

## Providence House's "Fact" Sheet

### -and Why Their Facts Don't Matter Here

No-one is disputing Providence House's excellent track record, or the nobility of their mission. All we are saying is that the facility they are proposing to build at 329 Lincoln Rd. isn't appropriate for that location. Here's why:

- **What is the Providence House proposal?**

Providence House has applied for City permission to construct a 26-unit, six-story building on the site of a 16-unit, four-story apartment building that was surreptitiously torn down via an emergency demolition order in June, after the Community Board had already denied Providence House's application.

- **How can they fit that many units into that space?**

This structure will consist of 26 300 sq. ft. studios, consisting of a one-room dwelling (kitchenette along one wall), plus a bathroom. Additionally, they have requested a zoning exemption to allow them to construct an extra two stories on the new building. 300 sq. ft. is approximately the size of the living room area of one of the houses on these blocks. Imagine if you had to live in a room of that size (including the bathroom).

- **Who is going to live here?**

Providence House is proposing a mix of 80% supportive housing and 20% affordable housing for lower-income single women.

- **What is supportive housing?**

The women to be housed here on a permanent basis all have a history of incarceration, in keeping with Providence House's mission, and also mental health issues. This last point is crucial to the funding of this project, which is coming primarily from the department of mental health.

- **What's wrong with that?**

Unlike at every other Providence House facility, there will be no full-time live-in social services presence at this facility, only a live-in super and a 24-hr security guard. Providence House has no experience in unsupervised supportive housing of this nature, which is why they have partnered with Community Access, which has until now only worked on larger developments. While this plan might work elsewhere, it is not appropriate for this block.

- **What is the block of Lincoln Rd. between Nostrand and Rogers like?**

This is a challenged block, with an ongoing crime and drug presence. Within the past week there has been one shooting, one report of vagrants breaking into a house, and one report of prostitution being conducted out of an apartment building. At the same

time there are many families trying to raise their children in a mix of three and four story houses, apartment buildings, and condominiums. The population density, combined with the criminal element already present on the block, would not create a healthy environment for either party in this equation.

- **Do you have another solution?**

Yes! Our elected officials (State Senator Eric Adams, Borough President Marty Markowitz, and Councilmember Mathieu Eugene) have proposed and improved mix of at least 60% supportive housing and 40% affordable housing, with no zoning exception. A zoning exception could be obtained if the plans were to include more family-sized apartments as opposed to only SRO studios.

- **How would this help?**

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Our neighborhood has a great need for affordable housing, and there are no affordable housing units under construction or planned in Prospect Lefferts Gardens. There are some affordable units under construction in Flatbush, on Caton Avenue, and in Crown Heights, east of PLG, on Winthrop St. and East New York Avenue, but there is nothing planned for people who already live in and love our neighborhood. These current neighborhood residents, who already care about our community, would be an asset to the block, and the reduced concentration of supportive housing clients would result in a better, less-stressful mix for all.

- **Is the concentration of supportive housing here a problem?**

Community Districts 8 and 9 already have more than their fair share of affordable and transitional housing beds relative to the overall area population density. Providence House and others will dispute this, saying that their facility is the only one of its kind. It is the only one in the area to be funded by HPD and the Department of Mental Health, but there are at least 16 other such facilities within the boundaries of CD9, they are just funded by other agencies and private charities. A recent proposal to revise the City Charter to include all of these facilities in Fair Share accounting was not presented for a vote in the most recent elections (unlike a similar rectification of the counting of waste treatment and transportation plants, which passed overwhelmingly).

- **Providence House says that what you're asking for isn't financially feasible and if they don't get what they want they will walk away, leaving us with a vacant lot to attract crime.**

Providence House is playing on your fears. A 60/40 split is entirely financially possible, particularly if family-sized affordable apartments are included. Currently, Providence House states that it plans to collect approximately \$1000 from the Department of Mental Health for each of the 20 supportive units, with an additional amount to be paid by the client, depending on the level of her benefits/employment, and approximately \$750 for each affordable studio. A greater number of larger-size affordable apartments

would bring in more money (\$900 each for eight three-room apartments, for example), while a reduced number of supportive residences would entail a lessened need for social workers and security guards. Perhaps, for example, a security guard would only need to be on duty from 6 pm – 6 am, already halving that budget, and the number of social and case workers required could also be reduced.

- **Even if Providence House were to abandon this project, this lot could be sold to another developer by HPD.**

Construction in PLG and nearby of market-rate condominiums is doing well. The recent development of 11 one and two bedroom condominiums at 59 Hawthorne St., introduced in July, 2010, with prices ranging from \$330K - \$495K has 4 units in contract; other condominiums are being developed just south of PLG. A market-rate project could be built here, as could a mixed market-rate/affordable development. Providence House is not our last, best hope, and they should not be allowed to intimidate us into thinking they are.

- **What can I do? How can I help?**

**Councilman Mathieu Eugene needs to hear from you. Call or e-mail him to express your opposition to Providence House's strong-arm tactics, and to encourage him to stand up for our community by supporting affordable housing in our neighborhood. You can call his district office: 718-287-8762 and his City Hall office: 212-788-7352. Ask to speak to JONAH ROGOFF, Chief of Staff. E-mail: [mathieu.eugene@council.nyc.gov](mailto:mathieu.eugene@council.nyc.gov); [jrogoff@council.nyc.gov](mailto:jrogoff@council.nyc.gov).**

**Most importantly, contact (e-mail preferred) the members of the City Council Subcommittee on Planning, Dispositions, and Concessions, as well as those on the Committee on Land Use, as below:**

**Stephen T. Levin, Chair, Subcommittee on Planning, Dispositions and Concessions**

Phone: 718-875-5200

e-mail: [slevin@council.nyc.gov](mailto:slevin@council.nyc.gov)

**Charles Barron, District 42**

Phone: 718-649-9495

e-mail: [mwashington@council.nyc.gov](mailto:mwashington@council.nyc.gov) (note that this is the address for his assistant, Monique Washington; I was told at Mr. Barron's office that he does not accept personal e-mails except from those in his district)

**Sara M. Gonzalez, District 38**

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**Members of the Committee on Land Use:**

**Leroy G. Comrie, Jr., Chair, Committee on Land Use**

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**Brad S. Lander, District 39**

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**Diana Reyna, District 34**

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e-mail: [bambaruch@council.nyc.gov](mailto:bambaruch@council.nyc.gov) (Please note that this is her Deputy Chief of Staff; I was told that the Councilmember receives so many e-mails that she doesn't often check them, so it's not the best way to get her attention)

**Albert Vann, District 36**

Phone: 718-919-0740 or 718-919-0741

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**Jumaane D. Williams, District 45**

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Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 11/10/10

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Carol Clark

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: FIPD

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

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Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 208, 247 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 11-10-10

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Sal D'Arulo, Exec. Director

Address: Restored Homes

I represent: Broadway

Address: NYC

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms