

PENDING COMMITTEE APPROVAL

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF HEALTH, HOSPITALS AND SOCIAL SERVICE
PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 31, 2016 at
ATRIA RIVERDALE
3718-3726 HENRY HUDSON PARKWAY**

PRESENT

Lenora Croft
Diomarys Escaño
Steven Froot
Karen Pesce
Tao Moran
Zelda Keaton
Pravin Mascarenhas
Melanie Garmer
Katherine Archila
Lawrence Domenech
Elizabeth Thompson
Joel Chaiken
Sue Dodell
Ian Christner
Benna De Costa

AFFILIATION

Committee Chair
Vice Chair
CB8 - Committee Member
CB8 - Committee Member
CB8
Special Citizens Futures Unlimited
Special Citizens Futures Unlimited
Bon Secours
Bon Secours
OPWDD
Neighbor
Neighbor
Neighbor
Neighbor
Neighbor

PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing was called to order at 7:38 p.m.

The Chair welcomed all in attendance and explained that the first part of this meeting is a public hearing, convened pursuant to the Padavan Law, to consider the establishment of an Individual Residential Alternative (“IRA”) at 442 West 259th Street, proposed by Special Citizens Futures Unlimited (SCFU).

SCFU was represented by its Sr. Director of Programs, Zelda Keaton; and its Chief Programs Officer, Pravin Mascarenhas. Lawrence Domenech, of the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (“OPWDD”), was also in attendance.

The representatives of SCFU provided information about their organization, the proposed IRA at 442 West 259th Street, the property itself, and other IRAs operated by SCFU in the neighborhood. The residents selected to live in the proposed IRA at 442 West 259th Street would be four individuals with mild to moderate Autism, aged in their mid to late twenties, and have already been identified.

The prospective residents are all Bronx residents who are aging out of school facilities located in Pennsylvania and Upstate New York. The proposed IRA will be supervised on a 24-hour basis, with staff assisting residents with meal preparation and other activities of daily living, helping them to be as independent as possible. Three of the residents will attend a day program

and one resident will take educational classes in New Rochelle, with transportation to be provided by van to and from their day activities. The proposed IRA at 442 West 259th Street has its own driveway and 6 off-street parking spots. The residence is not a “locked” facility. The individuals who will reside here do not require a restrictive setting, and do not present a danger to themselves, to staff or to neighbors. Residents will have the opportunity to have visitors, including friends and family. The proposed IRA is expected to be permanent housing for the residents, who will each have their own bedroom.

Sue Dodell and Joel Chaiken, community residents, expressed concern over the establishment of the facility and questioned the representative extensively on SCFU’s plan to prevent traffic problems, as well as, whether the residents might be a danger to the community. SCFU representative assured the community residents that off-street parking will be available for the IRA staff, that the home passed the over concentration check with OPWDD, and individuals with developmental/intellectual disabilities pose no danger to the community. However, Ms. Keaton provided them with her contact information should any problems arise with respect to parking or the prospective residents. SCFU also expressed it is open to establishing a Community Advisory Board.

Following the question and answer period, the chair declared the public hearing closed and called for a meeting of the committee.

The public hearing concluded at approximately 8:20 pm.

COMMITTEE MEETING

Update: Katherine Archila, Program Manager, Bon Secours

Ms. Archila updated the Committee on the Marble Hill Mental Health Outreach Program. The Outreach Program is staffed by Bon Secours and works in connection with Riverdale Mental Health Association (RMHA) to meet with residents of Marble Hill in their own community as part of its “Healthy Communities” initiatives. The first meeting took place at St. Stephen’s United Methodist Church and had eight attendees; attendance at the meetings has increased to an average of approximately ten to fourteen attendees per meeting. The participants were referred by RMHA. Community Forums are the second part of the Outreach Program, where specific demographic groups are targeted and encouraged to attend Forums to discuss a variety of topics. Bon Secours hopes the Committee will promote the Forums and help them expand their reach in the future, and as such will share the details of the Forums with CB8 and the Riverdale Press.

Minutes: September 2016 minutes were voted on and approved unanimously, by Lenora Croft, Steve Froot, Diomarys Escaño, and Karen Pesce.

Resolution: The proposal to establish a group residence at 442 West 259th Street was discussed. The Committee approved a resolution to recommend that the Board vote to approve the establishment of the proposed IRA, by the following vote: 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

In Favor – Board members: Lenora Croft, Diomarys Escaño, Steve Froot, and Karen Pesce.

With that said the meeting was adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Diomarys Escaño, HHSS Vice-Chair