

Program director, "there was a new victim to this crime. For ComLinks to know about it since August, and not tell its employees about it ... that was very traumatic to the staff."

Trudeau said the employees wonder if they could be on the tapes, and are worried that the tapes will be destroyed, thereby making it next-to-impossible for them to sue Lohr or ComLinks if they were, in fact, victimized.

"There could be civil suits pending," Trudeau said. "Staff want to know if they or their families are on the tapes."

Trudeau resigned from ComLinks on Dec. 1.

"I put my name on an e-mail," he said, "next thing I know, my computer's locked."

The e-mail in question was one trying to organize the employees to speak to the board of directors. Trudeau said he resigned because he heard he was going to be fired soon for "improper computer use."

"I saw the writing on the wall and I resigned," he said.

"That bathroom was by the food pantry," said Faith St. Hilaire, account technician, indicating that pantry customers also used that bathroom. "This affects the whole community."

North Creek housing issues

Trudeau said the company is bleeding money due to problems with its Peaceful Valley low-income housing development in North Creek.

"It was a good cause," he said, "but the person in charge of it didn't want to make the two-and-a-half hour commute from Malone." Therefore, the unsupervised project spun out of control, and no one was even aware of many of the problems until it was too late.

That person is Housing and Community Development Director Brian Cassini.

"He made the application for the funding to the state," said Trudeau, "and he oversaw the building of it. And, as of this morning, he is also the Neighborhood and Revitalization Program Director." The vacancy was never advertised, Trudeau added.

Trudeau said many of the problems with the project were due to Savarino Construction Company, a Buffalo-based company. Trudeau said that Savarino didn't pay many of the subcontractors on the project, and as a result, the subcontractors walked out on the job. Some of them are suing ComLinks for their money.

"We're the end user," said Moll. "It's our housing development."

Due to construction delays, the houses were ready to rent out in February of this year, not in October 2006 as was originally planned.

Moll said the company was initially looking at three other sites for the housing project. Cassani commissioned a market study, and the analysts told him the proposed location at North Creek would not be profitable enough to be feasible. He then commissioned a second study, with a different company, which told him it would be.

"The project went on line in February of this year," said Moll, "and we have struggled to find tenants." Out of the 20 units, 11 are currently occupied. Six have never been occupied, and the tenants in the other three were "either evicted or disappeared into the night." Moll said the company is losing tens of thousands of dollars a month in North Creek.

"It's affecting the agency," said Trudeau. "We can't use the money elsewhere, because it's being used to bail out other problems."