

From: Julie Ellingson [mailto:jellingson@rah-tc.net]
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2015 11:01 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward4
Subject: Support for Better Mental Health Access

Honorable Council Member Russ Stark:

I am writing to express my support for the move of Diane Ahrens Crisis Residence to the former convent on LaCrosse Avenue in St. Paul.

Insufficient treatment for those living with mental illness has been a concern of mine for some time. Now that my son was recently diagnosed with mental illness, it is even more important to me. It is possible that with proper treatment, people with mental illness can manage their illnesses over time and even become productive and contributing citizens in the communities in which they live. Proper treatment not only means medication and therapy, but a safe place to live. It is difficult for anyone to concentrate on getting well when you have to worry about where to lay your head at night.

Our community is in desperate need of more help for those living with mental illness, which, I believe is about 1 in 4 persons. So many go undiagnosed and even when diagnosed still end up in jails and/or prison. It is far more effective and less costly to treatment mental illness out of the criminal justice system.

I trust you will stand by the decision to utilize the previous convent for the purpose of expanding services for those living with mental illness. It is the right thing to do.

Thank you!

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