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COMMUNITY BOARD No. 2, MANHATTAN

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April 28, 2023

Molly Wasow Park
Acting DSS Commissioner
150 Greenwich St., 40th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Dear Acting Commissioner Park:

At its Full Board meeting on April 20, 2023, CB#2, Manhattan (CB2, Man.), adopted the following resolution:

IN SUPPORT OF PAUL'S PLACE'S VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMMUNITY DISTRICT 2, AND REQUESTING FURTHER ENGAGEMENT OF NEIGHBORS AND OF COMMUNITY BOARD 2 AS OPERATIONS CONTINUE

WHEREAS:

- 1) Paul's Place is a Safe Haven Shelter and Drop-In Center at 112-114 W. 14th Street operated by Center for Urban Community Services (CUCS), contracted by New York City's Department of Homeless Services division of the Department Social Services (DSS/DHS);
- 2) The Safe Haven contains 24 beds for ongoing stays from otherwise street homeless New Yorkers referred by the Manhattan Outreach Consortium;
- 3) The Paul's Place team includes three case managers for the Safe Haven residents, helping them access long-term housing outside of the Safe Haven;
- 4) The Drop-In Center serves roughly 75-100 individuals each day, with services including meals, showers, laundry, storage, and case management for those who want it;

- 5) The Drop-In Center connects these individuals with additional mental and physical healthcare, with employment opportunities, and with longer-term transitional housing at Safe Havens, stabilization beds, and conventional congregate shelters;
- 6) The Drop-In Center allows for 44 individuals to rest overnight in recliner chairs accessible via lottery, with roughly 60-70 individuals seeking them each day;
- 7) Paul's Place has served 1,213 discrete New Yorkers since opening seventh months ago;
- 8) There is clear ongoing demand from unhoused New Yorkers in downtown Manhattan for low-threshold options for meeting basic human needs and for ongoing shelter options;
- 9) Demand exceeds what Paul's Place can currently provide;
- 10) The Safe Haven and Drop-In Center models are helping connect street homeless New Yorkers with mental and physical health treatment, with employment, with more stable temporary housing, and with permanent supportive or traditional housing;
- 11) More data will be needed over a longer time horizon to fully understand the overall efficacy of this model and the opportunity for scaling it in Community District 2 and citywide;
- 12) The Community Advisory Board (CAB), and CUCS more broadly, are engaging community members including residents, members of Community Board 2, and representatives from elected officials' offices and the Sixth Precinct of the NYPD on an ongoing basis;
- 13) Some community members have complained of disturbances on the block and in neighboring buildings, including broken windows, drug use, and sexual contact;
- 14) CAB members and others have reported that Paul's Place has been proactive and collaborative in addressing community concerns;
- 15) Numbers of 311 and 911 calls related to Paul's Place have declined as protocols have improved;
- 16) Paul's Place staff, CUCS, and DSS/DHS have been responsive to CB2's interest in being kept apprised of the developments at Paul's Place;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT COMMUNITY BOARD 2, MANHATTAN

- 1) Supports the valuable work that Paul's Place is doing in providing stable shelter options and essential services to street homeless members of our community;
- 2) Commends Paul's Place and CUCS for collaborative engagement with the surrounding community, and for responsiveness to Community Board 2;

- 3) Encourages Paul's Place to continue robust engagement of neighbors and community members in surfacing and resolving issues related to its presence in the neighborhood;
- 4) Requests that Paul's Place return to CB2 in another six months to report on updates, including additional data about successful connection of clients and residents to mental health support and permanent housing;
- 5) Advocates for serious consideration by DSS/DHS of expansion of the private-room, low-threshold Safe Haven shelter model in order meet the demand of street homeless New Yorkers for this alternative to congregate shelter;
- 6) Affirms the need for New York City to increase the number of supportive and conventional housing opportunities in order to speed the rate at which New Yorkers in shelter can move into more permanent housing; and
- 7) Entreats the City to take meaningful actions to make housing more affordable, and to augment outreach and support of individuals with severe mental illness, in order to reduce the destabilization and vulnerability that arise from resulting street homelessness.

Vote: Unanimous: 41 Board Members in favor.

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Susan Kent, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Susanna Aaron, Chair
Human Services Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

SK/EM

c: Hon. Dan Goldman, Congressman
Hon. Brian Kavanagh, NYS Senator
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NYS Assembly Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Erik Bottcher, NYC Council Member
Julie Harrison, Assistant Commissioner of Street Capacity
Hailey Nolasco, Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Intergovernmental Affairs
Tracey Erhardt, Program Director at Paul's Place
Abbey Nyamekye, Chief Administrative Officer
Linda Shimer, Deputy Program Officer