizen groups, to an association working with disabled persons and he set up a display booth at a Shediac mall, during a week marking “Community Integration for the Handicapped”. (The feedback he received is described in the section “Community Needs and Involvement”.)

1.4.2 Regulatory Approval

Mr. LeGresley needed the official blessing of two regulatory agencies: the Beaubassin Planning Commission, which approves all development in the town of Shediac and surrounding area, and the Town of Shediac, which had to approve the plans for sewer and water hookups.

His initial negotiations with officials of the planning commission found them favourably disposed towards his concept even though they could find no dwelling definition in their by-laws to cover the type of hybrid duplex Mr. LeGresley had in mind. Eventually, they agreed that the proposed layout technically met their definition of a single family home. That was great news for Mr. LeGresley because he had deliberately designed his house with the single family designation in mind.

“It was always one of my major objectives to have a design that could be built anywhere. Disabled people and seniors don’t want to be isolated on the fringes of an urban area or in a commercial area. They want to be in a residential area where quite often they are closer to the services they prefer, like churches, clinics, recreational facilities and so on,” said Mr. LeGresley.

The Town of Shediac also agreed that his plan met the requirements of a single family home, although town authorities felt they would want to hold public meetings and have the concept explained to ratepayers before allowing any construction to proceed in single family neighbourhoods.

Mr. LeGresley desired the single family designation for two reasons:

1. It meant houses of this design could be built in single family neighbourhoods, a factor he thought would enhance their market appeal.
2. More important, though, was the impact on construction costs and the ultimate price of the house when compared to a duplex. The single family home needs only

one hydro hook-up and just one sewer connection. A duplex needs a separate connection for each of its halves. A duplex would also require a firewall between the two units; Mr. LeGresley's design did not.

What seems to have locked up the single family designation for Mr. LeGresley's plan was the inclusion of a shared kitchen with just one stove. Had there been two complete kitchens, each half of the "duplex" would have been seen as a self-contained dwelling unit and all the building code standards that apply to duplexes would have come into play.

As it turned out, Mr. LeGresley eventually built his "R1" designated demonstration house in a residential subdivision zone "R2", meaning either duplexes or single family homes could be built there. Mr. LeGresley's civil engineering business, A.L. Professional Services Ltd., already owned 50 lots in this subdivision, so his decision to build the demonstration house on one of those lots was based purely on cost.

This decision meant he only needed additional financing for the actual construction of the house, not for the land component, which was already financed separately. In due course, A.L. Professional Services obtained a conventional mortgage loan for about \$70,000 from Assumption Mutual Life and he proceeded to build the house, acting as his own contractor.

At Mr. LeGresley's request, the Town of Shediac passed a by-law in July 1996 that changed the zoning designation for the sites where Mr. LeGresley hoped to build several "Together Independently" homes. The original permitted use for the site under the existing R2 zoning was four units. The by-law amendment rated the sites R3, meaning 12 units could have been built.

2.0 RESULTS

Canada's first "Together Independently" house was built at 62 La Batture Street in Shediac, N.B. and opened with an official ceremony on Dec. 5, 1997. (See Community Needs and Involvement, section 3.) It took about eight weeks to build from site grading to open house. Since the site was dry and elevated, the house rested on an insulated slab-on-grade foundation. All other aspects of construction were similar to a typical single family bungalow. Mr. LeGresley did daily site inspections to ensure construction progressed exactly according to plan.

The finished house was available for sale or rent. Despite the publicity generated by the open house and some additional promotional measures, it sat empty for a year. People



Figure 1 : Exterior photo of Together Independently house.

came to look at it, but no one offered to move in. Finally, in late 1998, Mr. LeGresley reluctantly decided to abandon his dream. He could no longer afford to pay the mortgages, taxes and upkeep on the house without deriving income from it. In early 1999, he converted the house to a true duplex and put it up for rent. The interior layout, designed so the front-to-back centre line of the house mostly delineated the two living units, eased this conversion.

2.1 Some Thoughts on Why it Did Not Succeed

From early on, Mr. LeGresley felt he had a viable project. He saw the need of people like his aunt. He developed a concept to address that need. He discussed this concept with people who are advocates for seniors and disabled persons. They offered suggestions to improve his concept. He encountered nothing but enthusiasm and support for his idea right from the provincial government on



Figure 2 : Interior photo shows the kitchen with one stove, one sink and two refrigerators (on the right). Note the blind that could be pulled down from the ceiling to the counter top to create privacy for dining, if desired.

¹ See floor plan, Appendix A

down. At no time did he get the kind of negative feedback that would cause him to wonder if it would really work.

From the perspective of hindsight, we can see that there were problems.

1. There was never an objective market analysis. It would have determined the actual extent of the housing needs of seniors in the Shediac area and would have identified competing alternatives. Mr. LeGresley now understands that the advent of public programs, offering support to seniors so they can remain in their homes, provided direct competition to the “Together Independently” concept.
2. Mr. LeGresley’s wife Phyllis, the office manager of A. L. Professional Services who lived and breathed “Together Independently” almost as intensely as her husband, identified the need for tenant match-ups as another impediment to the successful execution of the concept. Each “Together Independently” unit required two people of compatible personality to live in a shared arrangement. Someone with a need had to link up with someone willing to fill that need.

In a small place like Shediac, the number of people willing and available to enter such an arrangement was limited. Mrs. LeGresley feels a project similar to “Together Independently” might work where the pool of potential clients was larger. Even in a larger market, she said, proponents of the concept might have to

set up something that operated similar to a dating service to bring prime occupants and tenants together and to screen them for compatibility and security purposes. The provision of a service such as this was way beyond the capacity of A. L. Professional Services.

3. Limited financial and human resources was another obstacle to a possible successful outcome. Acting alone, A. L. Professional Services could not undertake the kind of media promotion in the Shediac and Moncton areas that might have aroused more interest in the concept and attracted more potential buyers or renters to the house.

“It takes a lot of energy and money to sell anything new. We had the open house and later I put a few ads in the paper and contacted a few organizations. A few people came to see the house, but nobody made a move. My recommendation for a house like that is to build it where there is more population so you increase the odds of renting it or selling it. It would have taken an extra \$10,000 to do a proper selling job.

“The bottom line is I still believe in the concept and a lot of people who were involved believe in it, too. There is a need for it. Just look around at seniors. Once they leave their homes, what choices do they have? They can go to a place and live in a small room or they can go to some very expensive apartments. In my case, for less cost than a small room in a seniors home, they could live in a place a lot like their own home,” said Mr. LeGresley.

Ironically, the “Together Independently” concept might have been ahead of its time.

Gerard Belliveau, the recently-hired town manager of Shediac, points to the growing popularity of his community as a retirement destination. He said homes designed according to the principles advocated by Mr. LeGresley's might well have a place in the town's future housing mix as area builders address this growing retiree market.



Figure 3 : Bathroom doors built 36 inches (914.4 mm) wide could permit wheelchair access.



Figure 4 : A close-up view of the street entrance shows the privacy feature of a separate door into one of units. Facing this door, on the opposite side of the portico, is the door to the adjoining unit.

3.0 Community Needs and Involvement

3.1 The Need

Housing for seniors in the Shediac area is in good supply, according to both Ray Bourgeois, a vice-president of the N.B. Seniors' Federation, and Jean Rioux, portfolio manager with New Brunswick's department of Municipalities and Housing.

"It's pretty well-served. You never have as much as you would like but the situation is quite good," observed Mr. Bourgeois.

A complex in town that consists of a nursing home surrounded by several buildings containing retirement suites serves the needs of seniors capable of living on their own with limited assistance.

Despite the adequacy of this supply, Mr. Bourgeois thought "Together Independently" would find a market.

"I attended Alphonse's open house and liked his concept. I immediately thought of two sisters who would want to live together. They could share certain things but each would have her privacy," said Mr. Bourgeois.

As for disabled persons, Mr. LeGresley heard about the extent of their need while manning his display booth at the Shediac Mall during "Community Integration for the Handicapped" week. A social worker told him that there were more than 25 adults in the Shediac area alone who were looking for accommodation outside their parents' homes.

The social worker said there were no agencies offering support to disabled persons wishing to live independently and that many parents did not want their sons or daughters living in group homes for people with special needs.

3.2 Group Consultations

Although, Mr. LeGresley basically worked alone as he developed the "Together Independently" concept, he did make a concerted effort to win community backing for his project among groups with an interest in housing for seniors and disabled persons. He met with the Club d'Âge d'Or de Shediac and the Silver Sand Senior Citizens Club. He also consulted with the South-East Abilities Development Centre on the needs of disabled persons.

"At my meetings with the seniors groups, I saw that about 90 per cent of the people there did not understand it because it was new. And the 10 per cent who did understand it, brought some good suggestions that changed my approach," said Mr. LeGresley.

This lack of understanding confirmed, in his mind, the wisdom of his original decision to build a demonstration house so people could see the ideas applied in a real life setting. Advocates for disabled persons were also keen to see a real model home and assess the costs of renting or buying.

He recalled how the feedback from seniors altered his design:

“First of all, I was just planning to put in the one bathroom. But they told me, no, sometimes we need the bathroom in a hurry and it has to be available right then. And sometimes we stay there a long time. So I put two bathrooms into the design. I also had a standard kitchen but they said, ‘no, we want our own fridge, that’s very important to us’. So I put two fridges in the design.”

By the time he met with advocates for the disabled, his design incorporated the changes suggested by the seniors. The only additional suggestion he got, and accepted, was to ensure the living spaces in the unit for the primary occupant could accommodate someone in a wheelchair.

Although a common main entrance would have worked, he changed the design so each unit had its own. His feedback indicated this feature helped occupants feel more independent and satisfied their need for privacy. He also introduced a pull-down blind to the kitchen area that could be used as desired to create more privacy for dining.

3.3 Letters of Support

In addition to expressions of support from advocacy groups, Mr. LeGresley received written endorsement for his project from various public officials. On file, backing his application for an A•C•T grant, he has letters from the Town Manager and Mayor of Shediac, from the local manager of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and from the Minister, Municipalities, Culture and Housing for the Province of New Brunswick. Each letter offers encouragement

and points out the importance of developing innovative, affordable housing solutions that meet the needs of an area’s seniors and disabled persons.

3.4 Official Opening

The “Together Independently” official opening and open house on Dec. 5, 1997 was designed to attract local media exposure for the housing concept. Largely organized by Mrs. LeGresley, the event attracted representatives from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the New Brunswick Home Builders Association, the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association, the Beaubassin Planning Commission, the New Brunswick Senior Citizens’ Federation, and the Association for Community Living. All guests were sent formal invitations prior to the event.

About a week before the opening, Mrs. LeGresley issued an advisory to the local media alerting them to the unique nature of the “Together Independently” house and inviting them to attend the opening. On the day itself, she issued a ¹press release, which was distributed to local media and was available on site for media representatives. Her efforts were rewarded with a burst of publicity that included both print and electronic media reports.

¹ The guest invitation, the media advisory and the press release are reproduced in Appendix B.

4.0 REGULATORY REFORM INITIATIVES & IMPACT ON HOUSING COST, CHOICE AND QUALITY

4.1 Affordability

Affordable accommodation was a key feature of the “Together Independently” concept. Mr. LeGresley calculated that the savings in construction costs and the sharing of certain operating expenses for the house would deliver lower shelter costs to both the primary occupant and the tenant.

Based on the actual construction costs of the “Together Independently” prototype, a house of this type could be built in the Shediac market for about \$72,000, including a land component of \$15,000. Since his design met the single family house designation, Mr. LeGresley obtained reduced rates on water, sewer and other municipal services.

Operational expenses are hypothetical since the house was never occupied in the shared arrangement as originally conceived. Mr. LeGresley calculated the monthly savings per occupant, based on shared cable TV, electricity, telephone, water and sewer charges would be about \$47.00. In a year the savings would be about \$565.00 for each occupant. He cited snow removal, lawn maintenance and food preparation as other areas where the occupants could share expenses and reduce their costs. Mr. LeGresley figured he would have to charge each tenant rent of about \$450 a month to meet operating expenses, taxes and financing cost.

This rate compares favourably to other accommodation for seniors in Shediac. According to Ray Bourgeois of the N.B. Seniors Federation, monthly rents for suites in retirement buildings are in the \$480 range, utilities included.

4.2 Housing Choice

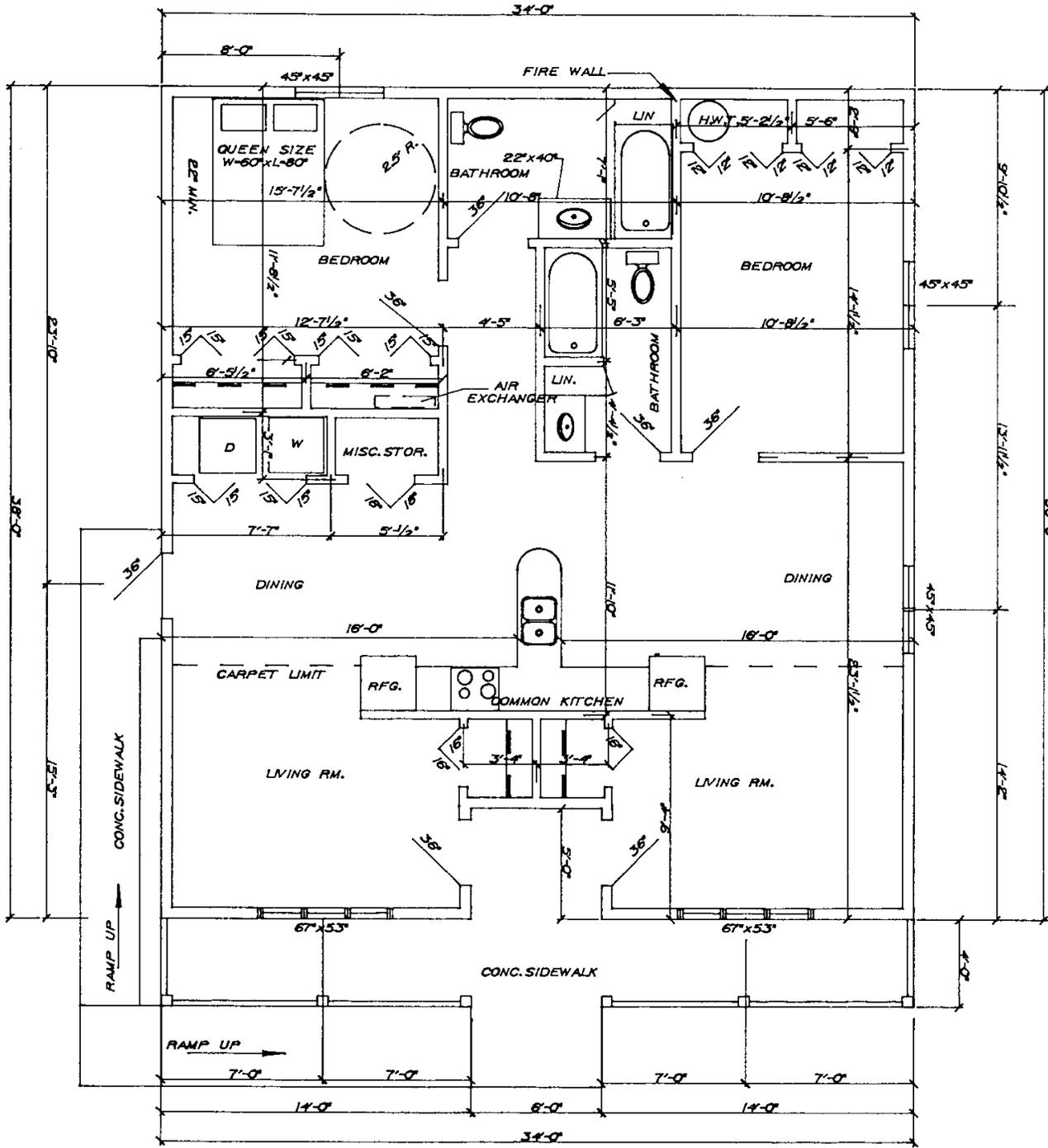
The driving impulse for Mr. LeGresley’s innovative concept was his desire to increase housing choice and quality of life for seniors. “Together Independently” did not work in the Shediac market, but would this shared-occupancy concept succeed elsewhere? Perhaps a larger market with a bigger potential client base could support this housing option for seniors and persons with disabilities.

4.3 Regulatory Reform

Mr. LeGresley did not require regulatory changes since his design conformed to existing by-laws governing single family dwellings. Without having checked other regulatory environments, Mr. LeGresley believes his design would stand a good chance of winning single family designation in other communities, as well. Building code standards across the country are usually based on the National Building Code so they all tend to be similar.

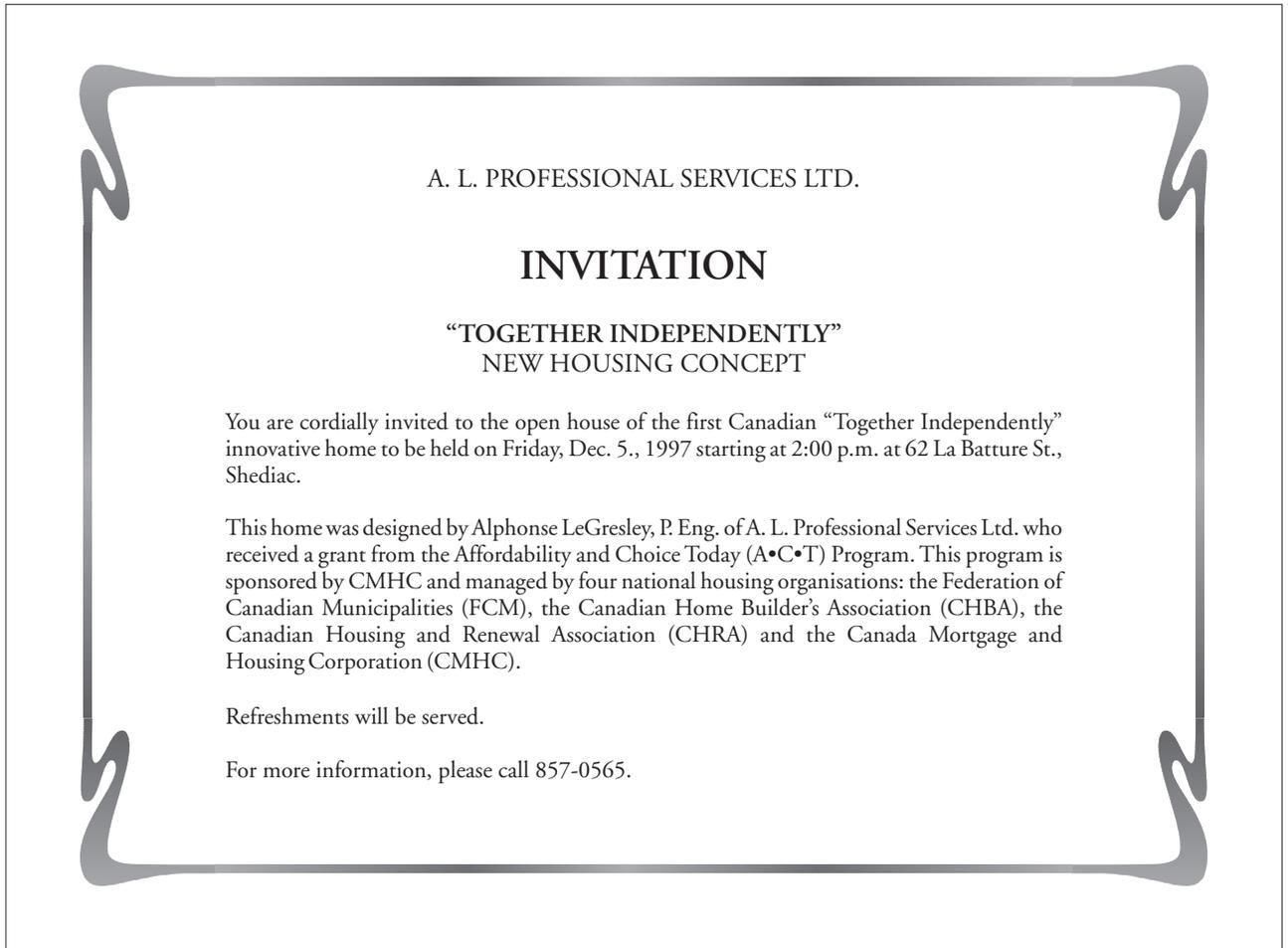
Appendix A

The interior floor layout shows the common kitchen, which was the key to “Together Independently’s” designation as a single family home.



Appendix B

Reproduced below are the guest invitation, the media advisory document and the press release produced by A.L. Professional Services for the official opening of “Together Independently”. All were in both official languages.



A.L. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES LTD.
722 Acadia Ave
Dieppe, N.B.
Canada E1A 5Y5

November 27, 1997

MEDIA ADVISORY

First Canadian “Together Independently” home is launched

The opening of the first Canadian “Together Independently” home will be held on Dec. 5, 1997.

This one storey home is designed for individuals wishing to keep some independence while feeling secure, comfortable and possibly saving money. It is another alternative for seniors, physically challenged people, adults living alone etc... This home includes both shared and private spaces.

Date: December 5, 1997

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Place: 62 La Batture St., Shediac

The official opening will be marked by a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Expected to attend are officials from the town of Shediac, the Beaubassin Planning Commission, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Canadian Home Builders’ Association, Canada Housing and Renewal Association and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. After the opening, questions from the media will be answered.

For further information, please contact:

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Fax: (506) 858-0466

PRESS RELEASE

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE FIRST CANADIAN “TOGETHER INDEPENDENTLY” HOME RECIPIENT UNDER THE A•C•T PROGRAM

Shediac, December 5, 1997

Today marked the official opening of the first Canadian “Together Independently” innovative home which is the result of a partnership with four national housing organisations. This home was designed by Alphonse LeGresley, P. Eng. of A.L. Professional Services Ltd. who received a grant from the Affordability and Choice Today (A•C•T) Program. This program is sponsored by CMHC and managed by four national housing organisations: the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the Canadian Home Builders’ Association (CHBA), the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA) and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). The program is administered by the FCM.

Mr. LeGresley’s project has received the support from the town of Shediac and the Beaubassin Planning Commission.

A ribbon cutting ceremony was attended by interested public and several invited guests including: (to be confirmed)

Located at 62 La Batture St., “**Together Independently**” is a new approach in providing a segment of the population with a residence offering added security and cost saving. The layout allows the users to maintain their independence within their own dining room, living room, bedroom and bathroom areas while sharing a kitchen having separate cabinets and fridge and a common stove and sink. The unit has a common electric meter, water and sewer, heat exchanger system and the possibility exists for a common telephone. The project allows for many combinations between senior(s), adult(s) and physically challenged offering:

- affordability
- security
- accessibility (if necessary with some modifications) for the physically challenged
- independence
- possibility for mutual assistance
- added density for residential development
- motivation for others in the private industry to build affordable, innovative housing for special groups
- support to the national trend to deviate away from institutionalising seniors and physically challenged people

The “Together Independently” home will be open for visits by appointments throughout December.

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