

October 8, 2002

Linda Gibbs
Commissioner
Department of Homeless Services
33 Beaver Street
New York, NY 10004

Re: Salvation Army drop-in center and shelter at 502 W. 30th St.

Dear Commissioner Gibbs:

We are writing with regard to the proposal of the Salvation Army to operate a drop-in center and shelter at 502 W. 30th St. in Manhattan Community District No. 4.

We understand that this facility would help respond to the need identified by the city for such services, especially the need to replace slots that are being lost from the Bellevue Shelter. While our Board has consistently stressed the priority need for additional affordable housing development, we do recognize the need for temporary shelter also.

We have been extremely disappointed to see the number of undomiciled persons increasing again in various parts of our district and are eager to see this problem addressed. While we do not have sufficient information or knowledge to fully or specifically assess the Salvation Army's capacity to implement this particular proposal, our committee members had generally positive impressions about existing services. The plan presented to us was thorough, detailed, and appropriate; the physical plant and design seem appropriate; the need is real; and the presenters were informative and responsive to our concerns. Therefore, should DHS find the Salvation Army's proposal acceptable, we have no objection to this plan proceeding, with one essential pre-requisite.

It is critical that additional funds be allocated to add designated outreach workers to serve key sites in the CB4 area with large numbers of undomiciled persons, which now receive little or no attention. One key site, which is very close to the proposed shelter, is the area around Chelsea Park – bordered by 27th and 28th Streets, between 9th and 10th Avenue. We would also expect to participate in both planning for and monitoring this outreach. We strongly believe that the addition of such outreach services will be critical to the success of this new facility and would not support this proposal in its absence.

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Thanks for your attention. Please feel free to contact us if you would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Simone Sindin
Chair
Manhattan Community Board No. 4

Janice McGuire
Chair
Health & Human Services Committee

This letter was passed at Manhattan Community Board No. 4's October 2, 2002 full Board meeting.

cc: Hon. Michael Bloomberg, Mayor
Hon. C. Virginia Fields, Manhattan Borough President
Local Elected Officials