

WARD 5 Emergency Meeting

Response to Mayor Bowser's
Homeward Program



Meeting Date: February 22, 2016, 6:30PM – 8:30PM

Meeting Location: New Canaan Baptist Church, 2826 Bladensburg Rd NE, WDC

Purpose: Discuss Community Concerns; propose alternative Ward 5 Site Location

Organizers: Langdon Park Community Association * Woodridge South Community Association

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Background:

The Langdon Park and Woodridge South Community Associations called for an emergency meeting with Ward 5 residents to discuss Mayor Bowser's plan to close D.C. General Homeless Shelter by placing smaller units in all 8 Wards. The Mayor's proposed homeless shelter site in Ward 5 located at **2266 25th Place NE**, is a warehouse in an industrial area flanked by the Metro Bus Barn, CSX railroad tracks, and several Nightclubs. There are other environmental issues and concerns with the site location as it is near a Waste Management facility, medical marijuana cultivation centers, and auto repair businesses with paint spray booths. Additionally, the site at 2266 25th Place NE does not offer viable transportation options nor does it provide the sort of convenient amenities (i.e. grocery store or drug store) that would allow our homeless citizens to be self-sufficient. By all accounts, the site location is not appropriate under the guidelines set forth by the Mayor in allowing our homeless citizens to 1) integrate into the community, 2) maintain their dignity, and 3) provides a healthy and safe environment. Moreover, this location is in very close proximity to seven (7) existing homeless shelters in one general area of Ward 5 thus creating an over concentration of homeless citizens within the combined communities.

Facts:

Ward 5 has both homeless shelter facilities as well as hotels serving as temporary shelters. These include:

1. Adams Place NE – Men's Shelter*
2. Days Inn – up to 300 hundred families**
3. Quality Inn – up to 300 hundred families**
4. Holiday Inn – up to 40 families**
5. Fairfield Inn – up to 40 families**
6. Howard Johnson – up to 40 families**
7. New York Ave (Ivy City) – Men's Shelter*

**Denotes designated shelters*

***Number of families may not accurately reflect current numbers and are approximations based upon past data.*

- Overconcentration of homeless shelter facilities in SMD 5C

- 8-ward strategy – Sites address homeless families that need temporary support. Sites do not address citizens with mental or physical disabilities.
- Need more homes instead of shelters for families rather than distinct shelters. Homes can and should be dispersed throughout Ward 5, integrated into neighborhoods.

Legislative Conversation

1. Hearing Date: March 17, 10AM Room 500
See: <http://lms.dccouncil.us/Download/35335/B21-0620-HearingNotice1.pdf>
2. Current location requires a use variance from the Board of Zoning.
3. Eminent Domain? Is this an option for blighted properties within the residential community?

How you can help!

- **Sign up to testify** at the council hearing March 17th, 10AM, Room 500 See: <http://action.dccouncil.us/page/s/sign-up-to-testify> to register
- See Summary information regarding the Mayor's bill.
<http://lms.dccouncil.us/Download/35335/B21-0620-HearingNotice1.pdf>

See the full list of sites here:

http://mayor.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/mayormb/page_content/attachments/Short-Term-Family-Housing-Site-Selection-2.pdf According to the Mayor's office, there were only two possible sites in Ward 5 that met the city's criteria. Residents in Ward 5 know and believe we can do better for our homeless citizens.

- **2266 25th PI NE will have a 15 Year Lease with 5 option years – approx. \$2 Million/year; private rooms (no bathroom, kitchen), approximately \$3400 per family. See lease attached**

Ward 5 Requirements

- Residential Area
- Healthy, dignified, and ethical
- Transportation multiple bus lines and train options
- Green Space
- Near Amenities like grocery store, drug store
- Job Centers within the facility
- Costs (come up with locations, homes, smaller sites that cost less than the proposed sites).
- Social services (medical, mental)

Alternative Sites for Consideration

- Fort Totten Area near UDC
- Fort Totten housing development
- Smaller scattered sites throughout Ward 5
- Potomac Prep Charter School Closing*
- Tree of Life Public Charter School Closing*
- Rhode Island and Newton Street (former tourist home)
- St. Frances De Sales School and Convent vacant (closed and available)*

- Former MPD Youth Division on (17th and RI) Rhode Island Ave NE*
- 2900 South Dakota Ave NE, still vacant and available for purchase*
- Decommissioned DCPS School Buildings (Spingarn High School, Crummell Elementary)
- DC Housing Stock*
- Smaller sites
- Convert the \$3400 per room into vouchers to afford apartments

Other Potential Sites not necessarily in Ward 5

- 13th and Rhode Island Ave NE Empty lot next to Fire Station
- Corner of Riggs and South Dakota Ave
- Thurgood Marshall (will potentially re-open, ANC Commissioner opposes location)
- Bladensburg/NY Ave NE Road Development
- St. Joseph's Eastern Ave and Randolph
- Walter Reed, Georgia Ave NW (Ward 4)
- Old Soldiers Home (Ward 4)
- St. Benedict the Moor (ward 7)
- Religious Community, Non Profit Community, NGOs
- Tree of Life Charter School

Lingering Questions

- What are the plans to fix the management issues in current shelters, group homes, or facilities to help homeless citizens?
- Where and how many Public/Private Shelters exist in all of Ward 5?
- How will this plan be different from existing Shelter system?
- Where is the religious/faith-based community? Most have a homelessness ministry. What about the non-profit and NGOs who specialize in taking care of homeless citizens?

What if? What do you want to see in the area if the mayor keeps the current site?

- File legal action against the City Government.
- Find out if there are other locations outside of DC where this model worked. Ask the Mayor's Office for proof where this model has worked or is working.
- Have the industrial area re-zoned to residential area, mixed use area, or anchor for transformation.
- Require environmental impact study.
- Require private bathroom, kitchen within the rooms
- Funding for WARD 5 WORKS; investments for Queens Chapel/Bladensburg Road area – Office of Planning Website; see: <http://planning.dc.gov/publication/ward-5-industrial-land-transformation-study>
- Energy efficient facility