IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted for the Department of Homeless Services and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for site selection and acquisition of property located at 681 Clarkson Avenue (Block 4833, part of Lot 1), Community District 9, Borough of Brooklyn, for use as a transitional residence.

* 197-b(d)2 eliqible

This application (C 970472 PCK) was filed on March 11, 1997 by the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) for site selection and acquisition of property located at 681 Clarkson Avenue (Block 4833, part of Lot 1), Community District 9 in Brooklyn, for use as a transitional residence.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Homeless Services (DHS) proposes to occupy a portion of the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center campus, located at 681 Clarkson Avenue (Block 4833, part of Lot 1), in Brooklyn, to establish a transitional residence for homeless adults. DHS currently administers a transitional residence on the campus, and occupies the site pursuant to a license agreement with the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY). The residence is operated by the Salvation Army under a contract with DHS.

The site is located in the western portion of the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center (Block 4833, Lot 1) and is developed with three buildings (Buildings 6, 7, and 8).

Building #8, a three-story building located at the southeast

corner of Winthrop Street and Albany Avenue, is in the northern portion of the site. DHS has occupied this building since February, 1997. It currently houses dining and laundry facilities, offices, recreation rooms and congregate sleeping areas for 158 men who suffer from substance abuse or mental illness. The existing program will be eliminated in August 1, 1998 and the building renovated to support two distinct programs:

- adults who suffer from serious or persistent mental illness will be located on the 1st and 2nd floors of the building. It will provide counseling, vocational rehabilitation, substance abuse treatment, and housing skills development and training. The average length of stay before residents graduate into permanent housing is six months.
- Permanent Supportive Housing. Permanent supportive housing for 15-40 residents who complete the transitional program will be created on the third floor of the building.

Building #6, a three-story building located at the northeast corner of Clarkson Avenue and Albany Avenue, is in the southern portion of the site. It had previously been used as offices and dormitories for staff of the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center. DHS has occupied this building since August, 1997. It currently houses a Short Term Assessment and Referral (STAR) Program which provides accommodations for 228 adults. This is a highly structured program

Page 2 C 970472 PCK

lasting from six to nine months in which residents rise through four program stages as they progress in their recovery and prepare for employment and independent living. The residents do not need to have a history of mental disorders for admission. The program features highly-structured coordinated supportive services and programs, treatment including job readiness and placement assistance, housing searches, opportunities for vocational training, and group peer counseling from organizations such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous. The renovated building contains dining and laundry facilities, recreation rooms and congregate sleeping areas.

The third building, Building # 7, is located in the middle of the site, between Building #6 and Building #8. It had also previously been used as offices and dormitories for staff of the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center and is vacant. This building, which is now sealed, cannot be used as a congregate shelter because it is constructed with a non-fireproof wood interior which would not meet Fire Department safety standards. An existing roadway runs in front of Building #7 and provides access between Building #6 and Building #8.

The entire site for the transitional residence is physically separated from the rest of the psychiatric center by a ten-foot high chain link fence. The site has its own entrance from Clarkson Avenue which is secured by a guard booth and a 24-hour guard. In addition, there is 24-hour security personnel at both buildings, and a roving guard on the grounds of the facility.

Page 3 C 970472 PCK

All residents of the current facility are free to exit and enter the site during the day, but must return by 10:00 PM. Exceptions will be made for appointments such as employment interviews, meetings related to entitlement eligibility and family visits. Residents who leave the facility must identify themselves to the security guard at the front gate, and indicate their destination.

The site is located in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn. It is zoned R5, which allows the use. Kings County Hospital is located west of the site, across Albany Avenue. Residential communities, predominately developed with two-story attached and semi-attached residences and some six-story multiple dwellings, are located both north and south of the site. The site is accessible by public transportation via the B 12 bus, which runs on Albany Avenue and stops in front of the site, and the 2 and 5 trains, which stop at the Winthrop Street station two blocks to the west of the site.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This application (C 970472 PCK) was reviewed to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and the SEQRA regulations set forth in Volume 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations, Section 617.00 et seq., and the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedures of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The designated CEQR Number is 97DHS001K. The lead agency is the Department of Homeless Services.

Page 4 C 970472 PCK

After a study of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a negative declaration was issued on August 22, 1997.

UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW

This application (C 970472 PCK), was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on December 1, 1997 and was duly referred to Community Board 9 and the Borough President of Brooklyn, in accordance with Article 3 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules.



This application (C 970472 PCK), was also referred to Community Board 17, pursuant to Section 197-c, subsection m, of the New York City Charter and Section 4.070 of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) rules.

Community Board Public Hearing

Community Board 9 held a public hearing on this application on January 27, 1998, and on that date, by a vote of 31 to 1 with 1 abstention, adopted a resolution recommending the disapproval of this application.

At its January 21, 1998 meeting, Community Board 17 voted to disapprove this application.

Borough President Recommendation

This application (C 970472 PCK) was considered by the Borough President of Brooklyn, who issued a recommendation

disapproving the application on March 5, 1998, subject to a condition that the applicant:

- Agree that under no circumstances is the capacity of Building 8 to exceed 80 temporary shelter beds;
- Provide all necessary security to assure that clients refrain from loitering, soliciting or trespassing on private property within the area in which the shelter is located;
- 3. Discharge any client who breeches curfew or violates the condition described in item 2 above.

City Planning Commission Public Hearing

On March 4, 1998 (Calendar No. 1), the City Planning Commission scheduled March 18, 1998 for a public hearing on this application (C 970472 PCK). The hearing was duly held on March 18, 1998, (Calendar No. 2). There were three speakers in favor of the application and fifteen speakers in opposition.

The speakers in opposition included representatives from the Congress Member for the 11th District and State Assembly Member for the 43rd District, the City Council Member for the 41st District, and twelve area residents. They stated that the Department of Homeless Services does not appear to be able to control the facility and that the large number of men with a history of problems who reside at the facility are having a negative impact on the surrounding residential neighborhood. Residents who live across the street from the facility stated that, despite a curfew, residents are seen entering and leaving the facility at all hours

Page 6 C 970472 PCK

of the day and early morning hours and that the guards posted at the facility are ineffectual. They complained that the residents of the facility panhandle aggressively, loiter, sleep on the sidewalks and urinate in public. They also stated that area residents and children walking to local schools have been harassed by homeless persons and that there has been an increase in crime in the area because of the presence of the transitional residence. They stated their belief that these conditions are causing a decrease in the property values of their homes and destabilizing the neighborhood. They also believe that the transitional residence is being used as a tool to close the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center and to downsize Kings County Hospital.

The speakers in favor of the application included the Assistant Commissioner of Program Planning and Housing for the Department of Homeless Services, the Program Director of the Kingsboro Transitional Residence's Outreach Center, and a representative from the New York City Police Department. The Assistant Commissioner from the Department of Homeless Services provided a brief history of how the Department of Homeless Services came to occupy Buildings 6 and 8 at the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center and described community initiatives which were developed before the buildings were occupied, such as an increased police presence, campus security, street cleaning service around the perimeter of the shelter, enhanced outreach programs, and employment opportunities for area residents. In addition, she stated that DHS convened a task force comprised of elected

Page 7 C 970472 PCK

officials, community representatives and mental health professionals to offer recommendations on the long term use of the facility.

The Assistant Commissioner explained that, in order to address an immediate need for beds last winter, DHS contracted with the Salvation Army to open a transitional shelter for 158 men in Building 8 in February, 1997. She stated that the current program at this facility is not structured, but is designed to refer residents for placement to some other residential or rehabilitation facility. She stated that this existing program will be eliminated by August, 1998, and replaced with a structured transitional program for 80 men, a 51% reduction in capacity. In addition, DHS had already been operating a structured program, at Building 6 since August, 1997.

The Program Director of the Kingsboro Transitional Residence's Outreach Center stated that the transitional residence has not resulted in a significant increase in loitering by homeless individuals within the neighborhood. He explained how staff of the Outreach Center circulate in the streets around the facility to contact the homeless. He stated that most of the population his staff have contacted are street-dwelling homeless and that it is very rare to encounter a resident of this facility in the street.

A representative from the New York City Police Department stated that NYPD statistics do not indicate that any major crimes are attributable to residents of the facility. He acknowledged that there are quality of life concerns and that the community

Page 8 C 970472 PCK

perceives that there is a problem, however, he stated, statistics do not bear out an actual crime problem.

There were no other speakers and the hearing was closed.

Consideration

The City Planning Commission believes that the application of the Department of Homeless Services, and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services for the site selection and acquisition of property located at 681 Clarkson Avenue (Block 4833, part of Lot 1) for use as a transitional residence, is appropriate.

The proposed site is part of an institutional complex with a history of providing specialized social and psychiatric services. This proposed facility for people with special needs is consistent with the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center's historical function as a center of care for people with special needs.

The proposed facility would be the only transitional residence in Brooklyn Community District 9. Only 18 of the city's 59 Community Districts do not have any temporary or transitional facilities for homeless persons. Community District 17, adjacent to the proposed site, has one transitional residence (Providence House) which houses three homeless families. The nearest transitional residence for adults is 1.5 miles away from the site.

The Kingsboro Transitional Residence is not a general shelter and only individuals who demonstrate receptiveness to rehabilitation are referred to the facility by DHS. All of the programs to be provided at the Kingsboro Transitional Residence

Page 9 C 970472 PCK

after August 1, 1998, will be highly structured with clearly defined rules and regulations. The typical day for any resident consists of a highly organized schedule of support groups, seminars and classes. Counselors and caseworkers know where each resident should be at any time of day. Residents who leave the facility must identify themselves to the security guard at the front gate, indicate their destination, and identify themselves again when they return.

Upon entering a program, each resident must sign a contract to acknowledge acceptance of the program's rules and regulations, which include regulations regarding appearance and behavior. A resident who repeatedly fails to follow the contract will be escorted off the premises and taken to another shelter.

DHS is conducting a homeless outreach program to identify people living on the streets in the surrounding area in order to secure services for them. The Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation (BEDCO) has been performing this outreach for DHS since the facility opened. Initially, in the spring and summer of 1997, BEDCO reported contact with between 72 and 103 homeless individuals each week. As a result of these efforts, many of these individuals were admitted into the shelter system. Currently, BEDCO currently keeps contact with between 16 and 45 homeless individuals, weekly, in the streets around the facility. Of these contacts, on average, only one person each week turns out to be a current resident of the facility. DHS plans to continue its outreach efforts to further reduce the number of street-dwelling homeless in the area.

Page 10 C 970472 PCK

DHS has demonstrated a willingness to work with the community to ensure that the residence remains a good neighbor. Meetings with elected officials and members of the community have resulted in a number of initiatives, including enhanced police coverage in the area of the residence, enhanced security for the residence, direct bus and van transportation for facility residents, and the establishment of a community advisory board. The City Planning Commission urges DHS to continue its good neighbor initiatives and suggests that mechanisms be adopted to respond on an immediate basis to all complaints, expeditiously notify the complainants of all conflict resolution, and report all incidents to the Community Advisory Board.

The need for this transitional residence was cited in the <u>Citywide Statement of Needs for Fiscal Years 1997-1998</u>. The site is already developed with buildings which were initially constructed for use as housing and it is accessible by public transportation.

The Borough President of Brooklyn included several conditions in his recommendation disapproving the application. In response to these conditions, the Commissioner of the Department of Homeless Services stated in a letter dated March 16, 1998 that:

DHS issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for organizations to operate an 80 bed transitional program in Building 8 in December, 1997. The number of transitional beds in Building 8 will be reduced to 80 once the provider selected through the RFP assumes management, which will take place by August, 1998. As stated in the ULURP application, DHS may also locate up to 40 permanent supportive housing units in Building 8. this permanent housing component, which is dependent upon

Page 11 C 970472 PCK

the identification of sufficient funding, would be in addition to the transitional beds...

DHS made modifications to the site prior to opening the facility in order to improve security. At the point where the driveway opens onto Clarkson Avenue, DHS repaired an existing gate and constructed an new security The booth at the facility's entrance is staffed 24 hours a day by security personnel who monitor conditions in front of the facility and maintain order. Security personnel also patrol the grounds on a twentyfour hour basis. A wrought iron fence wraps around the project site's perimeter along Clarkson and Albany Avenues and Winthrop Street, and separates the site from the surrounding sidewalk and streets. DHS also modified and extended and existing fence along the project site's eastern perimeter, which is adjacent to the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center. These enhancements allow DHS to effectively monitor the flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic to and from the site. All clients are required to sign in when entering the facility and sign out when leaving it... A DHS funded homeless outreach program has been identifying and offering services to homeless people and other public spaces in the in parks, streets, immediate vicinity of the Kingsboro transitional Residence since the facility opened. DHS's outreach efforts have revealed that a nominal proportion of the homeless people in the neighborhood of the shelter are from the facility...

All DHS shelters have a curfew of 10 p.m. Clients who have a legitimate reason to be away from the residence after this time, such as employment, must receive prior written permission to do so... Once the provider selected through the recent RFP assumes the management of Building 8, all clients of the Kingsboro transitional Residence will be enrolled in specialized programs... Clients of these specialized programs sign a contract upon their enrollment which includes an agreement to comply with the program's rules. Behaviors such as trespassing, loitering, of soliciting would violate these rules and subject the client to DHS's transfer policy.

The Commission believes that the facility provides important services to the city's homeless population and that DHS is using its best efforts to minimize the impacts of the facility on the neighborhood.

Page 12 C 970472 PCK

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, the City Planning Commission finds that the action described herein will have no significant impact on the environment; and it further

RESOLVED, by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, that based on the environmental determination and consideration described in this report, the application (C 970472 PCK) of the Department of Homeless Services and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services for the site selection and acquisition of property located at 681 Clarkson Avenue (Block 4833, part of Lot 1), Community District 9, Borough of Brooklyn, for use as a transitional residence, is approved.

The above resolution, duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on April 1, 1998 (Calendar No. 15) is filed with the Office of the Speaker, City Council, and the Borough President of Brooklyn, in accordance with the requirements of Section 197-d of the New York City Charter.

JOSEPH B. ROSE, Chairman
VICTOR G. ALICEA, Vice-Chairman,
ALBERT ABNEY, ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, AMANDA M. BURDEN, A.I.C.P.,
IRWIN CANTOR, P.E., KATHY HIRATA CHIN, Esq., ALEXANDER GARVIN,
ANTHONY I. GIACOBBE, Esq., BRENDA LEVIN, EDWARD T. ROGOWSKY,
JACOB B. WARD, Esq., Commissioners.

WILLIAM GRINKER, Commissioner, Recused.

Page 13 C 970472 PCK



Executive Officers: Albert Payne Chairperson

Kenneth Campbell First Vice Chair

Celeste Greene Second Vice Chair

Rose Meiselas Treasurer

Linda Green Secretary

Willie Scott District Manager FOF THE

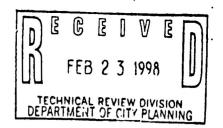
Community Board 17

39 Remsen Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11212-1536 (718) 467-3536 - FAX (718) 467-4113

12100

February 6, 1998

Joseph B. Rose Chairman New York City Department of City Planning 22 Reade Street New York, New York 10007



Dear Chairman Rose:

At its January 21, 1998 meeting, Community Board 17 voted to reject ULURP Application #970472, an application by the New York City Department of Homeless Services to operate a homeless shelter for men on the campus of the Kingsborough Psychiatric Center.

The residents that live in close proximity of the facility testified that their quality of life has deteriorated. Residents also testified that due to the shelter, a business has closed its doors because the clients that reside at the shelter have made it impossible for the business to operate. The Board heard testimony stating that the community is no longer safe and the young and elderly feel threatened.

We ask that you support the community and do not allow this facility to operate 681 Clarkson Avenue.

Sincerely,

Albert Payne Chairman

cc: Borough President Golden Council Member Una Clark

DATE

☐ RECOMMENDATION TO FOLLOW

RECOMMENDATION REPORT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN KINGSBOROUGH TRANSITIONAL HOMELESS SHELTER 970472 PCK

BACKGROUND

An application has been submitted by the New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) for site selection and acquisition of Buildings 6, 7 and 8 on the campus of Kingsborough Psychiatric Center, located at 681 Clarkson Avenue in East Flatbush, Brooklyn. The applicant proposes to utilize Buildings 6 and 8 for services for the mentally ill and chemically addicted. Accordingly, Building 6 will continue to shelter 225 clients with a history of alcohol and drug addiction. Building 8 will house a specialized program for mentally ill chemical abusers and the capacity will be reduced from its present population of 158 to 80 beds. A Request for Proposals has been released to solicit a provider for this service which is expected to begin in August 1998. The reduction of the population will free up the third floor of Building 8 which is proposed to be used as permanent supported housing for up to 35 clients. Funding is n w being sought for this purpose. Whether or not this effort is successful, the capacity of Building 8 will remain at 80 clients.

BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC HEARING

On February 26, 1998 the Borough President held a public hearing on this application. There were five speakers in favor of the application, including the Assistant Commissioner for Government and Community Relations and the Assistant Commissioner for Housing and Program Planning at DHS; a representative from the Salvation Army; the Bushwick Economic Development Corporation (BEDCO) program director and the Commanding Officer of the 71st Precinct of the New York City Police Department. There were 11 speakers in opposition including the chair of Community Board 9 (CB9) and New York State Assemblyman Nick Perry.

The DHS Assistant Commissioner for Housing and Program Planning gave a brief history of DHS actions to date. The New York State Office of Mental Health offered the Kingsborough Psychiatric site to DHS in 1997 to house DHS programs. It was pointed out that DHS has had community meetings and that a task force has been convened to promote good working relations with the community. A Request for Proposal will be released in 1998 for a new operator of the program in Building 8 to begin operation in August 1998. Building 6 houses clients for six to nine months as they go through a graduated program of short term assessment and referral.

A representative from the Salvation Army stated that the Salvati n Army operates eight shelter programs in Kings County, two f which are und r c ntract with DHS. They are presently responsible for the program in Building 8. He estimates that the present turnaround time for clients is about five months. He mentioned that the community had requested that at least 25 percent of the shelter workers be neighborhood residents. According to the representative, 30 percent of the workers are from the neighborhood and 82 percent are from Brooklyn. He estimates that there are 25 to 30 clients on-site during the day. He explained that there is a 10 p.m. curfew; however, some clients who work late have special permission to arrive after curfew.

The Program Director from the Bushwick Economic Development Corporation (BEDCO) gave a brief presentation and stated that BEDCO has four outreach workers responsible for the area. Their job is to make sure that shelter residents do not loiter in the streets or neighborhood. He n ted that the outreach workers have found hardcore homeless people in the neighborhood who do not belong to the shelter program. He emphasized that when BEDCO workers encounter problems, they communicate them immediately to the shelter administrators.

The Commanding Officer of the 71st Precinct of the Police Department stated that there have been no reported incidents or complaints related to shelter residents. In addition the sector where the shelter is located accounts for only eight percent of the precinct's crimes.

The Borough President asked the DHS Assistant Commissioner for Government and Community Relations questions regarding how Building 7 would be used; the number of residents to be housed in Building 8; and, the agency's proposed plans for the use of the third floor in this building. The Borough President also asked how DHS would address issues related to noise generated by transport buses, deliveries and the opening and closing of gates; problems associated with nightly walk-ins; and breaches in curfew. The Borough President's final question conc rned the requirement for this ULURP application.

In response to these questions, the Assistant Commissioner stated that Building 7 will not be utilized because it is not code compliant. With respect to Building 8, it serves 158 residents at present, but only 80 residents will be served in the Mental Health Service program scheduled to begin in August 1998. The third floor of Building 8 will be used for classrooms and office space if funding is not identified to set up the approximately forty permanent supported housing units that they hope to establish as part of the continuum of services for the men they are now serving. The noise issue has been addressed by requiring transport buses to pull onto the campus and by re-scheduling deliveries for morning or afternoon hours, instead of the former practice of late night deliveries. The 10 p.m. curfew is strictly enforced except in instances when clients are employed during evening hours. Walk-ins are not permitted at any time. With respect to the question regarding the rationed for this ULURP action the DHS representative indicated that the application was required because this project included a site selection. Further, ULURP was a condition required by the court in the litigation initiated by the community against the shelter.

The Chair of CB9 commented on strong community opposition, with 31 of 32 Community Board members voting against locating the homeless shitter in their community. According to the chair, the community would prefer a long term facility for the mentally ill at that site.

The Chair of the Dodgertown Association said he has letters of opposition from the all the public and private school principals in the area stating that the shelter and its residents would be a danger to school children.

The remaining speakers in opposition raised complaints which included: s licitation by shelter clients at banks, stores, eating establishments and in front of their homes; harassment by shelter clientele; loud and abusive talking late at night or early in the morning; traffic congestion on Clarkson Avenue caused by the shelter's buses picking up and dropping off shelter clientele; trespassing on homeowner's property; littering caused by the shelter clientele going through garbage; multiple burglaries of a resident's home; loss of market value of homes and coop rative apartments in the community because of the shelter; safety concern for the elderly and young children which has resulted in closure of a playground at a neighborhood residential cooperative building; lack of advance notice before this facility began operation; fear that the shelter population will be increased; lack of any real job training for the shelter clientele to enable them to move out of the community; and fear of the possibility of permanent housing of this population on the site.

Assemblyman Nick Perry reiterated many of the community resident's issues and stated that the shelter will significantly change the character of the neighborhood and impact negatively upon this community. He mentioned that DHS has already reneged on promises made to the community, but did not give examples.

CONSIDERATION

On January 27, 1998, CB9 voted to oppose this application. There were 31 votes against the proposal, one in favor and one abstention. Eight community residents spoke on the application, all in opposition. On January 21, 1998, Community Board 17 voted unanimously to oppose this application. There were six community residents who spoke against the proposal.

The Borough President believes that the Kingsboro Transitional Homeless Shelter has generated considerable community concern and has had a negative impact upon the quality of life within the East Flatbush community. Local schools, homeowners and community leaders have expressed opposition to the shelter at this location. Concerns raised by community representatives include: safety of children and the elderly; solicitation by shelter clients at banks, stores and restaurants; harassment by clients; littering; loud and abusive language; the possibility of permanent housing of clients on the site; and loss of homes market values.

RECOMMENDATION

Whereas, the Department for Homeless Services has been operating a shelter at this location since February 19, 1997;

Whereas, there are approximately 385 homeless men served at this facility;

Whereas, on January 27, 1998, Community Board 9 voted to oppose this application;

Whereas, concerns have been raised about the safety of children and elderly in the community;

Whereas, concerns have been raised about harassment, solicitation and littering by clients of this facility; and

Wh reas, residents believe that this facility will negatively impact the market value of their homes; now therefore be it,

Resolved, that the President of the Borough of Brooklyn, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter that, based on the consideration described in this report, recommends disapproval of this application subject to the adoption of the following conditions by either the City Planning Commission or City Council:

That the applicant:

- 1. agree that under no circumstances is the capacity of Building 8 to exceed 80 temporary shelter beds;
- 2. provide all necessary security to assure that clients refrain from loitering, soliciting or trespassing on private property within the area in which the shelter is located;
- 3. discharge any client who breaches curfew or violates the condition described in item 2 above;

Moward Golden, President Borough of Brooklyn