



December 14, 2010

Ald. James N. Witkowiak
12th District
Chairman
Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development Committee
Common Council – City of Milwaukee
City Hall
Room 205
200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Chairman Witkowiak:

The Milwaukee Continuum of Care is a 100 + member coalition of shelters, homeless service providers, faith-based, public and private members that work together on issues and opportunities around the issue of homelessness. The Milwaukee Continuum of Care is proud to support the proposed substitute ordinance relating to zoning regulations for transitional housing and permanent supportive housing as File Number 100848.

In February of 2010, the Milwaukee Continuum of Care released its 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness (the Plan). Permanent housing is one of the four pillars to end homelessness in Milwaukee contained within the Plan which calls for the development of 1260 new permanent supportive housing units within 10 years.

This Plan was presented to both the City of Milwaukee Common Council and the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors. The County Board approved the Plan on March 18 as File 10-108. As you know, by a vote of 14 to 0, on September 21, 2010, the Common Council adopted a resolution endorsing the Plan's principles and goals. The resolution also expressed the City's commitment to "assist in the implementation of the plan and to continue to provide funding for housing for the homeless". Signifying his support, Mayor Tom Barrett signed the resolution on September 24, 2010.

The proposed City of Milwaukee Code of Ordinance zoning changes contained in File Number 100848 are the direct result of the direction that the Common Council has provided on this very important issue. These regulations will establish a more straight-forward process for the development and operation of both transitional and permanent supportive housing units by quality supportive housing providers. In turn, a vulnerable population that is generally homeless or at risk of homelessness and who has mental health conditions or other disabilities will have the opportunity to benefit from safe and affordable housing and services that will assist them to live independently.

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The increased public and private sector focus on the development of much needed and long awaited permanent supportive housing units was assisted by the attached 2006 series of articles by Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reporter Meg Kissinger. These articles helped bring to light the alarming need for safe and supportive environments for people who have both mental health conditions and are homeless.

Many positive steps have already been taken, including the joint establishment by the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County of the Commission on Supportive Housing. In addition, 163 permanent supportive housing units have already been developed with plans to add 155 more for a total of 318 units since the articles were published. Although we are well on our way to achieving the goals of the Plan, our work is not done.

The Milwaukee Continuum of Care fully supports the proposed zoning ordinance changes. We urge you as a member of the Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development Committee to also approve the proposed zoning regulations. We believe that these regulations are an excellent step forward in helping to provide safe and supportive environments that people can call home – and in fulfilling the goals endorsed by the Common Council.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 414-274-2546.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan McCarthy", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dan McCarthy
Milwaukee Continuum of Care Co-Chair
Towne Investments
710 N. Plankinton Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53203

DM:kl
Attachments



MILWAUKEE

Continuum of Care

Member Organizations

American Red Cross
Transitional Living Services
Milwaukee County Housing
Division
The Gathering of Southeastern
Wisconsin
Guest House of Milwaukee, Inc.
Wisconsin Community Services
Cathedral Center
City Transformation, Ltd.
National Development Council–
Project Restore
Interfaith Conference of
Milwaukee
My Home Your Home, Inc.
Housing Trust Fund of
Milwaukee
Milwaukee County Behavioral
Health Division
National Association of Black
Veterans
Milwaukee County Health
Programs
United Way of Greater
Milwaukee
St. Aemilian-Lakeside, Inc.
Greater Milwaukee Foundation
AIDS Resource Center of
Wisconsin
LISC
Center for Veterans Issues, Ltd.
Greater Milwaukee Committee
Hope House of Milwaukee, Inc.
Mercy Lakeside Housing
Walker’s Point Youth and
Family Center
Heartland Housing
YWCA of Greater Milwaukee
Gorman and Company
The Salvation Army
Medical College of Wisconsin
La Causa, Inc.
Disability Rights Wisconsin
Clement J. Zablocki VA
Medical Center

Independence First
Meta House, Inc.
Urban Economic Development
Association
St. Ben’s Community Meal
Our Safe Place
2-1-1 at IMPACT
Milwaukee Careers Cooperative
Community Advocates
Housing Resources
Sojourner Family Peace Center
Wisconsin Nazarene
Compassionate Center
Wisconsin Department of
Commerce
Hope Street Ministry
Word of Hope Ministries
Crisis Resource Center
City of West Allis Housing
Division
Helen Bader Foundation
Milwaukee County Disability
Services Division
Lutheran Social Services
Milwaukee County Department
on Aging
House of Lydia
Housing Authority of the City of
Milwaukee
Mov’n Out
Milwaukee Public Schools
For the Empowerment of
Women
Milwaukee Police Department
Recovery Network
Workforce Investment Board of
Milwaukee
National Association for the
Mentally Ill
Day Star, Inc.
American Legion
Hunger Task Force of
Milwaukee
Common Bond Communities
Legal Action of Wisconsin

Medical Society of Wisconsin
Milwaukee Rescue Mission–
Safe Harbor
Genesis Building Better Lives
Milwaukee Rescue Mission–
Joy House
Cornerstone Counseling
St. Catherine Residence
Tieg Whaley Smith
Cardinal Capital Housing
Development
Mary Neubauer
UMOS TANF Agency
Healthcare for the Homeless
Living Proof Homeless Support
Group
Vets Helping Vets Consumer
Group
Repairers of the Breach
St. Vincent de Paul Society
Mental Health America
Marquette University
SET Ministry
Faith Harvest
Milwaukee Development Group
Social Security Administration
Zilber Development
The Counseling Center of
Milwaukee, Inc.–Pathfinders
Community Relations–Social
Development Commission
City of Wauwatosa Community
Development Department
City of Milwaukee Community
Development Grants
Department
Center for Urban Initiatives and
Research, University of
Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Wisconsin Housing and
Economic Development
Authority
Community Advocates–
Milwaukee Women’s Center