

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES



March 14, 2016

Councilmember Charles Allen
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW; Ste 406
Washington, DC 20004

Re: 700 Delaware Avenue, SW

Dear Councilmember Allen,

Thank you for your letter dated March 4, 2016, regarding the proposed Homeward DC short-term family shelter location in Ward 6 at 700 Delaware Avenue, Southwest. The responses to your questions are below:

1. The property is currently zoned for R-4. The planned short-term housing at that site has been described as seven stories on the east side, and five stories on the north side. That height does not appear to be compatible with the current zoning of this location.
 - a. What specific zoning changes will be required for the proposed site to be constructed and operated as described? For each change, please include which entity (the District or the Landlord) will be responsible for all applications, fulfillment, and processes related to zoning changes or modifications.

We expect zoning changes will be needed. The developer and their architect will be responsible for all applications, fulfillment and processes related to zoning changes or modifications.

- b. What specific zoning use changes will be required for the proposed site to be constructed and operated as described? For each change, please include which entity (the District or the Landlord) will be responsible for all applications, fulfillment, and processes related to zoning changes or modifications.

The current zoning allows boarding house use for stays of more than 90 days. The specific use change will be to allow stays of less than 90 days as well, to conform to the Department of Human Services' (DHS) program requirements. The developer and their architect will be responsible for all applications, fulfillment and processes related to zoning use changes or modifications. However, DHS will be responsible for ensuring compliance with requirements related to the length of stay.

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c. Will all zoning applications be sought through a public zoning process?

Yes, all zoning applications will be sought through a public zoning process.

d. Will the District or the Landlord require any easements, access rights, or any other agreements with the adjacent property owner on three sides of the proposed site, Capital Park IV Townhomes?

No easements, access rights or other agreements with the adjacent property owner on three sides of the proposed site, Capital Park IV Townhomes, are required.

2. On page 2, in the “Permitted Use” section, the Letter of Intent for the lease of premises (“LOI”) states the facility will have a “minimum of 50 units.” However, in public meetings and public documents, it was stated that the proposed facility will have up to 50 units, not a minimum of 50 units. Further, there are other sections of the LOI that describe the proposed facility as having up to 50 units. For the Ward 6 property, please specify without ambiguity exactly how many residential units will be constructed and used for emergency family housing purposes, and how the number of units will be agreed to.

This site will have 50 units. Under no circumstance will there be more than 50 units on this site. This will be made clear in the final negotiated lease.

3. On pages 5-6, in the “Tenant Improvements” section, the LOI states that the Landlord shall be responsible for the turnkey build-out of the premises, including “Common-use bathrooms and shower facilities on each floor; one family bathroom (meaning it includes a bathtub) on the third and fourth floor.” The Interim Eligibility and Minimum Shelter Standards Emergency Amendment Act of 2015 (IEMSSEAA) explicitly requires that buildings composed of DC General Family Shelter replacement units shall include, at minimum:

“(B) For every 5 DC General Family Shelter replacement units, one private, lockable bathroom that includes a toilet, sink, and bathtub and shall be accessible to all residents;”

The requirements set forth in the LOI appear inconsistent with the legal requirements to provide private and family-style bathrooms.

Each developer was challenged to exceed the requirements of the legislation. The site at 700 Delaware Avenue has been designed to significantly exceed the requirements of the

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IEMSSEAA. At 700 Delaware Avenue, there will be no multi-user bathrooms. The design provides for five en-suite bathrooms and will not require more than two families share a family bathroom with a shower and bathtub.

Please answer the following:

- a. How is the construction of a total of two family bathrooms that include bathtubs for 50 units of emergency family housing to replace the DC General Shelter units in compliance with the requirements of DC law?

Please see the response to Question 3, above. The design significantly exceeds the requirements of the legislation.

- b. Will the common-use bathrooms and shower facilities on each floor be separated by gender?

No. Please see the response to Question 3 above.

- c. How will the new construction for the Ward 6 building exceed, not simply comply with, the minimum number of private bathrooms required?

Please see the response to Question 3 above.

4. On page 6, in the “Landlord Work” section, the LOI states that the new building shall be constructed “at Landlord’s sole cost and expense.” What is the estimated cost of construction of the proposed new building at this location?

The total construction costs, property tax, and personal property information will be determined by the Landlords' deal to acquire the property from a third-party. The land acquisition deal is under negotiation between the Landlord and the Seller.

5. The LOI outlines monthly costs per unit at \$3,750. The LOI further states that the District government is responsible for all utility costs (“electrical, gas, water/sewer, internet, trash pick-up/collection and recycling”), real estate taxes, and personal property taxes. Please elaborate on the following:
 - a. What is the estimated total monthly cost of utility services for this proposed facility? Please provide this information as both for the leased space in total, and as per unit estimate.

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The figures below estimate a baseline utility estimate for approximately 38,000 rentable square feet:

Utility	Cost(\$)/sf	Cost(\$)/Unit	Annual Cost
Electrical	\$ 1.51	\$ 1,166.09	\$ 58,304.74
Gas	\$ 0.37	\$ 285.92	\$ 14,296.06
Water & Sewer	\$ 0.74	\$ 567.98	\$ 28,398.93
	\$ 2.61	\$ 2,019.99	\$ 100,999.73

We further note the following -- Waste Management and recycling costs are being generated by DGS' Sustainability and Energy Division.

Further, each site will be designed to accommodate the infrastructure to support all utilities to include internet so that there will be Wifi throughout the building. The Program Provider (DHS) will be responsible for securing and connecting ITS services for each site.

- b. Once the new building is constructed, what is the estimated value or assessment of the real property, and the cost of real property taxes to be borne by the District?

We are unable to estimate the taxes at this time. Only once the improvements are constructed, the Office of Tax and Revenue will assess the property and assign an assessment and calculate taxes at that time.

- c. What is the estimated cost of the personal property taxes to be borne by the District?

As this will be a leased facility for which the furniture will be provided by the developer, personal property taxes are only paid by the owning entity. The District will not be expected to bear any personal property taxes.

6. As proposed, the facility would provide supportive services, meal services, laundry services, and security on-site. These services are integral to successful emergency housing for the families temporarily residing on the premises. Please provide:
 - a. A description of the specific proposed on-site services;

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The short-term family housing programs will include on-site wrap-around services, such as rapid connection to permanent housing programs, housing search assistance, social work staff, early childhood screenings and school liaisons; education, training, and employment services, health care, and financial and budget management services. The District will select a provider for each short-term family housing site through a competitive process.

The short-term housing programs will also partner with other community service organizations to provide health and wellness services, mentoring and tutoring, and programming and activities for children. The programs will also have 24 hour staffing and security.

In regards to security, District-owned facilities are maintained and secured by DGS. All privately-owned sites are maintained by the property owner through the terms of the lease. Additional maintenance and security will be provided through the service provider contracts that are chosen through the competitive RFP process that will be conducted before the facility is opened.

- b. A description of laundry services, including the hours, costs, and maintenance plan for three washer and dryer units serving the needs of 50 families;

Depending on the unique designs of each facility, there will be two (2) washers and dryers on every floor creating a possible ratio of two (2) washers and dryers per 10 families. The cost and maintenance of these appliances are the responsibility of the building owners. The cost is built into the maintenance and equipment cost of the lease.

- c. How those services will be integrated or linked with the surrounding community;

The service provider for each short-term family housing facility will integrate and link access to community-based services to complement the suite of services that will be provided on-site and that meet the unique needs of families. The short-term housing programs will partner with community service organizations to provide health and wellness services, mentoring and tutoring, and programming and activities for children.

- d. How the contracts for those services will be effectuated by the District; and

The contracts for these services will be effectuated by the District through a competitive procurement process.

- e. The estimate annual cost for all proposed services for this location.

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The estimated annual cost for services and programming at the Ward 6 short-term housing facility is \$2.69 million.

7. For this effort to be successful, it is important that this proposed facility not be viewed in isolation, but rather, as part of the fabric of the entire Southwest Community. To that end, the nearby residents, Advisory Neighborhood Commission, neighborhood associations, and others have asked for more details about the District's planned investments in the adjacent and nearby facilities that serve the whole community and that will also serve the families residing in the proposed emergency housing. Please answer the following:
 - a. How will the District invest in ongoing operations at the adjacent Randall Recreation Center? Given its proximity, this recreation site will service residents of the emergency housing facility. The Department of Parks and Recreation has not operated a community or recreation center at this site, but has partnered with independent non-profits to provide community-based programming.
 - i. Will the District commit to ongoing financial support to operate programming at this site?

Randall Recreation Center is an important asset in the Department of Parks and Recreation's (DPR) inventory and the District is committed to ensuring ongoing investments and programming for the community. Stating that, our model of providing services through an external vendor has been very beneficial in this community. Through the existing agreement, the offerings for this community are Life Skills trainings, Fashion, Computer Access and Zumba to name a few.

- ii. What is the plan to do so?

DPR operates the Randall Recreation Center through a programmatic partnership. One of the benefits of a programmatic partnership is the District's ability to ensure community-based programming at little or no cost to the District. This model is a win-win for a few reasons. The site is able to offer programming and activities at low or no cost. Partners usually provide a greater range of programs, provide their own resources and this saves in government resources. As a sign of the District's continued commitment, it is important to note several recent capital investments at this location. For example, a new playground was recently installed, funding has been allocated for ADA improvements for the recreation center, and the adjacent pool will undergo a \$1.5 million renovation beginning later this spring. In addition, a state-of-the-art turf field was recently installed in partnership with Under Armor, the Washington Nationals, and the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation.

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- iii. How much financial commitment and support will the District invest in this particular site?

The District commits to ensuring that the Randall Recreation Center offers safe, functional and enjoyable spaces for all community residents.

- b. Amidon-Bowen Elementary and Jefferson Middle Schools are the nearby in-boundary schools for this site.
- i. What outreach and additional supports will be provided to these two schools?

DCPS works with students experiencing homelessness and their families, as well as schools, shelters, and community organizations, to ensure that these students' needs are addressed appropriately. Students who identify as experiencing homeless are entitled to immediate enrollment in school, confidentiality regarding disclosure of homeless status, transportation assistance, and access to an education that is equal to that of their peers. Our data suggests that families generally seek to minimize the disruption in their students' lives, and a significant majority continue to attend the school they were attending before experiencing homeless. The Office of Youth Engagement (OYE) at DCPS works with the designated homeless liaison at each school to provide a number of supports and services, including but not limited to, school supplies, school fees assistance, referrals to other city services, parent and staff training. DCPS will also work with the DHS to ensure that the right resources are in each of the schools that may be impacted by the District's new short-term family housing facilities. Further, the educational rights of students experiencing homelessness are dictated by federal law, under the McKinney-Vento Act of 1987.

- ii. Will any resources beyond expected At-Risk funding be allocated to the schools to ensure adequate staff and supports are available for potential new student enrollment, and that newly enrolled At-Risk students' needs are efficiently addressed?

All funding that attaches to students based on their housing status – or otherwise – follows them to the school in which they enroll. DCPS is well-poised to ensure that these students receive the support they need to abate any barriers to the educational process.

- c. The condition of the District-owned building that houses Unity Health, Inc's Southwest Clinic has deteriorated and lacks accessibility for individuals with disabilities or with mobility challenges. The Southwest community has requested that this District-owned property be included in the planning for a "Build First"

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replacement of the Greenleaf public housing. Allowing for the construction of a new community health clinic co-located with new housing to accommodate Greenleaf units.

- i. As this is the closest and most accessible health provider for the proposed temporary housing location, what steps is the District taking to stabilize this facility?
- ii. What commitments will the District make to include this property as part of the Greenleaf public housing replacement and “Build First” planning?

DOH ended our formal relationship with that facility when our grant ended in 2014. We were supporting the fixed costs of a few Unity sites until all of the Capitol Expansion sites opened. Given the lack of alternative sources of care in the area and the current state of disrepair of the building, DOH is supportive of Unity and CM Allen’s efforts to find a more permanent solution for the clinic (e.g. the Greenleaf redevelopment, DGS selling the current building to Unity, etc.), but we have no plans to provide material support for renovation of the current site nor for a new facility.

- d. What investments will the District make in Lansburgh Park, located across the street from this proposed facility? The Park will likely be heavily used by residents as an outdoor gathering area and public space. While the District has partnered with community groups to make investments, including a community garden, dog park, and renovated basketball court, the Park itself remains deficient with poor lighting, deteriorated sidewalks, inadequate seating, limited activation, and no water fountains.

The Park has a thriving community garden and new dog park, which is heavily used. The park will continue to be used by residents as an outdoor gathering area and public space. While the District has partnered with community groups to make investments, including a community garden, dog park, and renovated basketball court, the Park itself has opportunities for enhancements- such as new energy efficient lightning throughout the park, improved walkways, adequate site furniture, trash cans and water fountains. DPR is committed to ensuring that the park space is safe and serves as place of relaxation and enjoyment.

- e. The selected site is on a dead-end portion of H Street, SW, which also serves as a pedestrian connection to Randall Recreation Center, the Randall athletic fields, and the pedestrian through-way to crossing South Capitol Street. What streetscape investments will the District make in the area around the proposed facility?

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DDOT is currently assessing the potential infrastructure needs at each Homeward DC site, including the Ward 6 location, and will continue to do so throughout the construction to ensure that necessary infrastructure repairs and upgrades are performed.

We thank you for your consideration of the above with respect to the proposed Ward 6 short-term family housing site at 700 Delaware Avenue, Southwest. We continue to look forward to working with you on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher Weaver".

Christopher Weaver
Director, Department of General Services