

Bobbie Walthall

To: David L. Corliss
Subject: RE: LCS - Franklin Park

From: Lance Johnson [mailto:ljohnson@peridiangroup.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2010 10:43 AM
To: David L. Corliss
Subject: FW: LCS - Franklin Park

Dave –

Please post this email online and distribute to LCS, and my fellow commissioners. I made comments in the paper a few days ago, and I've received numerous emails, calls, and visited with several stakeholders. To be fair to everyone, I would like to make my comments, concerns, and questions available to the public.

I planned to get this email out to you yesterday late afternoon/evening, but after I had reviewed and commented on the January Management Plan, I received an updated Plan (April). I was encouraged to see some of my concerns had been addressed in the updated version. I believe LCS has made an effort to listen to my concerns as well as those of the community. With that said, however, I still have concerns. I have presented them below.

“LCS is a dry shelter...”

If the guest arrives with alcohol, drugs, etc., what happens? Do the drugs and alcohol get taken away? Does the shelter give it back when they leave?

The Good Neighbor Agreement is very similar, if not almost the same as the current one being used at 9th & Kentucky. My concern is with the discomfort of the public with the current facility and the issues the current neighbors have had to deal with. There has been concern expressed by property owners in the area of the Franklin Park site. How could LCS give more authority to the neighbors and property owners in the area? How can the surrounding neighbors/property owners have the comfort/confidence they can keep LCS accountable to its plan?

I know a Good Neighbor Committee is referenced later in the “Good Neighbor Agreement”, and it allows for 3 businesses/residents to have a seat at the table through a committee. In addition, would LCS allow for three seats to be added at the Board level?

“Actions and Consequences”

Given the problems that the public and neighbors have had at the current location, and to accommodate families and help people that want a “hand-up”, why so lenient on some extreme behaviors that seem to me would undermine the mission? Why not some real, hard consequences?

Carrying a Weapon...why a second, third chance?

Alcohol or drug usage...if this a dry shelter and do not want this on premises, why second and third chance?

Selling, Buying, distributing drugs...Why limit the ban? Why not forever?

Violence with a weapon...Why limit ban? Why not gone forever?

Good Neighbor Agreement

This community has tried and LCS would attest to exhaustively trying to locate the shelter in other locations throughout town. We can all debate the reasons, but the fact is, to date, no one has wanted them in their neighborhood. Whether this is right or wrong, I'm not going to debate that. What I think needs to happen is something that will make the new neighborhood willing to “take a chance” on the new shelter, so LCS can prove they are a worthy neighbor. LCS has said they will be a good neighbor. Is there anything that can be put in place that is more substantive than just “trust us, it will be different/better”?

Would LCS be willing to add three board seats to some of the major property owners/businesses (or a respective representative) in the area in addition to the three seats on the Good Neighbor Committee? Obviously, this would not put them in a position of control, but it would give them a seat at the table, and get them “plugged in” on a more regular basis with the operation/issues LCS faces.

I know this is a land use issue, but unfortunately given the history of LCS at the current location, there is reason for concern. It is very difficult for me to accept the premise that “We’re going to do it better, and we won’t have the problems that we had at 10th & Kentucky”. I’ve heard that the Drop-In Center is one of the main reasons for all the problems LCS has experienced at 10th & Kentucky. Why hasn’t LCS dropped that program before now if it’s been such a problem to manage?

I/we are being asked to approve something that will be a permanent location for LCS. What if the problems that exist now, don’t go away? What happens if they get worse? We (commissioners, neighbors, property owners, community) are being asked to trust that the new location along with the operation/management (same) will solve it and be better for everyone.

Given that we are supposed to decide this issue next Tuesday, and the Management Plan has changed – as late as yesterday, I have concerns this is being rushed. Believe me, I know a lot of people have put in an incredible amount of work – most everyone, more than I. The argument is lost on me why “We need to just get it done because everyone is tired and this is the solution we have now after all this time”. For such a permanent decision (locating this facility in a new neighborhood, albeit one the City has determined as the next business/commercial – Jobs center), I think we should take the time to get it right.

Does a solution exist that would allow LCS to operate in a location for a period of 2-4 years while LCS demonstrates the management/operation will work with the neighborhood. At the same time, fundraising could be taking place and a permanent solution/location could be found?

I feel the management and operation of the shelter is relevant and should not be discounted. LCS has heard this, and I commend them for the progress that has been made. It is my hope LCS will hear my comments, as well as the other commissioners, and we can achieve something the community will be proud of.

Lance Johnson
City Commissioner

I provided my comments below in reference to the January Management Plan. I feel they have now been addressed in the April Management Plan. I hope I don’t confuse anyone by providing them, but thought by including them, it would give more context to my concerns as well as show the efforts made by LCS to address my comments/concerns.

Item 2, second bullet point – “Guests will be assigned a case manager after intake...held accountable”.

Is it within 72 hours as mentioned in other sections of the document?

How will the guests be held accountable? Is there a time limit to their stay/program?

If they’re not making progress with their program and towards their goals, are they required to leave?

If there is a time limit, does it get extended? Why?

If there isn’t a time limit, why not?

Item 2, fifth bullet point – “LCS is a dry shelter...”

If the guest arrives with alcohol, drugs, etc., what happens? Do the drugs and alcohol get taken away? Does the shelter give it back when they leave?

Item 4 – “Beyond 90 days...”

Is the guest placed in a program at the time he/she meets with the case manager? Or, can it be up to 90 days before a guest is put in a program? Again, is there a time limit to stay per program/guest (assuming they are making progress toward their respective goals) – similar to Item 2 above.

Not sure of the page – It falls under “Rights and Responsibilities – Hours and Schedules”. “Day shelter...open to any homeless person...”. To me, this sounds like a drop-in shelter. It is my understanding there is not going to be a drop-in center at this location. Correct? Again, I want to clarify that all guests are required to be in a program?

Same Page, “All Guests – Conditions of Stay”. All guests will complete an intake form...plan to get out of homelessness”. Is there a time limit associated with the plan?

“LCS is a dry shelter...” Again, is the alcohol, drugs taken? Returned?

Level 1 and Level 2 Shelter? It’s my understanding this is supposed to be an Emergency Shelter. This is what is stated on the first page under Item 1. Why is this designation being made? Is every guest required to check-in, complete a form, meet with a case manager, placed in a program and required to make progress toward that program/goal(s)?