



**Tom Barrett**  
Mayor, City of Milwaukee



**Scott Walker**  
Milwaukee County Executive

November 17, 2008

Ald. Jim Witkowiak  
Chair  
Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee  
Milwaukee Common Council  
200 E. Wells St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Chairman Witkowiak:

I am writing today on behalf of the 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 benchmarks and monitor community progress in the development of permanent supportive housing for individuals with mental illness.

Item 14 on the agenda of the November 18, 2008 Zoning Neighborhoods and Development Committee meeting will, if adopted, help to increase the supply of quality supportive housing in Milwaukee. The Commission supports this file, and we urge members of the Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee to approve it.

The file is a request of Our Space, Inc. to rezone the property located on the South Side of W. Lincoln Ave. and East of S. 5<sup>th</sup> Pl. to allow for development of Empowerment Village, 30 units of 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 developer of United House, Cardinal Capital Group, is working with Our Space on the Empowerment Village project.

Members of the CSH were appointed by the Mayor and County Executive to ensure goals were met in establishing permanent housing for individuals suffering from mental illness. This proposal can help close the gap of 1000 supported housing units needed in Milwaukee. I strongly believe the Empowerment Village development is consistent with our vision and I urge your approval of the rezoning request. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Kenyatta Yamel  
Chair  
Commission on Supportive Housing

C: Ald. Robert Bauman  
Ald. Tony Zielinski  
Members of the Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee

Supportive Housing Commission