

Date: January 12, 2021

To: The NYC Department of Homeless Services

From: Msgr. Anthony Sherman, Pastor
Fr. Gregory McIlhenney, Parochial Vicar
St. Anastasia Parish, 45-14 245th Street, Douglaston NY 11362

Mr. Robert Schirling, Chairman of the Board of Directors
Ms. Miriam Bonici, Principal
Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy, 45-11 245th Street, Douglaston, NY

Submission of Questions for Virtual Meeting with the NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS) on Tuesday January 12th at 7:30PM during the Community Board 11 Douglaston Zoning and Health Human Services Committee meetings.

With regard to the Announced Senior Women Shelter Project to be located 243-02 Northern Boulevard, Douglaston NY 11362

On behalf of St. Anastasia Parish (the "Parish") and Divine Wisdom Catholic Academy (the "Academy"), we thank you for the opportunity to submit questions prior to today's meeting. Our combined questions are on the next page. We respectfully ask that you address these in detail during the meeting.

The Parish and the Academy are important parts of the Douglaston community. We work collaboratively to serve our community through our Christ-centered academic, spiritual, and social missions. We recognize and support efforts to minister to the homeless in our city.

The close proximity of the Parish and Academy facilities to the proposed shelter puts both the Parish and the Academy in the position of being the most directly impacted by the announced shelter. It is vital that, should this announced shelter go forward, the Parish and the Academy have an honest and candid working relationship, where our mutual needs are heard, understood and addressed. We therefore would respectfully request, should this proceed, that representative from both the Parish and Academy be appointed to the proposed Community Advisory Board.

Our communities look to us for the confidence to know that they and their families can worship, learn, serve and grow in a safe, welcoming environment. We are committed to doing our part. We expect nothing more, or less, from those responsible for this proposed shelter.

We look forward to tomorrow's meeting.

Questions for DHS re Proposed senior women's shelter

Decision Process and Timeline

1. **When did the necessary community outreach begin regarding the proposed shelter?**
2. **Were there any community board meetings held prior to the December announcement?**
 1. If yes, please provide dates and invitees
3. **Who is the developer and what is their experience?**
 1. **Is the developer compensated based on the number of beds?**
4. **Who is the service provider for this site and what is their experience?**
5. **What is the anticipated timeline for occupancy?**
6. **What is the plan for building security given that it is intended to be all women?**
7. **What social services will be provided on-site to address the needs of the residents?**

Governance of Proposed Shelter, including Community Advisory Board

- 1) Please provide information regarding oversight of shelter operations and compliance with laws and regulations.
- 2) Who is responsible for vendor contract renewal and approval?
- 3) What would be the process to make changes to the purpose of the shelter
 - a. Types of individuals supported?
 - b. Approach to sheltering?
 - c. Density?
- 4) What ensures the amount of space allocated to each individual is sufficient to maintain their personal safety and dignity
- 5) What prevents the facility from exceeding approved density?
- 6) What is the purpose of the Community Advisory Board
 - a. How often does the CAB meet?
 - b. What if any authority does the CAB have?
 - c. How large is the CAB?
 - d. How is CAB membership determined?
 - e. How is CAB tenure determined?

General Operations

- 1) Would the shelter operate 24/7? If not, what are the anticipated hours of operation?
- 2) Explain the expectations of those utilizing the shelter regarding:
 - a. Time if any they may leave the shelter
 - b. Time if any they must return to the shelter
 - c. Minimum/maximum stays required/permitted/allowed
- 3) Would the shelter assist walk-ins or are those sheltered here sent from elsewhere?
- 4) Who approves shelter occupants?
- 5) Can you describe the types of situations your occupants may be dealing with in terms of health, addiction, mental health etc.?
- 6) Is the shelter a residential setting, transient, or both?
- 7) Who may visit the shelter, and the process for managing visitors?
- 8) What is the process relating to shelter occupants entering or existing the premises?
- 9) Will the shelter provide Meals?
 - a. If yes, please describe which meals and times.

Questions for DHS re Proposed senior women's shelter

- 10) What services will be available to the shelter occupants on-site?
- 11) What activities will be available to the shelter occupants during the day?
- 12) How will these residents travel to outside services/employment/training/activities?

Interaction with the Parish and Academy communities

- 1) The Academy will have students in the building beginning as early as 7AM until as late as 6PM
 - a. How will this overlap with those using the shelter being outside the shelter
 - i. During times children arrive
 - ii. During outside recess, lunch periods, outside gym periods
 - iii. When children are dismissed
- 2) The Parish will have community members in the Parish facilities as early as 7:30AM and as late as 10PM.
 - a. How will this overlap with those using the shelter being outside the shelter?

Space Utilization

- 1) Please provide a detailed layout of the facility, including:
 - a. Total utilized square footage
 - b. Total personal square footage per individual
 - c. Square footage used for meals
 - d. Square footage used for services
- 2) How has the density been assessed to ensure that the occupants have sufficient space per occupant?
- 3) How are changes to space utilization approved?

Criteria for being sheltered

- 1) What are the criteria that would make an individual eligible to be sheltered?
- 2) What testing and/or assessments are done to determine individuals meet the criteria?
- 3) What happens when an individual no longer meets the criteria?

Code of conduct for those sheltered

- 1) Please provide details regarding the code of conduct individuals must follow:
 - a. Within the facility?
 - b. Outside the facility?
- 2) What are consequences for code violations?
- 3) Please provide information regarding the rights of the shelter occupants:
 - a. Within the facility?
 - b. Outside the facility?

Security

- 1) What is the shelter's overall approach to security?
 - o What does the shelter view as its security obligations to its employees, shelter residents, visitors, and the surrounding community?

Questions for DHS re Proposed senior women's shelter

- What would the shelter's security resources be?
 - What relationship should be expected with the local police precinct (the 111th)? Has the local precinct been contacted regarding the proposed shelter?
- 2) What is the proposed vendor's track record with respect to managing such facilities and working with the local community to foster a safe environment for all?
 - 3) Have there been security incidents in other facilities managed by the proposed vendor?
 - 4) How would one contact the shelter if assistance was required relating to an occupant?
 - 5) How is the staff vetted?
 - 6) Can you guarantee that this facility will not exceed its mandate or change the types of people sheltered?
 - 7) What processes and procedures would be in place to address safety needs of shelter occupants, staff, visitors, and the surrounding community?