



Tom Barrett
Mayor, City of Milwaukee



Scott Walker
Milwaukee County Executive

October 9, 2008

City Plan Commission
c/o Vanessa Koster
Assistant Director of Planning
Department of City Development
809 N. Broadway St.
Milwaukee, WI 53202

To the Honorable Chairman and Members, City Plan Commission:

I am writing today on behalf of the City/County Supportive Housing Commission, which I chair. As you may recall, the Commission was formed under the direction of the Mayor and County Executive to set and monitor benchmarks for the development of adequate housing for persons living with mental illnesses.

There are two items on the October 13, 2008 City Plan Commission agenda which the Commission fully supports:

- 1) The request of Our Space, Inc. to rezone the property located on the South Side of W. Lincoln Ave. and East of S. 5th Pl. to allow for development of 30 units of multifamily housing.
- 2) A request from Cardinal Capital Group to rezone property on the north Side of W. Clybourn St. and east of N. 26th St. for the purpose of developing 30 units for individuals in the Autumn West supportive housing program.

The Our Space project, Empowerment Village (EV), will provide 30 units of affordable supported housing for persons experiencing mental illness. Our Space, Inc. is a well respected psychosocial rehabilitation center that has served our community for 20 years. Our Space provides a variety of programming for persons experiencing mental illness, including basic functional literacy, computer skills, wellness, parenting skills, peer support specialist training, and employment. Our Space is also the service provider at United House, the first permanent supported housing development in Milwaukee County, located at 2500 W. Center St. The proposed project will be developed in partnership with Cardinal Capital Group, a high-quality developer of such housing.

The Autumn West proposal, funded with a Safe Haven grant from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, provides housing and support services to individuals with a mental illness in the community who have a history of homelessness. The goal of the program is to have individuals become engaged in mental health treatment and then be

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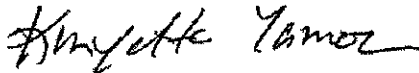
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placed in permanent housing. The Red Cross has successfully run this program for 10 years. The program has been operated at West Samaria, which is being vacated due to foreclosure issues. A permanent site for this necessary program must be viewed as a priority for our community. Cardinal Capital, the developer of this project, plans to develop 30 units of supported housing to allow for the continuation of the program. Cardinal Capital has expertise in developing supportive housing as they demonstrated with United House.

Members of the Commission were appointed by the Mayor and County Executive to ensure goals were met in establishing permanent housing for individuals suffering from mental illness. These two proposals can help close the gap of 1000 supported housing units needed in Milwaukee. I strongly believe these two developments are consistent with our vision and I urge your approval of these two requests. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Kenyatta Yamel

Chair

Commission on Supportive Housing