

From: Frees, Karen A [mailto:Karen.Frees@allina.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2015 5:21 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1; #CI-StPaul_Ward2; #CI-StPaul_Ward3; #CI-StPaul_Ward4; #CI-StPaul_Ward5; #CI-StPaul_Ward6
Cc: karenfrees651@gmail.com
Subject: Please Vote to Allow People Incorporated to Relocate the Diane Ahrens Crisis Residence to 1784 LaCrosse Avenue

Dear St. Paul City Council Members:

Dai Thao, Dave Thune, Chris Tolbert, Russ Start, Amy Brendmoen, Dan Bostrom and Bill Finney,

I live in Ward 1 of St. Paul and I work as a Clinical Social Worker in the Twin Cities area, including St. Paul and Ramsey County.

I am writing to urge you to vote in favor of relocating the People Incorporated Diane Ahrens Crisis Residence from its current location to 1784 LaCrosse Avenue, in St. Paul.

At least one-in-four individuals live with a mental health concern. I work with individuals who have some type of disability. Most individuals who have a physical disability have also had a mental health concern, such as depression or an anxiety disorder at some point in their recovery process. This includes individuals who have experienced a Stroke, a Traumatic Brain Injury, MS, ALS, spinal cord injuries, etc. These are individuals who live among us every day. Our relatives, our neighbors, our church members, our friends. Every day, we live and work and socialize with many people who have a medical condition which also involves their mental health and well-being. They live in our neighborhoods already. Obtaining appropriate medical, social and vocational services and support is important to anyone's ability to manage and function to the best of their ability, whether their medical condition is related to a metabolic disorder, dementia, hypertension, vascular disease, or mental health, etc.

Our community is in desperate need of community mental health services. The Planning Commission has already approved the change in zoning. To deny the relocation based on unfounded fears would be discriminatory and further stigmatizing. Let's make sure people can access the right treatment at the right time. We are a community of compassion and support.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. Please feel free to call me if you have questions.

Karen Frees

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