



Mercy Housing Lakefront

more than a roof

June 3, 2008

Alderman Michael Murphy
Chair, Housing Trust Fund Advisory Committee
City Hall, room 205
200 E. Wells
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Re: Request for extension for use of Housing Trust Fund award

Dear Alderman Murphy,

As Chair of the Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board, Mercy Housing Lakefront, on behalf on the Johnston Center Residences, is requesting that you and the Advisory Board grant an extension on the use of Trust Fund award until summer of 2009.

As you know, MHL has been generously awarded \$750,000 from the homeless category of the City of Milwaukee's Housing Trust Fund. This award was granted to the Johnston Center Residences, a project proposing 89 units of permanent supportive housing targeted for use by people who have been homeless, at high risk for homelessness and/or those who have special needs.

At the last Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board meeting, MHL presented a status report on the project, including a revised timeline. The new timeline showed a delay in the project due to the decision of the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority's (WHEDA) not to allocate tax credits to the project this year.

With this letter MHL is formally requesting an extension on the timeline for the use of the Housing Trust Fund award until after the 2009 WHEDA tax credit allocation announcement in the spring of 2009. This extension will allow MHL to continue work on the project, especially on site control for the property adjacent to the Johnston Center, while we apply for and await WHEDA's decision on the 2009 tax credit allocation.

We strongly believe that by spring of 2009 we will have worked out site control on the adjacent property, owned by Mexican Fiesta; relocating the organization to a site currently owned by the Milwaukee Public Schools. We also believe that the revisions to the 2009 QAP currently being considered by WHEDA will also enhance the project's ability to score well and receive an allocation in the next round.

Our experience shows that it takes 3-5 years from first funding to opening the doors of a permanent supportive housing development. Milwaukee (City, County and community) have come a long way in this project's development in only 18 months. We ask that the Trust Fund Advisory Board grant an extension until summer of 2009 for this critical project.

Sincerely,

Cindy Holler
President

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Mercy Housing Lakefront is a merger of Lakefront Supportive Housing and Mercy Housing Midwest.

Mercy Housing is sponsored by communities of Catholic Sisters.