



D A S H

DISTRICT ALLIANCE FOR SAFE HOUSING

Q: Is DASH opening a “Battered Women’s Shelter” across from McKinley Tech?

A: The District Alliance for Safe Housing (DASH) is a nonprofit agency that has acquired an apartment building in the area of 3rd and T Streets NE for the purpose of providing safe and supportive housing for women and their families who are survivors of domestic violence. These women and their children will experience apartment style living in a safe, violence- and drug-free environment for a period of up to two years. They will have access to a variety support services on the premises to help them as they transition to independent living. Unlike a shelter, these families will have leases, go to work, attend classes, attend area schools and churches, and will have programs aimed at supporting the transition back to stability and independence. The property is not located across from McKinley Tech.

Q: Do DASH and Councilmember Thomas have a “back-door-deal” to force this shelter on the community?

A: Although this housing project does not require community approval, we first reached out to the ANC 5C05 commissioner in September of 2007 in an effort to determine how to best introduce this program into the community and involve the community in shaping its presence. We also invited the ANC 5C chair to a meeting with CM Thomas to discuss this project and seek community involvement before the property was acquired. In February 2008, DASH met with the ANC 5C05 commissioner to discuss the project and agreed to attend both the ANC 5C February meeting and the ANC 5C05 SMD meeting convened to discuss this project. DASH has accepted every invitation to provide information concerning the safe and supportive housing project and has repeatedly sought input from the community on how to best be a community asset and good neighbor.

Q: Is DASH is evicting Section 8 and special needs tenants to make room for the program?

A: DASH is relocating tenants, not evicting tenants. The current apartment building is occupied approximately 50% by clients of the DC Department of Mental Health (DMH), and private tenants - some may be receiving a Section 8 subsidy. DASH is working to relocate the private tenants by finding equal housing, with equal access to community amenities, metro, bus lines, etc., and subsidizing the rent they would pay at these new apartments for a period of up to 60 months. In addition, relocated tenants receive:

1. Moving assistance or reimbursement of moving expenses;
2. Payment of application fees, deposits, utility transfer fees and other items related to moving; and
3. Assistance identifying housing that meets their needs.

Those receiving support through DMH will be supported by DMH through the relocation process.

The building requires an entire renovation including new electrical system, new sprinklers, and a new elevator in order to meet the District of Columbia Housing Codes. No one has been or will be forcefully evicted to make room for this project. All current and future residents will be expected to comply with provisions of their lease.

The post-renovated building will be secure (with twenty-four housing security guards and cameras located inside and outside the building), handicapped accessible, drug free and well-maintained.

Q: Will participants of DASH's housing program present a safety risk to the community?

A: The program's tenants will be women and children who have been forced out of their homes as a result of domestic violence. DASH's housing program will provide these families with the opportunity to live in a safe environment and receive support for choices that promote health and stability.

All tenants will have access to supportive services around the clock, seven days a week. Families who have difficulties will have immediate access to staff who can intervene in a crisis, and neighbors will have someone on staff to contact if they become concerned about the condition of the property or the behavior of a resident.