

Service Provider Information Sheet

Service Provider: Preble Street

Point Person: Fiona Mason

Services List: Targeted outreach, engagement and case management services for clients who are homeless and who meet program requirements for Veterans Housing Services, Anti-Trafficking Services and the Medication Assisted Recovery Program (MARP) within Health Services.

Target Demographic:

- Veterans
- Survivors of Human Trafficking that meet the federal definition of Human Trafficking
- Uninsured and high risk individuals with Substance Use Disorder that are participants in the Medication Assisted Recovery Program (MARP)
- Youth age 18 through 20

Days /Hours: TBD

Space /Office requirements: TBD

What else is needed?

All the of the services outlined are provided through and dependent on grant funding. Historically, funding and needs have changed over time which results in fluctuating service delivery. For example, we apply for and have received awards annually for our Veterans Housing Services program through the federal Specialized Services for Veterans and Families (SSVF) program. After receiving the award for this next grant period starting October 1, 2018, we were notified they may be reducing all SSVF grants for the next grant period. This reduction in funding will result in reduced service delivery.

Anti-Trafficking Services (ATS) is also dependent on federal funds. The current award cycle was for a three-year period and we anticipate receiving funds for another grant period starting 10/1/18. Our ATS team has fluctuated within and across grant funding cycle based on several factors; these changes in team configuration and number of caseworkers affect our ability to provide services.

The Health Services intensive case management services offered to MARP clients is also dependent on grant funding. We are currently participating in the MARP pilot project which ends in March 2019. We are hopeful there will be an opportunity to apply for another grant period through a subcontract with Greater Portland Health however we have no definitive information at this time.

Teen Services provides day services, case management and overnight shelter to youth age 12-20. We do not allow youth age 18-20 to access services at our Resource Center and instead encourage them to access services through our Teen Services. This aids in their ability to seek age and developmentally appropriate services that supports them in moving from homelessness to housing stability. Currently Teen Services works collaboratively with Oxford Street Shelter to encourage 18-20-year-old youth to access services through Teen Services. We would like to continue this practice with the new Homeless Services Center going forward.

Expected Outcomes: Access to specialized services as able.



Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

Fwd: [External Sender]Spurwink Further Location Feedback

1 message

Aaron Geyer <aeg@portlandmaine.gov>
To: "Harr, Adam" <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Mar 11, 2019 at 4:30 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Ben Strick** <bstrick@spurwink.org>
Date: Thu, Mar 7, 2019 at 7:11 PM
Subject: RE: [External Sender]Spurwink Further Location Feedback
To: Sara Fleurant <skf@portlandmaine.gov>
Cc: Aaron Geyer <aeg@portlandmaine.gov>

Hi Sarah,

My apologies for the delayed reply. We will work with the city to deliver services wherever the new shelter is located. With that said, County Way or Angelo's Acre would be markedly better for us. Having the shelter located within walking distance of Spurwink Adult Behavioral Health would make it much easier to collaborate and help coordinate care. I think this will be especially true for our MAT program. One of the strengths of our program will be the ability to directly administer medication on a daily basis if needed. While our substance abuse counselors can meet with clients anywhere, it will be hard for the program to routinely administer Suboxone outside of an secure office setting. The closer we can be to the shelter the easier it will be for clients to successfully engage in treatment. I suspect a daily bus ride to/from Riverside Industrial Parkway would create a significant barrier for many individuals.

Please let me know if there is anything else we can do to help.

Thanks so much,

---Ben

BENJAMIN STRICK, LCSW

Director of Adult Behavioral Health



207.871.1200 x 2149 | 207.615.2146 (c) | 207.871.1232 (f)

901 Washington Ave, Suite 100

Portland, Maine 04103

www.spurwink.org

From: Sara Fleurant <skf@portlandmaine.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 27, 2019 5:06 PM
To: Ben Strick <bstrick@spurwink.org>
Cc: Aaron Geyer <aeg@portlandmaine.gov>
Subject: [External Sender]Spurwink Further Location Feedback

Hi Ben,

We wanted to reach out and thank each of you for recently providing feedback on our site location surveys. As you may be aware coming out of last night's Health and Human Service Committee Meeting the site list was reduced to three locations. We have been asked to produce a deeper dive on these three locations and a large part of that is receiving more feedback from our valued community partners. We are asking you to provide any comments or feedback on the attached document, including any onsite or outreach services you think you may be able to provide at any of the locations. We understand at this time these are projections and not actual services to be delivered. We again want to thank so many of you who said they would partner with the City no matter where the new services center will eventually go. We are hoping to have these returned by next Friday so that this data can be compiled for the council.

Please feel free to contact either Aaron or myself with any questions.

Thank you,

Sara

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Sara Fleurant
Assistant Director of Housing Services

Oxford Street Shelter

207-482-5224

fax- 207-761-0536

skf@portlandmaine.gov

Notice: Under Maine law, documents - including e-mails - in the possession of public officials or city employees about government business may be classified as public records. There are very few exceptions. As a result, please be advised that what is written in an e-mail could be released to the public and/or the media if requested.

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--

Aaron Geyer
City of Portland

3/11/2019

City of Portland Mail - Fwd: [External Sender]Spurwink Further Location Feedback

Health & Human Services Department

[196 Lancaster Street](#)

[Portland, ME 04101](#)

(207) 482-5131

aeg@portlandmaine.gov

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Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

Fwd: Amistad Further Location Feedback

2 messages

Aaron Geyer <aeg@portlandmaine.gov>
To: "Harr, Adam" <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

Thu, Mar 7, 2019 at 4:38 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Sara Fleurant** <skf@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: Thu, Feb 28, 2019 at 4:09 PM
Subject: Fwd: Amistad Further Location Feedback
To: Aaron Geyer <aeg@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Brian Townsend** <briant@amistadinc.com>
Date: Thu, Feb 28, 2019 at 12:44 PM
Subject: RE: Amistad Further Location Feedback
To: Meredith Pesce <meredithp@amistadinc.com>, Sara Fleurant <skf@portlandmaine.gov>

Hi Sara,

Amistad would be able and willing to provide services onsite and through outreach at any of the three identified options.

Our feedback on the three site options:

With the disclaimer that no site can be perfect, we are inclined to see the County Way location as the best of the three. The most significant positive is the location relative to other services and resources. We do not have the same broad negative feelings about the proximity to the jail that some others seem to have. We agree that the optics aren't great, but we suspect that the people who will have the strongest negative reaction to those optics are not the actual people who will be seeking emergency shelter and services there. The jail does not have negative socio-environmental factors along its periphery, so any downside about being next door is conceptual. If Amistad were looking to purchase land and build a program somewhere, and prioritized accessibility (as we do) above most factors, we would absolutely consider this lot.

Angelo's Acre may have some positive aspects, but our immediate reaction has to do with safety, given the nearness of the harbor. Our community has had enough tragedy associated with accidental drownings; it is hard to overlook this when considering that spot. It also seems like a spot that would be exposed to significant wind and cold, in addition to the noise of the bridge, and we wonder about these factors as being additional existence burdens on the people seeking shelter and support there.

The third option, on Riverside, feels like the least optimal due to its distance from the service center. If all three options were similarly distant, it might hold up by comparison with some other options, but, as one example, it would seem less viable as an option than the previously proposed Barron Center location.

If you would like us to flesh out any of these responses or offer thoughts on specific questions, please let us know!

Brian

From: Meredith Pesce
Sent: Wednesday, February 27, 2019 5:45 PM
To: Sara Fleurant <skf@portlandmaine.gov>; Brian Townsend <briant@amistadinc.com>
Subject: Re: Amistad Further Location Feedback

Thanks Sara, we'll dig into this and send it back over soon.

Meredith Pesce
Associate Director
Amistad
[66 State Street](#)
[Portland, Me 04101](#)

207-241-9141

From: Sara Fleurant <skf@portlandmaine.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, February 27, 2019 4:55 PM
To: Brian Townsend; Meredith Pesce
Subject: Amistad Further Location Feedback

Hi Brian and Meredith,

We wanted to reach out and thank each of you for recently providing feedback on our site location surveys. As you may be aware coming out of last night's Health and Human Service Committee Meeting the site list was reduced to three locations. We have been asked to produce a deeper dive on these three locations and a large part of that is receiving more feedback from our valued community partners. We are asking you to provide any comments or feedback on the attached document, including any onsite or outreach services you think you may be able to provide at any of the locations. We understand at this time these are projections and not actual services to be delivered. We again want to thank so many of you who said they would partner with the City no matter where the new services center will eventually go. We are hoping to have these returned by next Friday so that this data can be compiled for the council.

Please feel free to contact either Aaron or myself with any questions.

Thank you,

Sara

--

Sara Fleurant
Assistant Director of Housing Services

Oxford Street Shelter

207-482-5224

fax- 207-761-0536

skf@portlandmaine.gov

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Sara Fleurant
Assistant Director of Housing Services

Oxford Street Shelter

207-482-5224

fax- 207-761-0536

skf@portlandmaine.gov

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Aaron Geyer
City of Portland
Health & Human Services Department

[196 Lancaster Street](#)

[Portland, ME 04101](#)

(207) 482-5131

aeg@portlandmaine.gov

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Aaron Geyer <aeg@portlandmaine.gov>
To: "Harr, Adam" <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Mar 11, 2019 at 4:31 PM

[Quoted text hidden]



Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

Fwd: PPD Further Location Feedback

1 message

Aaron Geyer <aeg@portlandmaine.gov>
To: "Harr, Adam" <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Mar 11, 2019 at 4:32 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Vernon Malloch** <vwm@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: Mon, Mar 4, 2019 at 12:35 PM
Subject: Re: PPD Further Location Feedback
To: Sara Fleurant <skf@portlandmaine.gov>
Cc: Aaron Geyer <aeg@portlandmaine.gov>

Hello Sara

The police department will provide all the same services indicated during the review of the Barron Center Site. I believe you have that information on file. If you cannot locate it I will search my old e-mails.

Specific to one site listed here I do have concerns about Angelo's Acre. It's proximity to the working waterfront is a public safety concern. Historically we have seen drowning deaths of homeless people and those who are impaired by alcohol or drugs. The department has worked hard over the years to partner with other providers to significantly reduce this occurrence. Locating a shelter so close to the waterfront has the potential to place an already at risk group in even more danger.

Thanks for soliciting feedback and please let me know if you need any other information.

Best, Vern

On Wed, Feb 27, 2019 at 5:03 PM Sara Fleurant <skf@portlandmaine.gov> wrote:

Hi Chief,

Hope all is well! We wanted to reach out and thank each of you for recently providing feedback on our site location surveys. As you may be aware coming out of last night's Health and Human Service Committee Meeting the site list was reduced to three locations. We have been asked to produce a deeper dive on these three locations and a large part of that is receiving more feedback from our valued community partners. We are asking you to provide any comments or feedback on the attached document, including any onsite or outreach services you think you may be able to provide at any of the locations. We understand at this time these are projections and not actual services to be delivered. We again want to thank so many of you who said they would partner with the City no matter where the new services center will eventually go. We are hoping to have these returned by next Friday so that this data can be compiled for the council.

Please feel free to contact either Aaron or myself with any questions.

Thank you,
Sara

--

Sara Fleurant
Assistant Director of Housing Services
Oxford Street Shelter
207-482-5224
fax- 207-761-0536
skf@portlandmaine.gov

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Vern Malloch

Interim Chief
Portland Maine Police Department
[109 Middle Street](#)
[Portland, ME 04101](#)
207-874-8600
email: vwm@portlandmaine.gov
Our Core Values
Leadership - Integrity - Service

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Aaron Geyer
City of Portland
Health & Human Services Department
[196 Lancaster Street](#)
[Portland, ME 04101](#)
(207) 482-5131

aeg@portlandmaine.gov

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***Homeless Voices for Justice Comment on Three Potential Sites for the Homeless Services Center
March 15, 2019***



To esteemed Councilors of the Health and Human Services Subcommittee:

Homeless Voices for Justice appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback to the HHS Committee on this step of the relocation process.

Based on community outreaches and careful analysis, Homeless Voices for Justice's main points of concern remain: accessibility, eligibility and bed numbers, and community inclusion.

We do have specific feedback on the three sites in particular, and then other points to consider:

Riverside Industrial Park

HVJ is concerned about the accessibility of Riverside Industrial Park as a location for a new Homeless Services Center. The area is somewhere between a four and six mile walk away from the current Oxford Street Location. While there has been much welcome discussion about proximity to METRO, we hope the public and the City understands the accessibility challenges posed by placing a shelter so far away from current services. Many people staying at shelters in Portland have persistent medical conditions that make it impossible to walk much of a distance. Many lack storage space and have to carry bags and belongings around. And many people are in wheelchairs, use walkers, or canes. Complicating this is the fact that few can afford bus passes, and free bus passes supplied by some service providers are incredibly hard to come by. One of the most frequently sought resources by those who are homeless are monthly passes.

When the State moved its DHHS building from Bayside to South Portland, many people who needed support lost services, or the opportunity to more frequently access services, because of the distance created. At the time of that move, HVJ advocated against it for accessibility reasons. Other concerns about this location include sidewalk accessibility and whether there are food stores close by. In addition to services, many people access employment through agencies such as Labor Ready, which involves lining up early in the morning. The distance created by placing the shelter at Riverside, combined with bus schedules, would make it much harder, if not impossible, for many people staying in the shelter to access employment.

County Way

HVJ is concerned about locating a new Homeless Services Center near the County Jail. While the location is closer to many current services than Riverside is, we fear that placing a shelter near the jail will increase the stigma, discrimination, violence and criminalization that people experiencing homelessness already face. Specifically, we are concerned about the association

implicitly made by locating a Homeless Service Center next to a jail. People who are homeless often struggle with barriers that result from disproportionate enforcement of certain laws, such as loitering or trespassing laws to name just two. Our research and experience as those who have been, or are, homeless shows us that the stigma and criminalization of those who are homeless makes basic life-sustaining activities much more difficult. People who are homeless do not have the privacy of a home to conduct their lives. They are disproportionately asked to “move along” in public space; their activities are more frequently and heavily scrutinized by the public and governing institutions. We believe the close proximity to the County Jail may increase these barriers rather than strive to resolve them. We strongly encourage the Health and Human Services Subcommittee to discuss this aspect of the location.

Angelo’s Acre

Of all three potential sites, Angelo’s Acre is the closest to many available services on the peninsula for those who are homeless. By staying on the peninsula, it is not far from the current shelter and a number of service providers and resources that people who are homeless access in downtown Portland. That said, HVJ does recognize other accessibility aspects that make this site challenging. Namely, the fact that it is quite close to water, a frequently busy street and bridge ramp, and the Port Authority.

Other Points to Consider

First, HVJ encourages the HHS Committee to carefully consider the question of residential zones, which has created much discussion among the councilors. A new Homeless Services Center in any location will no doubt be located close to, or in, a given neighborhood, and we would encourage the councilors to consider that guests at the new Center will be neighbors and residents, the same as anyone else. These guests should not be tucked away, out of sight, due to concern that their presence would pose a challenge to their neighbors. To include and integrate people who are homeless in Portland is one way in which our city can better address the need for shelter services, which has become more severe over the years as other shelters have closed down. To this end, we have heard over and over again from our community a concern and strong appeal for people experiencing homelessness to not be hidden. We recognize the City’s emphasis on *not intending* to hide the homeless. However, we believe that in considering whether current residential zones are appropriate, consideration must be given to how Portland, as a community, cares for its most disenfranchised, oppressed, and stigmatized residents.

Secondly, we are concerned about the prospect of opening up a 150 bed facility while the current shelter chronically exceeds its capacity of 154 people, resulting in the use of overflow and sometimes triple overflow on a nightly basis. In December of 2018, 537 people were served by homeless shelters in Portland. Based on current trends, HVJ does not believe the predictions for reduced numbers are realistic. We are encouraging the Councilors to afford for space and capacity such that the new Homeless Services Center does not need overflow in the first place.

Connected to this is the question of guest eligibility and policies governing the new Homeless Services Center. To us, it is crucial that the City keeps to its long-standing commitment to provide emergency shelter services to anyone who needs it and that the policies governing the new Homeless Service Center are the least restrictive they can possibly be, to ensure that the City's goals for rapidly connecting people to resources and housing can be met.

Third, the HHS Committee has moved recently to narrow down sites from 11 to 3. While we welcome the sense of urgency to address the life-threatening problem of homelessness in Portland, we will continue to encourage the HHS committee to work more systematically on including the input of those who are homeless as this process moves forward. Homeless Voices for Justice seeks to empower those who live in poverty and homeless – people whose perspectives are often absent from the development of policies and programs that directly impact their social and economic well-being. To this end, we are working in conjunction with City Management on convening a community forum for people who are homeless so their input can be heard. While those plans continue to move forward, we advise that the City take steps to ensure that the pace of the relocation process does not move so fast as to exclude the concerns and feedback of the community they seek to help.

As our most relied upon partners, we appreciate your feedback on the following potential locations for a Homeless Services Center. Please indicate any onsite services you may be able to provide. Thank you!

Riverside Industrial Park:

Goodwill's Workforce programs can provide onsite services to homeless individuals at this location if there are significant barriers to clients accessing services at our primary local program office, 190 Lancaster Street.

This includes access to:

- Job Connection programming
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker programming through Workforce Solutions, and
- Employment Services (job coaching and/or job development through Vocational Rehabilitation)

County Way:

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- Employment Services (job coaching and/or job development through Vocational Rehabilitation)

Agency: Goodwill Northern New England

Representative: Dave Wurm, Senior Director, Workforce Services

As our most relied upon partners, we appreciate your feedback on the following potential locations for a Homeless Services Center. Please indicate any onsite services you may be able to provide. Thank you!

In considering these locations, the Library evaluates how we could provide service through our existing locations and how we could add a site onto our outreach agenda. We recognize that the Library's collections are helpful as research tools as well as much-needed entertainment for people experiencing homelessness, and that library spaces are welcoming and safe which can be reassuring and provide a positive sense of community for someone experiencing disruption and anxiety due to homelessness. Of the Library's locations, the Main Library on Monument Square is best equipped to provide the variety of information resources, the technology tools, security staffing, and seating to accommodate.

Riverside Industrial Park:

Being the location farthest from any of our branches, especially the Main Library, this location would be most challenging to provide our strongest service. Based on current models and funding, we would anticipate providing bookmobile or pop-up service once per week, and the possibility of providing donated collections for free use (similar to Florence House). It seems critical that the location be on a bus line.

County Way:

The proximity to the peninsula and both major hospitals, as well as to the Police Headquarters (if it moved there), add value to this location. As stated above, the Library can provide our best service through our Main Library location, and this would still require a bus or a solid walk from County Way. As with any location chosen, the Library would provide outreach and pop-up service to the extent we can as described above.

Angelo's Acre:

This is geographically nearest to the Main Library and is, therefore, the most beneficial site for access to full Library services. As with any location chosen, the Library would provide outreach and pop-up service to the extent we can as described above.

Agency: Portland Public Library

Representative: Sarah Campbell

Service Provider Information Sheet

Service Provider: Preble Street

Point Person: Fiona Mason

Services List: Targeted outreach, engagement and case management services for clients who are homeless and who meet program requirements for Veterans Housing Services, Anti-Trafficking Services and the Medication Assisted Recovery Program (MARP) within Health Services.

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Space /Office requirements: TBD

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Expected Outcomes: Access to specialized services as able.

March 6, 2019 - Shelter Locations Questionnaire

As our most relied upon partners, we appreciate your feedback on the following potential locations for a Homeless Services Center. Please indicate any onsite services you may be able to provide. Thank you!

Riverside Industrial Park: *DEFINITE NO* Yes// Maybe ?

Pluses

- Receptivity by residential and business neighbors- likely somewhat low opposition

Minuses

- Public visibility- hiding homeless guests on outskirts of town...
- Access to other services and amenities – too remote; not within walking distance to much of anything...; longish bus ride
- Neighborhood- industrial
- Transportation- where’s the nearest bus stop?

County Way *NOT A PREFERRED SITE* Yes/No/ ?

Pluses

- Transportation- near bus lines
- Access to other services and amenities – within walking distance or short bus ride

Minuses

- Receptivity by residential and business neighbors- likely high opposition, by businesses who might not see a Homeless Services Center as good for business and by residential neighbors
- Public visibility- hiding homeless guests from public view
- Neighborhood- industrial feel; next to jail, may be seen by some as equating homelessness with criminality

Angelo’s Acre *PREFERRED SITE* /No/ Maybe ?

Pluses

- Public visibility- definitely not hiding homeless guests
- Transportation- near bus lines
- Access to other services and amenities – within walking distance or short bus ride

Minuses

- Receptivity by residential and business neighbors- likely opposition by both; may be manageable though...

Shalom remains committed to providing mental health case management to support mutual clients in need of such services wherever they are, including the new Homeless Services Center. The new configuration will make it easier to meet with shelter guests at the Center. In addition, Shalom will continue to meet with guests to assess eligibility for Section 17 adult mental health case management and/or eligibility for Shalom group homes or Community Rehabilitation Services.

Shalom staff will also continue to award as many eligible shelter guests as program resources allow with one of the rental subsidies we administer so that guests can better afford available housing in the area. We will also set up mutually agreeable times to meet with guests in need of rental vouchers and schedule regular weekly hours at the new Homeless Services Center to answer questions / assist guests and their housing counselors with rental assistance applications.

Agency: Shalom House, Inc.

Representative: Norm Maze, Deputy Director

As our most relied upon partners, we appreciate your feedback on the following potential locations for a Homeless Services Center. Please indicate any onsite services you may be able to provide. Thank you!

Riverside Industrial Park :

We are concerned that this location is too far removed from services. While the City seems committed to having a transportation plan in place, we feel that our clients benefit from being able to walk to access needed resources, services, and work. The team also has concerns that the segment of the population with significant behavioral challenges will struggle to be able to maintain access to transportation services whether it be city - provided or through the bus line.

County Way:

While the proximity to the jail is problematic optics and messaging wise, we feel that it is located close enough to town that folks will still have ease of access to essential services and its proximity to MMC is particularly positive.

Angelo's Acre:

Pros for this location include that it is centrally located and would provide ease of access to services. It is also the most publicly visible of the 3 remaining locations.

We have some concerns about clients who are under the influence wandering into traffic or down some of the wharfs in that area. It's worth noting that when people are restricted or CTO'd from the shelter some are likely to sleep rough around the city and shifting this population closer to the water could be dangerous, particularly for those who may be under the influence. There have been many instances of people who are homeless drowning in Portland and anything that puts people closer to the waterfront could be a concern.

Agency: The PATH Program at The Opportunity Alliance

Representative: Christina Cook

As our most relied upon partners, we appreciate your feedback on the following potential locations for a Homeless Services Center. Please indicate any onsite services you may be able to provide. Thank you!

Riverside Industrial Park:

This location seems too far and would seem to not help folks get the services they need, but instead might hinder them even more. SARSSM does not promote this location.

County Way: **County way is a great solution. It is close to the hospital and sticks to the bus route. It does not create any more barriers to the homeless population.**

Angelo's Acre: **Angelo's Acre is a great second choice.**

Agency: Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine (SARSSM)

Representative: Whitney Adell, Program Manager of Advocate and Outreach Services

What the agency can provide:

- **On-site one on one support for folks that have been sexually harmed**
- **On-site outreach by consistently showing up on a specific day to table and create awareness about surveys**
- **Possibility of an on-site support group once outreach as been established**



Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

Fwd: Location feedback

1 message

Robert Parritt <rwp@portlandmaine.gov>
To: Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

Tue, Mar 12, 2019 at 1:05 PM

Through These Doors Feedback

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Sara Fleurant** <skf@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: Fri, Mar 8, 2019 at 6:04 AM
Subject: Fwd: Location feedback
To: Robert Parritt <rwp@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jennifer S** <jennys@throughthesedoors.org>
Date: Thu, Mar 7, 2019 at 3:14 PM
Subject: Location feedback
To: Sara Fleurant <skf@portlandmaine.gov>
CC: Kelley W <kellyw@throughthesedoors.org>, Rebecca H <rebeccah@throughthesedoors.org>

Hi Sara,

Thanks for reaching out to Kelley with regards to our feedback on the shelter locations being proposed and the services we could provide. We had a discussion about what our involvement could be as a whole. The location of the shelter doesn't have an impact on the services that we could provide onsite.

Given the intersection of homelessness and domestic violence, what will be needed and what we could provide is a full-time domestic violence advocate (if funding permits) located on site to provide advocacy and support to victims and survivors of domestic violence, stalking, human trafficking and dating abuse.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks.
Jenny

Jenny Stasio, Director of Operations

she/her/hers

Through These Doors *(formerly Family Crisis Services)*

Office: 207-874-1196

Mobile: 207-712-8274

24-hour Helpline: 800-537-6066



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--

Sara Fleurant
Assistant Director of Housing Services
Oxford Street Shelter
207-482-5224
fax- 207-761-0536
skf@portlandmaine.gov

--

Rob Parritt
Homeless Services Consultant
City of Portland
rwp@portlandmaine.gov

As our most relied upon partners, we appreciate your feedback on the following potential locations for a Homeless Services Center. Please indicate any onsite services you may be able to provide. Thank you!

Riverside Industrial Park: Community Housing of Maine (CHOM) does not provide direct services, however we would be happy to continue our collaborative relationship with the City at any of the three potential locations for a Homeless Services Center, including the Riverside Industrial Park site.

County Way: CHOM does not provide direct services, however we would be happy to continue our collaborative relationship with the City at any of the three potential locations for a Homeless Services Center, including the County Way site.

Angelo's Acre: CHOM does not provide direct services, however we would be happy to continue our collaborative relationship with the City at any of the three potential locations for a Homeless Services Center, including the Angelo's Acre site.

Agency: Community Housing of Maine

Representative: Cullen Ryan, Executive Director

Feedback from community members experiencing homelessness, gathered from Homeless Voices for Justice outreaches and community meeting.

Homeless Voices for Justice gathered feedback from people experiencing homelessness in Portland on the three proposed sites for the city of Portland's proposed Homeless Services Center. HVJ collected 44 survey responses (combined with 88 general comments from surveys we utilized in previous community outreach) and held a community meeting in the Preble Street Resource Center with roughly 30 people, all of whom provided extremely diverse feedback and responses.



Significantly, HVJ has also spoken with a number of other community members who use the Oxford Street Shelter that opted *not* to fill out a survey, due to concerns that their voices and concerns would not be heard. This is why we feel it is important to continue working with City Management to arrange a community forum on this topic, specifically for those who are homeless and utilize shelter services in Portland.

Feedback on sites:

Riverside Industrial Zone

The majority of responses were opposed to this site for accessibility and location reasons. The frequency and price of public transportation would make moving between this location and other sites in the city very difficult or prohibitive. There was also concern from people who have to carry their belongings, have mobility challenges, and who need to access employment services/opportunities closer to the center of the city. Example of the responses not in favor of this site:

"This site would take someone without mobility issues at least two hours to get to from the center of town."

"I believe the reasons for this site are to hide the homeless community. It needs to remain fairly close and easily accessible to resources."

There were, however, some people who favored the Riverside site *because* of its distance from the rest of Portland. For example, one respondent said:

"[Riverside Industrial Site is] Choice 1. Out of town! Further away would be less stereotypes."

County Way

A sizeable number of responses from the community opposed this location due to its proximity to the Cumberland County Jail. People raised concerns about the impact of this location on increasing the stigmatization and criminalization of those who are homeless. Example of the responses not in favor of this site:

“This is not a good idea. Many homeless people have a negative association with police and the county jail.”

“They should absolutely NOT move it next to the jail... there is already a harsh stigma against the homeless and throwing us at the jail is wrong AND offensive.”

On the other hand, a sizeable number of responses from the community favored this location, noting that the location might help increase security and has close proximity to existing grocery stores, job opportunities, emergency and/or medical services, public transportation, etc.

Angelo’s Acre

Its closeness to existing, frequently utilized resources and social services in Downtown Portland (particularly the Bayside Neighborhood) was frequently referenced as a strength. In addition to facilitating access to important services, the central location was favored by some for keeping the issue of homelessness visible (as an important issue) in the city.

Responses opposed to this location were concerned about pedestrian safety, due to proximity to Commercial Street and the Casco Bay Bridge.

Overall, the responses to **Angelo’s Acre** and **County Way** were more mixed and positive as both remain closer to available resources downtown than does the Riverside site.

Other comments:

1. *What about other locations that the City has already moved on from?* The Douglass Street site came up several times. It was also clear that people who are homeless aren’t fully informed of the range of potential sites that had existed before there were three.
2. *What will happen to policies and procedures that govern the new Homeless Services Center?* Many people are concerned about policies and procedures and *who* can access services at the current shelter. Because Oxford Street Shelter cannot adequately accommodate those with high medical, disability, or related needs, those who are homeless in these categories are disproportionately affected by an outdated system. Many people are concerned whether the new Homeless Services Center will be more adequately set up to address guests with relatively higher needs, specifically medical needs.
3. *What about other resources?* People’s core concerns are around access to resources, including transportation. If the current density of resources and social services in the Bayside Area are broken up, people are concerned about how the City will help shelter guests access those vital services? Even if the new Homeless Services Center provides a number of services on-site, guests will still have to navigate the rest of the City for services and resources.
4. *How many beds?* People are concerned that 150 beds are inadequate to address the current need. People experiencing homelessness in Portland see that the current shelter is 154 beds, with frequently used overflow of 77 beds. The community is concerned how the City is going to address this need with a smaller shelter.

5. *Current conditions.* Overcrowding, pests, not feeling heard, not having adequate access to vital services such as casework, and opportunities to exit homelessness are few among the many indignities those who are homeless face in Portland on a daily basis. Often, people in the community want to discuss these conditions, what it's like from their perspective to experience them, and what needs to be different. People experiencing homelessness want to know how the new Homeless Services Center will address these issues.

Fwd: Bayside resident

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 8:41 PM

To: Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>, Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Michael Gelsanliter** <mrgelsanliter@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 8:36 PM

Subject: Bayside resident

To: <estrimling@portlandmaine.gov>, <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>, Councilor Belinda Ray <bsr@portlandmaine.gov>, Brian Batson <bbatson@portlandmaine.gov>, <jcosta@portlandmaine.gov>, Nicholas Mavodones <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, <kcook@portlandmaine.gov>, <gmitchell@portlandmaine.gov>, <sthibodeau@portlandmaine.gov>, Jill Duson <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>, <pali@portlandmaine.gov>

Dear Esteemed Members of the City Council,

Having lived in Bayside for 13 years on Mechanic Street I urge you to finally choose a site for the new Homeless Services Center and do everything you can to make sure it gets built. Relocating the Oxford Street Shelter is only relocating services for less than a third of the people now using services in Bayside! Between the city's family shelter and overflow shelter, the Preble Street Teen Center and the many other social services in Bayside, we will continue to provide for up to 300 people.

Thank you for your time and efforts.

Respectfully,

Michael Gelsanliter

--

Jon P. Jennings

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Fwd: Homeless shelter funding

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Sat, Jun 1, 2019 at 6:48 AM

To: Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>, Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Ashley Creighton** <ashleyc2820@yahoo.com>

Date: Fri, May 31, 2019 at 2:51 PM

Subject: Homeless shelter funding

To: <estrimling@portlandmaine.gov>, <bsr@portlandmaine.gov>, <sthibodeau@portlandmaine.gov>, <bbatson@portlandmaine.gov>, <jcosta@portlandmaine.gov>, <kcook@portlandmaine.gov>, <pali@portlandmaine.gov>, <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>, <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Good afternoon Mayor Strimling and City Councilors,

I recently had the opportunity to exchange emails with State Representative Michael Brennan regarding my concerns about the City's plan for a new homeless shelter. He informed me that he met with the Commissioner of the Maine DHHS to discuss a partnership between the State and the City to address issues of mental health, homelessness, and substance use. He went on the state that he has several bills now pending in the legislature that could influence the number of people who might be homeless over the next several years.

Given this information, my question is: if there is the potential for a partnership with the State and the State could help offset some of the cost, why are you forging ahead with choosing a site, especially choosing between the two poor sites that have been put forth? As our elected officials, the Portland taxpayers have an expectation that the people we elect will be fiscally responsible. It seems as though moving forward the way things stand right now would be an irresponsible decision.

Thank you,

Ashley Souther

Sent from my iPhone

--

Jon P. Jennings

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Fwd: Homeless Shelter vote

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 12:20 PM

To: Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>, Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jean Russo** <russo@maine.rr.com>

Date: Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 12:17 PM

Subject: Homeless Shelter vote

To: <estrimling@portlandmaine.gov>, <bsr@portlandmaine.gov>, <sthibodeau@portlandmaine.gov>, <bbatson@portlandmaine.gov>, <jcosta@portlandmaine.gov>, <kcook@portlandmaine.gov>, <pali@portlandmaine.gov>, <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>, <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>, <mjs@portlandmaine.gov>, <jlevine@portlandmaine.gov>, <dcs@portlandmaine.gov>, <dem@portlandmaine.gov>, <rwp@portlandmaine.gov>

I know the vote on a location for a “homeless” shelter is coming to a vote soon, but I would implore every city councilor and anyone else involved in this decision to watch “Seattle is Dying” before you vote on this matter. If you don’t want to click on the link, you can watch it on UTube. This documentary was on ABC news last night and gets to the core of our homeless problem in Portland. Our “homeless” problem is mostly a “substance use disorder” problem. We should be concentrating on detox centers first and foremost before we commit millions of Portland tax dollars to house, feed, clothe and pay for medical care for the homeless population for the rest of their lives, most of whom have addiction problems and who are not even from the Portland area. I believe we need to solve the drug problem first, or at least recognize that addicts are the majority of the “homeless” population.

On April 2 our former mayor, Anne Pringle, wrote the most intelligent article on the homeless situation in Portland that I have seen to date. Please read this article and address some of her questions below:

1. Should Portland continue to shelter, without limit, “homeless” people from other parts of the state and from out of state?
2. What are the direct operating costs for police, medical, trash cleanup, etc. of such a broad responsibility?
3. Should the city continue the current “low barrier” approach sheltering everyone or should we instead provide limited shelter nights and require clients to fully engage in assessment and treatment?
4. What are the recognized impacts of emergency shelters in adjacent residential or commercial neighborhoods and does a huge homeless shelter even belong in a residential neighborhood at all?

I am a lifelong Portland area resident (born on India Street before it was cool to live there), a business owner and a taxpayer. Portland is a great city of compassionate and generous people and we all want to help the homeless. However, kicking this explosive can to another neighborhood is not going to solve the problem. It’s time to press the pause button on spending our tax dollars to build a huge “homeless” shelter which we will need to fund forever. We need to do more research and look into having a state funded addiction center – maybe remotely located somewhere in Maine and not in anyone’s backyard. Let’s try to help the “homeless” by helping them to get clean and sober.

If you build it, they will come – from all over New England. No resident of Portland wants this mega shelter in their backyard.

<https://youtu.be/bpAi70WWBlw>

Jean Russo

Portland, Maine

--

Jon P. Jennings

City Manager

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Fwd: Portland city councilor: Slow down and reconsider Brighton Avenue shelter - Portland Press Herald

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 5:54 PM

To: Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>, Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Stephanie** <fneuts@maine.rr.com>

Date: Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 5:40 PM

Subject: Portland city councilor: Slow down and reconsider Brighton Avenue shelter - Portland Press Herald

To: <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

If you don't listen to social services, who else really matters

<https://www.pressherald.com/2018/07/10/portland-city-councilor-slow-down-and-reconsider-barron-center-shelter/>

Sent from my iPhone

--

Jon P. Jennings

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Fwd: Press Herald Article

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 7:21 AM

To: Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>, Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Ashley Creighton** <ashleyc2820@yahoo.com>

Date: Sun, Jun 2, 2019 at 9:10 PM

Subject: Press Herald Article

To: <bsr@portlandmaine.gov>, <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>, <estrimling@portlandmaine.gov>, <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>, <jcosta@portlandmaine.gov>, <bbatson@portlandmaine.gov>, <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, <sthibodeau@portlandmaine.gov>, <pali@portlandmaine.gov>, <kcook@portlandmaine.gov>, <cityclerk@portlandmaine.gov>

Good Evening,

I'm sure you all saw this article in the Press Herald last summer, given that Councilor Batson was the author.

<https://www.pressherald.com/2018/07/10/portland-city-councilor-slow-down-and-reconsider-barron-center-shelter/>

I hope that you all take a minute to re-read this prior to voting for the shelter relocation. He makes some excellent points and brings up some very concerning aspects to consider. All of these concerns can be applied to the Riverside Street site. In fact, the Riverside Street site is even more dangerous than the Barron Center site. You would have a heavily wooded area and a river in the shelter's backyard. The traffic is heavy all day (including trailer trucks going to industrial sites) and travels well over the 35mph posted speed limit. We have no ambulance at our local fire station. No bus stop on Riverside Street. Let's be realistic- a shuttle van isn't going to be sufficient. Most importantly, nearly ALL service providers polled oppose the Riverside Street site. Again, let's be realistic- you are never going to be able to offer all services on site. To ignore the service providers' and Homeless Voices for Justice's opposition to this site would be extremely irresponsible. They obviously know the needs of this population better than anyone.

I hope that you will all do the right thing and vote against Riverside Street.

Thank you,
Ashley Souther

Sent from my iPhone

--

Jon P. Jennings

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Fwd: Public comment for June 3rd city council meeting regarding homeless services site

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 7:21 AM

To: Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>, Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Robert Sylvain** <acadianmaineiac@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 12:01 AM

Subject: Public comment for June 3rd city council meeting regarding homeless services site

To: <estrimling@portlandmaine.gov>, <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>, Councilor Belinda Ray <bsr@portlandmaine.gov>, Brian Batson <bbatson@portlandmaine.gov>, <jcosta@portlandmaine.gov>, Nicholas Mavodones <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, <kcook@portlandmaine.gov>, <gmitchell@portlandmaine.gov>, <sthibodeau@portlandmaine.gov>, Jill Duson <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>, <pali@portlandmaine.gov>

CC: Sarah Michniewicz <sarahmichniewicz@icloud.com>, Jonathan Bass <jonathan.h.bass@gmail.com>, Laura Cannon <igocoastal@yahoo.com>, Stephanie Scherer <stephanie.f.scherer@gmail.com>, Sean Kerwin <cairdhubain@gmail.com>, Deborah Van Hoewyk <dvhoewyk@umich.edu>, Susan McCloskey <smccloskey@maine.rr.com>, Ferrante Dennis <daymaker.ferrante@gmail.com>, colette bouchard <coletteb1821@gmail.com>

Dear People,

At the last council meeting I waited over 5 hours for my turn at public comment regarding the new shelter site. When the council was considering whether to allow an additional night of public comment, someone in the balcony stated, out of order, that many of 'their' people had left because of the long wait, and I thought, "long wait? we've been waiting for 20 years!" In the end I decided not to speak in person even though I knew I would be out of town on June 3rd, in part because ironically what i wanted to say and i really wanted the public to hear is: "enough public comment! no more stalling!" I've been on the Bayside Neighborhood Association board since its inception at the turn of the century and the shelter was insufficient then. The Council needs to choose a site now, no matter who shows up or doesn't show up.

Nevertheless, this is what I had prepared to say on May 20th:

Like most people speaking tonight, if pressed, I could say a few words about which of the two shelter sites is preferable, but as I hope you will appreciate, I'm not going to burden you with my opinion. The important thing is that the council makes a decision and not further delay the process. You have the facts, you have the figures, you have the results of years of studies, task forces committee reports and plenty of public input. You now have a choice to make that cannot wait. The time to act has come, and gone, and come again. I urge the council to move forward on building a new homeless service center without further delay.

Thanks for listening,
Robert Sylvain

Robert Sylvain
167 Falmouth Street
Portland, ME 04102
207.650.5634 cell
207.761.3931 home
email@robertsylvain.com
<http://www.robertsylvain.com>

--

Jon P. Jennings
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Fwd: Riverside opposition

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 5:50 PM

To: Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>, Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Stephanie** <fneuts@maine.rr.com>

Date: Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 5:41 PM

Subject: Riverside opposition

To: <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

https://cdn.fbsbx.com/v/t59.2708-21/60474205_2462759714007465_5886396225564966912_n.pdf/Shelter-Location-Provider-Feedback-for-31919.pdf?_nc_cat=104&_nc_oc=AQm6miBfRHI6NDj0IMJMsrTk0GF7YHMyuoDOrDOVTR0wBLXRdHLjDXuPbTTWUVhpKmY&_nc_ht=cdn.fbsbx.com&oh=4d5ff2ce4b1d0668590c5e7f5d1e9310&oe=5CF8282C&dl=1

Sent from my iPhone

--

Jon P. Jennings

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Shelter-Location-Provider-Feedback-for-31919.pdf

647K

Fwd: Shelter - non decision

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Tue, Jun 4, 2019 at 7:47 AM

To: Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>, Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Sarah Pluck** <sarahpluck@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Jun 4, 2019 at 6:45 AM

Subject: Shelter - non decision

To: <bsr@portlandmaine.gov>, <pali@portlandmaine.gov>, <bbatson@portlandmaine.gov>, <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>, <sthibodeau@portlandmaine.gov>, <kcook@portlandmaine.gov>, <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, <jcosta@portlandmaine.gov>, <estrimling@portlandmaine.gov>, <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>, <gmitchell@portlandmaine.gov>

Morning,

I am disappointed the committee did not make a decision on a new location for the Oxford St shelter. This has been ongoing for three years. It's really time to step it up, it's time for some leadership to make these hard decision.

I detailed this in my last email but living in bayside (and prior to I lived in Boston and NYC), there is a serious problem. It really blew my mind, and frankly still does, at the massive amounts of homeless people I see out. I lived in the rough places of Boston and NYC when i was younger and never saw anything like this. Unfortunately, we do not live in a socialist society and it's unlikely to happen in my lifetime so hosting such a large amount of public services downtown, in the area of downtown poised for the next set of growth, is just crazy to me! We need to support and grown downtown businesses so we can continue to fund these growing social service programs. Also at what point do we say enough is enough and we can't afford to pay for this? Other towns and certainly other areas need to take on the burden. Putting all social services outside of the city, in an isolated location, is the most sensible. Continuing what is going on is detrimental to the growth of our city. Seems like Portland is making decisions on what is best for the transients, not what is best for economic growth and every day people that actually pay taxes.

Thanks,
Sarah Pluck

--

Jon P. Jennings
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Fwd: Shelter Location

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 7:01 PM

To: Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>, Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Anne Pringle** <oldmayor@maine.rr.com>

Date: Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 6:59 PM

Subject: Shelter Location

To: Duson, Jill <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>, Cook, Kim <kcook@portlandmaine.gov>, Mavodones, Nick <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, Ray, Belinda <bsr@portlandmaine.gov>, Strimling, Ethan <estrimling@portlandmaine.gov>, Brian Batson <bbatson@portlandmaine.gov>, Ali, Pious <pali@portlandmaine.gov>, Costa, Justin <jcosta@portlandmaine.gov>, Thibodeau, Spencer <sthibodeau@portlandmaine.gov>

Cc: Jennings, Jon <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Sorry that I was not able to finish my comments before the Mayor, appropriately, cut me off after three minutes! Here are my final two points:

In summary, a new City shelter should be “right-sized” to the population Portland should be serving, should require client “engagement” in turning their lives around, and (as a short-term facility) should be located away from residential neighborhoods.

WPNA urges the Council to table these items to a date certain, not years but a few months away, so facts and data can be gathered to inform debate over the policy issues we have raised.

Anne

--

Jon P. Jennings

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Fwd: Shelter

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 6:03 PM

To: Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>, Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Stephanie** <fneuts@maine.rr.com>

Date: Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 5:37 PM

Subject: Shelter

To: <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Good evening

I hope you will re read the recommendations or lack thereof from the email I will resend to you, from social services and the article from a city councilor and RN, Brian Batson, and urge those in favor of the Homeless Shelter on Riverside, to rethink how much this is not the place.

This needs to be done correctly and possibly with help if a group of people willing to work with you all.

Thank you
Stephanie Neuts

Sent from my iPhone

--

Jon P. Jennings

City Manager

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Fwd: Site for future Homeless Shelter - resending due reschedule to today

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 4:21 PM

To: Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>, Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <fsreilly@aol.com>

Date: Mon, Jun 3, 2019 at 4:17 PM

Subject: Re: Site for future Homeless Shelter - resending due reschedule to today

To: <bsr@portlandmaine.gov>, <bbatson@portlandmaine.gov>, <pali@portlandmaine.gov>, <sthibodeau@portlandmaine.gov>, <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>, <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, <kcook@portlandmaine.gov>, <jcosta@portlandmaine.gov>

Cc: <JPJ@portlandmaine.gov>, <estrimling@portlandmaine.gov>

Dear Councilors,

We are unable to attend this evening's public comment session, but wish for our voice to be heard as well:

Regarding the proposal to build a Homeless Service Center on Angelo's Acre, we believe the homeless as well as the neighbors would benefit more by seeking a more appropriate area, e.g. less commercial, more space.

Angelo's Acre is currently accessible by two very busy streets, Commercial and Park, or by Harbor View Park. Both streets are not particularly pedestrian friendly, with very few crosswalks to navigate the heavy traffic. In other words, not necessarily safe, and already way too congested with heavy traffic. Also, there is not a great deal of public transportation available, certainly not on Commercial. Furthermore, Hobson's Landing will add tremendous activity when it's completed next year and is only a block away from Angelo's Acre.

Harbor View Park, the adjacent neighborhood park, has continuously had problems with people illegally camping out overnight, leaving litter - sometimes used needles - and personal waste behind them.....not a desirable situation for anyone to face and this, in itself, needs to be addressed and remedied eventually. We personally have encountered people sleeping on the downside of the park as we walk our dogs around the park, and let me tell you from that experience, it feels unsafe and appears filthy.

As far as a proposed building is concerned, we believe the height limit is 40-45 feet, which we, as neighbors, assume will be adhered to, and not "exempted" or compromised for any reason. After reading the plans for the shelter, it is difficult to understand how all the elements can fit into this relatively small space.

This is a lovely neighborhood, with a lot of new residential growth, either built or in the process (Hobson's Landing). We encourage the thoughtful development of Angelo's Acre as part of the residential area and important entrance to our great *seaport* city.

The homeless *do* need shelter, but the facility needs to be thought out carefully for an appropriate location else the situation will be compounded many times over!

Thank each of you for your thoughtful consideration in this very important matter.

Frank & Sharon Reilly
168 York Street
Portland

--

Jon P. Jennings
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Fwd: Homeless center site

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 10, 2019 at 7:11 AM

To: Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>, Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Johannah Hart** <hartjohannah1@gmail.com>

Date: Sun, Jun 9, 2019 at 10:13 AM

Subject: Fwd: Homeless center site

To: Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Johannah Hart <hartjohannah1@gmail.com>

Date: Sun, Jun 9, 2019 at 10:11 AM

Subject: Homeless center site

To: <bsra@portlandmaine.gov>, <sthibodeau@portlandmaine.gov>, <bbatson@portlandmaine.gov>, Justin Costa <jcosta@portlandmaine.gov>, <kcook@portlandmaine.gov>, Jill Duson <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>, <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, Belinda Ray <bsr@portlandmaine.gov>

Dear hardworking Councilors,

I stayed until about 8:00 to hear public comment on suggested sites. I noticed Homeless Voices of Justice & social service workers serving homeless populations were amply represented. While I think their input is important, the weight of decision rests on the council's shoulders & should represent the best choice for the entire city.

I listened carefully to objections, I believe the Riverside site is by far the most promising for the following reasons

1. Nothing is perfect! There will always be hardy objections.

Some compromise is always necessary. That said-

2. The site is not too close to any densely populated neighborhood. Perhaps close but not really too close.

3. The (somewhat) pastoral setting of Riverside site most conducive to regaining mental wellness. (McLean's Hospital outside of Boston, world renown, is especially known for landscaping/ trails.

4. The Presumpscot River. No comment.

5. The 6 mile transit into the city-this is a detail which can be worked out (van) as well as the other details-sidewalks lighting, construction of secure facility so people feel safe & heard. Details.

I again urge councilors to bring this much needed facility into existence.

Please go boldly forth, picking up ideas & suggestions on the way.

People's well being & lives hang in the balance.

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,, Johannah Hart

--

Jon P. Jennings

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Fwd: Homeless Service Center-- Riverside Street Site

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>
To: Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>, Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 17, 2019 at 5:24 AM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jill Duson** <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: Fri, Jun 14, 2019 at 7:09 PM
Subject: Re: Homeless Service Center-- Riverside Street Site
To: Leslie E. Lowry <LLowry@jbgh.com>
CC: Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>, Belinda Ray <bsr@portlandmaine.gov>

Thanks you for you message. I have copied your note to assure that your concerns are included in the public record.

On Fri, Jun 14, 2019 at 2:17 PM Leslie E. Lowry <LLowry@jbgh.com> wrote:

Dear Jill:

I am sending this as a follow up to a letter we submitted on behalf of Suburban Propane for your earlier June hearing regarding the Riverside Street location. I know that this is a difficult decision, and that the Council has been working incredibly hard for a long time to find a good location.

My client is concerned because of potential impacts on its industrial use at its new facility. I was hopeful to hear your thoughts on the suitability of the location or if there are any facts about the Suburban operations that would be useful to know in your decision process.

Best wishes, and I hope we can touch base.

Lee

Leslie E. Lowry, Esq.
Jensen Baird Gardner & Henry
Ten Free Street
P.O. Box 4510
Portland, Maine 04112-4510
Phone: (207) 775-7271
Direct: (207) 518-5917
Fax: (207) 775-7935

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--

Jill C. Duson
At Large Councilor
City of Portland

--

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Fwd: Next Steps - Shelter Discussion

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 17, 2019 at 5:16 AM

To: Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>, Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Casey McCormack** <jcdmccormack@gmail.com>

Date: Sun, Jun 16, 2019 at 2:02 AM

Subject: Next Steps - Shelter Discussion

To: Belinda Ray <bsr@portlandmaine.gov>, Spencer Thibodeau <sthibodeau@portlandmaine.gov>, Brian Batson <bbatson@portlandmaine.gov>, Justin Costa <jcosta@portlandmaine.gov>, Kim Cook <kcook@portlandmaine.gov>, Pious Ali <pali@portlandmaine.gov>, Nick Mavodones <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, Jill Duson <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>, Ethan Strimling <estrimling@portlandmaine.gov>

CC: Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>, Robert Parritt <rwp@portlandmaine.gov>

Hello Mayor and City Councilors,

To the extent I've built up any goodwill with the Council during the shelter siting process, I'd like to offer my \$0.02 as it relates to the future of Portland's Homeless Services Center.

I'll start by encouraging the Council to vote against both of the sites that are currently on the table. I believe that **there are better options.**

I know that this process has (in a broad sense) been going on for a long time and I realize that Bayside needs to be depressurized as soon as possible. However, **the site selection process has been problematic** (particularly with respect to the roll-out of the initial proposal). Speaking only of my neck of the woods, there are many hundreds of concerned Portland residents that have lost confidence in City government. Some are still angry. Some are still paranoid. Many are deeply concerned about where this process will go from here.

Assuming neither of the remaining sites gain enough Council support, I believe **the next step needs to involve a collaborative approach between Council members, City staff, homeless policy experts, and a representative group of Portland residents.** Call it a task force, call it a working group, call it whatever you want. But I think it will be necessary to legitimize whatever decision is ultimately made - at least from the perspective of many in my community.

To be sure, I don't think the above-referenced group needs to reinvent the wheel. It seems to me that the Council is pretty set on developing a single campus to cater to those experiencing homelessness. Okay. So limit the focus to site selection (more on that below). Maybe have the group reassess Portland's no-barrier policy as well (more on that below). And maybe appoint a subcommittee to further explore partnerships with others (more on that below). While this may seem like it will slow down the process, I think it will actually be the most efficient way forward (and will be the fastest way to actually achieve the development of a new Homeless Services Center). **And if there does end up being enough support on the Council for a working group like this, I would really love to have the opportunity to be considered for inclusion.**

If you're still reading (thanks), I'd also like to take a moment to outline my personal thoughts on the matter - again, assuming that neither Riverside nor Angelo's Acre are approved.

First, I'd establish the working group noted above.

Second, I'd task the working group with reassessing Portland's "no barrier" policy. It seems to me that this is a pretty fundamental decision - and one that may dictate some parts of the site selection process. Putting site selection ahead of this threshold policy determination seems a bit like putting the cart before the horse.

My personal opinion on the matter (at the moment) is that we should not impose a hard bed-cap but we should at least develop a robust management plan to repatriate out-of-state U.S. residents with no meaningful connection to Maine. In other words, if a hospital patient, sober house resident, or shelter guest get discharged to Portland from an out-of-state

facility (these are real examples, see ESAC minutes from Spring 2018) and those individuals have no meaningful connection to Portland (or Maine), we should temporarily provide them with shelter (i.e. for a night or two) until we can arrange for transportation back to the community from where they came.

Third, I'd task the working group with selecting areas that would be suitable for a Homeless Services Center - and then the working group (or City staff) can pursue a site. In my opinion, one of the fundamental flaws in the site selection process was a focus on sites as opposed to **a focus on areas**. Riverside Street and Angelo's Acre are so wildly different - it's hard to see how they were the end-product of the same process.

Instead, we should start the process by determining what **areas** in Portland are suitable for a 150-200 bed Homeless Services Center - **and we should be willing to acquire land or buildings in suitable areas** (even if it might take a bit more time). We should also be willing to sell land or buildings if needed to fund same. Limiting the site selection process to government-owned property and on-market listings is unnecessarily limiting - and I believe focusing on **areas** will lead to a better result. Once we know which areas are suitable we can focus on site selection.

As an aside, it's been encouraging to see the acknowledgement from many Councilors and others in the community that such a campus **cannot be located in or adjacent to a predominantly residential area**. At the same time, I believe that such a site must be located near public transportation and, ideally, near any services that will not be provided on-site. In that vein, I'd like to remind you of the District Road area, located near DHHS and in a setting much like Hope House in Bangor. Though somewhat dated, I've attached the District Road proposal for ease of reference. While there might be too many hurdles to develop the District Road site itself, there would seem to be ample opportunities in that general area for future acquisition.

Fourth, I'd task the working group (or a subcommittee) with developing partnerships and working with others (i.e. the State, County, other municipalities, and other service providers). Maybe we can fund the construction of the shelter with opioid settlement proceeds. Maybe the State will agree to fund operations again. Maybe we can work to craft legislation that requires that each county have a shelter (with a bed-size in proportion to its population). Maybe we can identify a nonprofit to develop SRO housing for homeless veterans. And who knows what Medicaid expansion will bring.

As another aside, while I'm fairly certain that the Council is set on pursuing a single Homeless Services Center model, I still think a compelling idea would be to separate the low-barrier/emergency/intake/overflow shelter facility into 2 components - a smaller intake/overflow/emergency shelter facility located anywhere to the east of 295 (i.e. closer to downtown) and a larger emergency shelter located further away from downtown (with a minimal intake/overflow component).

While I am proponent of the District Road area for a single Homeless Services Center, that area, IMHO, still suffers from one of the same issues that plagues Riverside Street (and other prior proposals as well) - it's not within walking distance from downtown Portland.

It remains to be seen whether the logistics of transporting individuals to and from a far away emergency shelter will work. Not only do I believe that there will be significant growing pains in the short term, I also believe that those experiencing homelessness will continue to be drawn towards downtown Portland more than any other area (for years to come). If that is true - practically speaking - I just don't see how we're going to be able to effectively locate and transport everyone to a campus on the outskirts of the City. Having a smaller intake/overflow facility closer to downtown could help. And maybe the State could help provide the resources that would be needed to operate such a system.

I was determined to get this email off tonight - even if it meant staying up until 2:00 in the morning! If you've read this far, I appreciate it - and I look forward to connecting with all of you in the future.

Thanks!

Casey McCormack

--

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Fwd: Shelter Vote: Support for Councilor Costa's Opinion Article

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 17, 2019 at 4:55 AM

To: Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>, Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **benjamin strick** <strickbenjaminw@gmail.com>

Date: Sun, Jun 16, 2019 at 9:42 PM

Subject: Shelter Vote: Support for Councilor Costa's Opinion Article

To: <estrimling@portlandmaine.gov>, <bsr@portlandmaine.gov>, <sthibodeau@portlandmaine.gov>, <bbatson@portlandmaine.gov>, <jcosta@portlandmaine.gov>, <kcook@portlandmaine.gov>, <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>, <pali@portlandmaine.gov>, <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Hello City Manager Jennings, Mayor Strimling, and Council Members,

If you haven't yet read it, I've attached a link to Councilor Costa's opinion piece from the Press Herald. As both a Portland resident, and a social service provider working with people who are homeless, I strongly support Councilor Costa's conclusions and suggested path forward. I ask that you please consider rejecting both sites and continuing to work on this issue. We can do better for Portland business, residents, and people who are homeless. I appreciate your thoughtful consideration, leadership, and commitment to some of Portland's most vulnerable people on this contentious issue.

<https://www.pressherald.com/2019/06/15/councilor-costa-both-of-portlands-proposed-shelter-sites-are-unworkable/>

Thank you,

Ben Strick
63 Kenilworth Street

--

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Fwd: You know in your heart that Riverside is not a good choice

1 message

Jon Jennings <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Mon, Jun 17, 2019 at 10:36 AM

To: Kristen Dow <kjd@portlandmaine.gov>, Adam Harr <ash@portlandmaine.gov>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Gina MacVane** <wingmac0929@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Jun 17, 2019 at 9:58 AM

Subject: You know in your heart that Riverside is not a good choice

To: Kimberly M. Cook <kcook@portlandmaine.gov>, <bbatson@portlandmaine.gov>, <nmm@portlandmaine.gov>, <sthibodeau@portlandmaine.gov>, <bsr@portlandmaine.gov>, <pali@portlandmaine.gov>, <jduson@portlandmaine.gov>, <estrimling@portlandmaine.gov>, <jcosta@portlandmaine.gov>, <jpj@portlandmaine.gov>

Good morning,

I know you all have a tough vote ahead of you tonight. Please remind yourselves of that walk you took on Riverside St. and please remind yourselves that Riverside is not a good fit. Maybe we can revisit this issue and find a more suitable location closer in town where the services are. It seems we may get help from the state level at this point. I think you all know in your hearts that Riverside is not a good fit.

Thank you all for all you do!

Gina MacVane

Bailey Ave

207-807-0188

--

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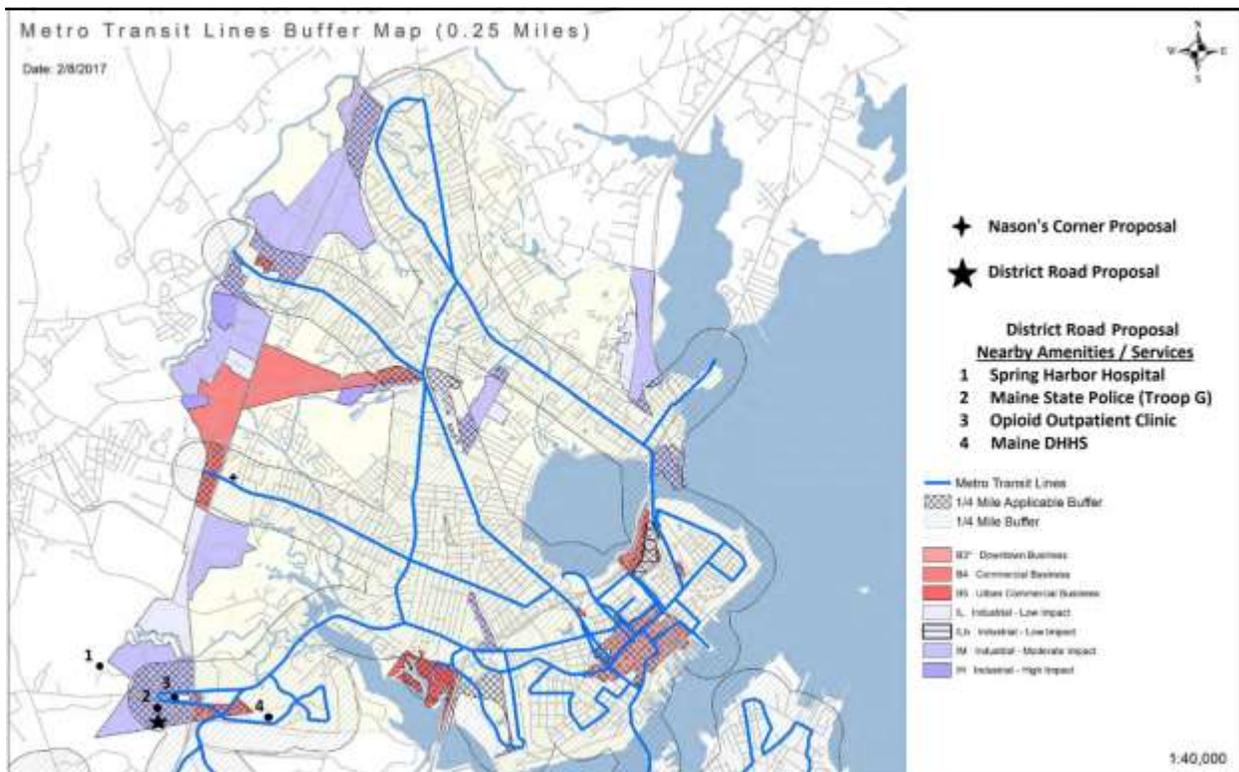
District Road Homeless Shelter Proposal

The Citizens' Proposal

The District Road Homeless Shelter Proposal is a citizen-sponsored proposal for siting a 200-bed emergency homeless shelter on a 53 acre City-owned parcel of land on District Road in Portland, Maine. The choice of location is modeled after [Hope House](#) in Bangor, which has been recognized as a “best practice” shelter by the City of Portland.

The District Road Proposal: (1) complies with Portland’s comprehensive plan; (2) complies with Portland’s zoning ordinance (as specifically amended by the Planning Board and City Council to accommodate homeless shelters); (3) mirrors “best practice” shelter sites cited favorably during Portland’s multi-year analysis; and (4) is not located in a residential zone next to a large owner-occupied residential neighborhood. In our view, the Nason’s Corner Homeless Shelter Proposal fails all four threshold issues.

The map below depicts the District Road Proposal in relation to some of the significant services and amenities nearby. The underlying map was approved by the City Council and shows where shelters may be sited based on the amended zoning ordinance. Shelters must be located within certain commercial or industrial zones and close to the Metro. The District Road Proposal complies; the Nason’s Corner Proposal does not.



District Road Homeless Shelter Proposal (Cont.)

Advancing “Best Practices” and “Housing First” Policy

The District Road Proposal is based upon the premise that this new shelter is intended to be a low-barrier, emergency homeless shelter, acting as a general intake facility for the Greater Portland region. As such, the shelter will provide safe and secure temporary accommodations and services for those in need, with a primary focus on implementing a “Housing First” policy by quickly connecting shelter clients to permanent and semi-permanent housing solutions that fit their needs (i.e. family shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing, etc.). Priorities like visibility and integration – and concerns about not “hiding the homeless” – should be focused on the permanent and semi-permanent housing solutions that follow – and not the emergency shelter phase. We believe that a general intake facility like the one proposed should be located in a safe, secure, and easy to monitor location, removed from residential neighborhoods that might create unnecessary friction, ensuring that the shelter will become a welcoming facility for all.

Limited Downside, Significant Upside – A Safer Bet

The Nason’s Corner Proposal is premised, in part, on Portland’s ability to successfully manage and control development decisions, planning decisions, land use policies, policing issues, and many other variables, not all of which are within the City’s control. Accordingly, we believe the question must be asked: *what if Portland is wrong?*

We’ve been told that the proposed Barron Center shelter will be a “gamechanger,” will not result in a “service cluster,” will not generate the kind of disorder that exists in Bayside, and will not adversely impact the Nason’s Corner community. What if that’s not the case? What if this proposal chills all commercial development on outer Brighton? What if the vacant retail stores and vulnerable commercial buildings get scooped up by service providers because, rightly or wrongly, no other commercial businesses want to be there?¹ What if there’s a massive recession that creates an unexpected spike in homelessness and creates massive overflow issues? What if the nearby hotels become impossible-to-police drug havens? What if something worse than fentanyl comes along? We do not believe that the Nason’s Corner community is in a position to absorb the kinds of unintended consequences and unforeseen adverse impacts that might follow.

In contrast, however, we would suggest that the District Road site, which is far removed from any residential neighborhoods, is much more capable of absorbing these types of unintended consequences and unforeseen variables. In addition, the 53 acre City-owned District Road location provides a myriad of development opportunities, which can be tailored to address future circumstances – thereby creating significant upside. For these reasons, we believe District Road is a safer bet – for the City and the community.

¹ We would note that, less than 3 weeks from the date of the Nason’s Corner Proposal announcement, a nonprofit organization announced that it was contemplating opening a 12-bed shelter adjacent to the Barron Center, which would seem to cast doubt on Portland’s ability to control third party development decisions (and thereby prevent the formation of a new service center).

Why Not the Nason's Corner Proposal?

It Violates Portland's Comprehensive Plan

Portland's [Comprehensive Plan](#) states as follows:

"The benefits and costs of our city will be born *fairly* across the entire city."

Siting the largest shelter in Maine adjacent to one of Portland's largest residential neighborhoods will unfairly burden the Nason's Corner community.

It Violates Portland's Amended Zoning Ordinance

Portland amended its zoning ordinance to contemplate off-peninsula homeless shelters in 2017, after several years of research and analysis. The [Planning Board Report to the City Council](#) clearly sought to prohibit shelters in residential zones and notes as follows:

"In preparing the draft amendments, staff considered whether it made sense to simply permit emergency shelters as conditional uses City-wide. However, in looking at the urban design and fabric of the other zones in the City, and the likely design of any new emergency shelter, *it did not seem appropriate to site emergency shelters in other residential zones*. However, group homes and other smaller-scale facilities similar in character to shelters continue to be permitted in those zones."

The Nason's Corner Proposal is located in an existing residential zone, at the gateway to one of Portland's largest residential neighborhoods. It is plainly in violation of the amended zoning ordinance and goes against the spirit of the Planning Board Report.

It Bears No Resemblance to the "Best Practice" Sites Reviewed

On June 10, 2015, Maine State Housing Authority provided the Shelter Planning Task Force with [3 "best practice" shelter models](#). They were as follows:

Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS), Burlington, Vermont

- Scattered site high-barrier shelter system located in Downtown Burlington with the largest shelter having 36 beds

The Road Home, Salt Lake City, Utah²

- Large low-barrier single shelter located in Downtown Salt Lake City with 1,100 beds

Hope House (Penobscot County Health Center), Bangor, Maine

- A 54-bed, low barrier shelter located next to the Bangor International Airport, with an additional 48 SRO transitional housing beds and a medical clinic on-site

The Nason's Corner Proposal bears no resemblance to these sites. We understand that shelters in Boston area have been reviewed as well but, to our knowledge, none of those shelters have been publicly identified. We also question whether shelters in large cities like Boston are appropriate for purposes of comparison, given Portland's size.

² Since the presentation, The Road Home has come under severe scrutiny for escalating crime and disorder in the neighborhood.

Why Not the Nason's Corner Proposal? (Cont.)

Shelters Should Not Be Sited Near Elementary Schools

The Nason's Corner Proposal is sited less than 1,000 feet from the Boys and Girls Club at Sagamore Village, just over 1,000 feet from the wooded areas of the Amanda C. Rowe Elementary School (formerly Hall Elementary School), and approximately ½ mile from the Breakwater School, which is another school with elementary-age children.

In the most recent year analyzed (2016), [84% of shelter clients reported substance abuse issues](#) (which would equate to ~168 individuals based on a 200-bed shelter). As such, the opening of a 200-bed homeless shelter in Nason's Corner would create one of the largest illicit drug marketplaces in the State of Maine practically overnight. We believe that siting a shelter so close to a public elementary school is inappropriate, no matter where in Portland that may be. We acknowledge that some residents of Bayside note that a few Bayside schools suffer from similar issues.³ We agree. They should not.

Please note that our primary concern is not with the shelter clients themselves, but with the criminal opportunists that prey on the ~168 individuals suffering from various substance abuse issues. Nason's Corner is a diverse urban/suburban landscape with many dimly-lit residential streets, retail back-alleys, hotels, woods, trails, and other difficult-to-police nooks, crannies, and dark corners. It is naïve to think that there will be no meaningful increase in neighborhood criminal activity – and there are several studies that indicate that homeless shelters generate a sustained increase of localized crime. We believe that it is inappropriate to site a large emergency shelter near an elementary school, especially when compelling alternatives like the District Road Proposal exist.

Shelter Clients Should be Protected, Not Tempted

The last place one would site a sober house would be next to a liquor store. Similarly, the last place we would expect to site a shelter with ~168 clients suffering from substance abuse and opiate addiction issues would be in Nason's Corner, which is a urban/suburban landscape that is incredibly difficult to police – so difficult, in fact, that for a long time it was home to the largest homeless tent encampment in Portland.

Accordingly, we believe Nason's Corner provides the kind of access and cover that will make it a paradise for drug dealers and a nightmare for those ~168 shelter clients fighting the temptation to use. At the end of the day, someone who is addicted and needs to satisfy that craving will go to great lengths to do so. We believe that Portland has a responsibility to make it more difficult for those ~168 individuals to connect with the criminals who seek to prey on them. As such, the shelter should be located in an environment that is easy to police and monitor, which Nason's Corner is plainly not.

³ We note that elementary-age children at Hall are much more vulnerable than the high school students at Portland High. However, the Boys and Girls Club of Portland is located in Bayside, which does attract young children and we agree is a cause for concern.

Why the District Road Proposal?⁴



| Issue | District Road Proposal | Nason's Corner Proposal |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Complies with Comprehensive Plan? | X | - |
| Complies with Existing Zoning Ordinance? | X* | - |
| Modeled After a "Best Practice" Shelter? | X | - |
| Ample Room for Future Development? | X | - |
| Not Located within ½ Mile of Schools/Daycare? | X | - |
| Not Located within a Residential Zone? | X | - |
| Not Located Next to Residential Neighborhood? | X | - |
| Safe, Easy to Monitor Location? | X | - |
| Single Point of Access? | X | - |
| Located Near Existing Law Enforcement? | X | - |

* Complies with Portland's Zoning Ordinance as a conditional use

⁴ We are not necessarily convinced that a single, large, intake shelter is the right policy for Portland. However, for purposes of formulating a proposal, generating discussion, and ensuring that the City Council is provided with at least two competing shelter proposals, we have assumed that a single, large, intake shelter is the direction Portland would like to take. Our proposal is not perfect, but we do believe it is quite compelling – and significantly more compelling than the Nason's Corner Proposal.

Why the District Road Proposal? (Cont.)

District Road Proposal Summary

The District Road Proposal calls for siting the new emergency homeless shelter on 53 acres of City-owned land located off of Congress Street near Skyway Drive. The site complies with Portland’s amended zoning ordinance, parallels the Hope House in Bangor, is not located within or near a residential neighborhood, advances Portland’s “Housing First” initiative, and, in our view, complies with the Comprehensive Plan.

The current site consists of vacant land, a large, rarely used parking lot, and a Portland public works facility. It sits adjacent to the Maine Turnpike Authority building, which doubles as the headquarters for Troop G of the Maine State Police. It is situated close to regional transportation options (Route 5 of the Metro), and is otherwise located near DHHS, Spring Harbor Hospital, and an opioid outpatient treatment clinic (Health Care Resource Centers – Portland). It is close in proximity to the Maine Mall commercial hub, offers views of the Western Promenade over the Portland Jetport runway, and, with 53 acres of land, provides ample opportunities to add future services, transitional housing options, or other amenities to the site. Moreover, the site has a single point of access (off of Congress Street) next to a significant Maine State Police presence, which may help deter criminal opportunists and make it easier to police, monitor, and manage.

Modeled After Hope House in Bangor (A “Best Practice” Shelter)

The District Road Proposal is modeled after Hope House in Bangor, Maine, which is located in a very similar commercial/industrial area adjacent to Bangor International Airport. Hope House consists of 54 emergency shelter beds and 48 (recently added) single room occupancy (“SRO”) transitional beds. The District Road Proposal provides Portland with a tremendous amount of site control and flexibility in order to add or alter amenities, add or alter services, or diversify on-site housing options.

Advances and Prioritizes “Housing First” Principles

The only policy that has been shown to impact homelessness in any meaningful way is a “Housing First” policy whereby a shelter’s primary focus is to transition shelter clients into permanent housing situations as quickly as possible. Once housing insecurities have been eliminated, the primary focus then turns to offering other supportive services.

As such, Portland’s new shelter should be focusing on (1) providing a safe, temporary environment for shelter clients, (2) rapidly transitioning shelter clients out of the shelter and into permanent housing situations, and (3) minimizing distractions that might interfere with these simple points of focus. We believe that the District Road Proposal advances these “Housing First” principles by facilitating an overall safer shelter experience and reducing unnecessary monitoring / policing / disturbance issues that are unrelated to (and distract from) the stated “Housing First” policy embraced by Portland.

Why the District Road Proposal? (Cont.)

Minimal Impact on Residential Neighborhoods and Schools

As the crow flies, the District Road site is located over 1 mile away from the closest residential neighborhood and over 2 miles away from the nearest public school (which, ironically, is still the Amanda C. Rowe Elementary School).⁵ While we do not believe that shelter clients are primarily bad actors, a substantial number of clients suffer from mental health and substance abuse issues, attributes that are likely to attract criminal opportunists. As such, the District Road Proposal will ensure minimal negative interactions between shelter clients, criminal opportunists, residential neighbors, and school-aged children, thereby reducing unnecessary distractions for shelter staff.

Complies with the Zoning Ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan

As noted in the Summary section, the District Road site complies with Portland's amended zoning ordinance. We also believe that the District Road Proposal complies with the equitable requirements of the Comprehensive Plan since the shelter is sited in a manner that reduces the likelihood of adverse impacts to surrounding neighborhoods.

Site Control, Flexibility, and Future Development Potential

The 53 acre site provides a tremendous amount of flexibility for any modifications that might be warranted in the future – whether that is more green space, a transitional housing complex, or additional supportive services. In contrast, the Nason's Corner Proposal is limited significantly by lot size and existing on-site improvements.

Close to Amenities and Supportive Services

As noted in the Summary section, the District Road site is close to many amenities and services, including the Metro, DHHS, Spring Harbor Hospital, an opioid outpatient treatment facility, a Maine State Police facility, and the Maine Mall commercial hub.

Why the District Road Proposal – Conclusion

We believe the District Road Proposal is incredibly compelling and offers Portland an unparalleled opportunity to initiate a "Housing First" policy that will substantially improve the effectiveness of the services it currently provides – all without disproportionately impacting any one particular neighborhood in Portland. We also want to ensure that the City Council will ultimately be presented with more than one proposal. We look forward to a robust, transparent, public dialogue regarding the future of Portland's next shelter.

⁵ In our review, we did identify two daycare facilities within a mile radius of the District Road site. As the crow flies, The Little Dolphin School is located ½ mile away from the District Road site and Bright Horizons is located a little under 1 mile away from the District Road site. Given the safer location, limited access points, and significant size of the buffer, we do not believe this is problematic.

Why Not the District Road Proposal?

Why Not the District Road Proposal?

In analyzing the District Road Proposal, we also sought to better understand why it was deemed by City staff to be less compelling than the Nason's Corner Proposal. Please find below the primary critique that we've identified, as well as counterpoints to same.

The "Hiding the Homeless" Perception

We understand that the City Council has provided guidance to City staff requiring that the new shelter site not be perceived as "hiding the homeless." This appears to be the primary issue that is preventing the District Road Proposal (and other similarly situated potential sites) from being thoroughly considered (and potentially recommended) as suitable alternatives to the Nason's Corner Proposal. We believe that this directive is motivated in part by a concern that locating a shelter on the outskirts of Portland is ultimately an attempt to "hide" or "shame" Portland's homeless population. In our view, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, we would suggest that the "hiding the homeless" directive is ultimately counterproductive, limits a robust public discussion of all suitable alternatives, and politicizes an issue that warrants honest dialogue, free from political catchphrases and hollow sound bites. We believe that such a concept ultimately ends up hurting shelter clients by forcing them into neighborhoods that are ill-prepared to accommodate them and unnecessarily creates friction between neighborhoods, homeless advocates, City officials, and our homeless residents. At best, this type of friction prevents Portland from considering all potential options. At worst, it prevents Portland from implementing meaningful, comprehensive, and effective homeless policy.

"Hiding the Homeless" Counterpoints

First of all, the entire design of the proposed shelter is intended, in part, to provide homeless clients with a secluded space (i.e. interior courtyard) where they don't feel like they are being "put on display" (as is often the case in Bayside). As such, it makes no sense to try and force the shelter into a visible location simply for the sake of visibility - such an attempt plainly contradicts one of the apparent goals of the shelter design.

Second, Portland's number one priority should be to implement a successful "Housing First" policy. In other words, Portland should be concerned primarily with developing permanent affordable housing opportunities and moving folks as quickly as possible from intake shelters into permanent housing solutions. Shelter clients should be rehoused as soon as possible, with the new shelter acting as a regional intake shelter – and connecting shelter clients to services and housing opportunities across the State.

We believe that a more thoughtful approach would be to make sure that Portland (and all of Maine, for that matter) is encouraging affordable urban infill projects that are designed to provide housing security to homeless individuals – and to focus the “hiding the homeless” energy on those types of permanent “Housing First” solutions. By way of example, we would expect much less concern from Nason’s Corner residents if the proposed facility was a 30-50 bed elder shelter or permanent housing for the homeless.

Third, the design of the new shelter is intended to provide an array of in-house services for homeless clients, thereby limiting the need for frequent travel. To the extent travel is needed (and to the extent travel is needed to an amenity not located within the District Road neighborhood), the Metro (Route 5) and the new shuttle service contemplated at the new shelter will provide easy access to the Portland region. It makes little sense to place such a large emphasis on the “hiding the homeless” concept at the emergency shelter level where the stated goal is for shelter clients to be connected with permanent housing opportunities as soon as possible (i.e. weeks or months).

Finally, we respectfully question whose needs are being met by insisting on not “hiding the homeless”? Is it truly the shelter clients – or to some extent are we projecting our own feelings and desires onto the entire homeless population? For instance, does every shelter client want to spend their days in plain sight, on display for everyone to see – or do some clients value seclusion and privacy? Does every client want shelters to be sited in areas that are susceptible to criminal opportunists – or do the vast majority of clients simply want a safe, secure, temporary accommodation, away from the temptations of modern urban life? We believe folks have been too quick to draw conclusions about what every shelter client wants or needs.

For the reasons stated above, we believe that concerns about “hiding the homeless” are misplaced and counterproductive. As such, we respectfully ask the City Council (and this Committee) to rescind the supposed “hide the homeless” mandate and direct City staff to revisit the District Road Proposal, as well as the other 20 sites that were reportedly under consideration before the Nason’s Corner Proposal was announced. If the City Council strongly believes that the “hiding the homeless” concept should apply at the shelter-level, they should do so by publicly debating the merits of several competing proposals in a public setting – and not by hamstringing this Committee and City staff.

“Hiding the Homeless” Analysis – Conclusion

Given the pressure on the City Council to address the “emergency situation” in Bayside, and given the City Manager’s reported goal of using “his full powers under the City Charter to move the process ahead in a timely fashion,” it is inappropriate to limit the City Council’s options to only 1 proposal based on arbitrary and counterproductive “hiding the homeless” concerns. Accordingly, we respectfully request that at least 3 potential sites are recommended to the City Council so that the merits of each site can be debated in public – and not behind closed doors at City Hall. To that end, we offer the District Road Proposal as a compelling alternative to the Nason’s Corner Proposal.

In Conclusion

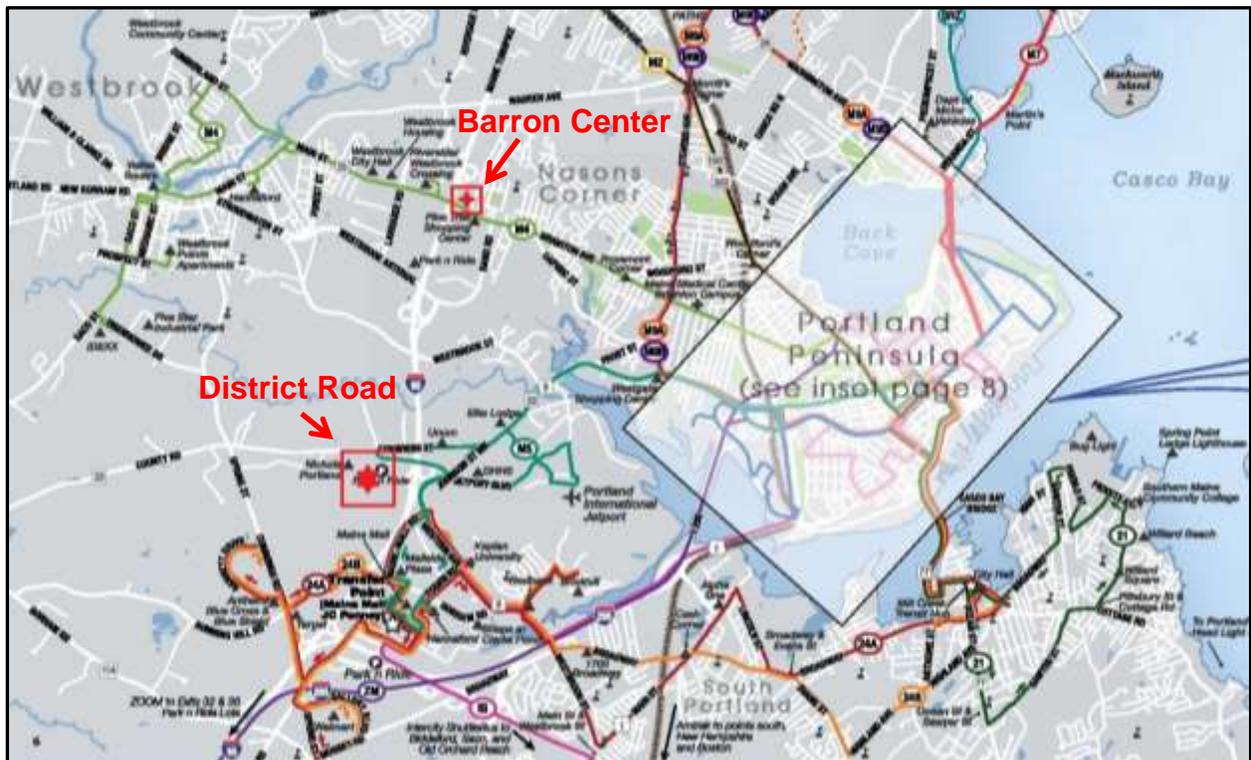
The District Road Proposal is Modeled After a Successful Shelter

The District Road Proposal is modeled after Hope House in Bangor, which is located next to Bangor International Airport and is surrounded by a variety of commercial uses. Over the course of our research, Hope House seemed to be one of the few larger shelters that regularly received praise as having successfully balanced (1) the needs of homeless clients and (2) the needs of the surrounding community. If Portland is intent on using a larger shelter model, it should take its cue from its neighbor to the north.

The Nason's Corner Proposal is Outsized and Unproven

We have yet to come across a *single* example of a similarly-sized emergency shelter that has successfully integrated into a community resembling Nason's Corner. We believe that this is because none exist. The only successful models that we've identified consist of either (1) smaller scattered / specialized shelters located throughout a city or (2) larger shelters located in dense urban areas or well-within commercial districts. We believe the Nason's Corner Proposal is unproven and will not be successful.

Metro Bus Map



Disclaimer

While the District Road site is owned by the City of Portland, we understand that it is subject to certain unrecorded restrictions because the decades-old acquisition was funded through the Federal Aviation Administration (the “FAA”).

As such, it is our understanding that in order for the District Road site to be developed, Portland and Portland International Jetport (“PWM”) (which is owned by Portland) would need to follow these steps:

1. Apply to the FAA to **show that the land is surplus to the needs of aviation** (as was recently done with the Duluth Trading building currently under construction off of Maine Mall Road in South Portland).
2. If approved, the land would need to be **leased on a long-term basis at fair market rent** (this is somewhat of an odd thing, but since Portland owns the land, it would basically need to lease the property to itself and then pay PWM a fair market rent, which funds would go to PWM (which is owned by Portland) and then used by and for PWM).
3. Assuming that the above two requirements are satisfied, and while we don’t believe this is an absolute guideline, the use should generally be **compatible with the day-night average sound level in that location** (which is 65 dBA). A 65 dBA setting is generally acceptable for hospitals, nursing homes, and other similar uses with appropriate construction techniques (i.e. sound reduction), but it is not recommended for purely residential uses.

Accordingly, we believe the District Road proposal still offers some level of potentiality. However, we also understand that PWM is land constrained and there may be competing priorities for the site.

Regardless of the City’s appetite to pursue the District Road Proposal, the point remains: large emergency homeless shelters – and especially shelters doubling as general intake and triage facilities – should not be sited near residential neighborhoods. And to the extent that Portland is insistent on building a large emergency homeless shelter (as opposed to scattered programmatic shelters), there are many other sites around the City that offer the type of large commercial buffer that one expects to see when looking at similar shelters across the United States. And if the City doesn’t own any property in a suitable location, it should be willing to acquire property (and spend more in the short term) in order to ensure that a large emergency shelter is appropriately sited (thus avoiding the longer term costs associated with managing an unsuccessful large shelter in a poorly suited location).