

THE CHRISTIAN COUNSELING
and
WELLNESS GROUP, INC.
PO Box 21034
Greensboro, NC 27420-1034

June 1, 2004

Mr. Len Lucas, Acting Internal Auditor Director
City of Greensboro
P.O. Box 3136
Greensboro, NC 27402-3136

Dear Mr. Lucas:

Thank you for granting the request for a fifteen (15) day extension to present a plan of action to your department as it relates to the St. James Homes II project. This letter is in response to your request. There are, however, several issues that we wish to address prior to proceeding with the plan.

Mr. Lucas, for several months now it appears that you have become the only person from the city to communicate with us regarding this project. Why is this so? We understand your position as an auditor, however, it seems that you have become the bridge between The Christian Counseling and Wellness Group and the City of Greensboro. The perception is that due to the sensitive nature of this situation, it may be safer in some way for you to now deal with us rather than members of HCD. In so many ways, it gives the same perception that you and Mr. Brown had to be the big guns to deal with the Project Homestead fiasco.

Andy Scott sent us a letter several months ago indicating that someone from his office would be contacting us regarding the above referenced matter. No one has contacted this organization. We understand that Cindy Blue was unavailable for a period of time, as well as I was unavailable due to a major medical problem. However, when I did attempt to arrange a time to discuss this project, Cindy Blue indicated that she had too much to do to address this issue. We do realize that every one is busy and Cindy has been very helpful in the past, yet, we have continued to need assistance in order to move forward.

My husband and I embarked on a mission to become part of the solution to the problem of homelessness in Guilford County. We made it perfectly clear that we had absolutely no interest in getting into the ugly politics that surrounds the City of Greensboro. Yet, we have become entangled because we dare fight for the rights of the less fortunate individuals in this city to have the opportunity to live near the down town area. We believe that you do not have to have the \$50,000

and above jobs to be good neighbors for "Down Town Greensboro". Why is it necessary to push as many low income individuals out of the area that is most convenient for services that they need?

Are we sending up smoke screens and making excuses for the lack of progress toward completing the renovation project of St. James Homes II? The answer is absolutely not. This project has not moved forward because "we have been redlined". Special interest group(s) desire to tear down the apartments for self-serving reasons. While we were being told that we had the full support of the city, some city employees were verbally promoting tearing down the apartments. Some of the leaders in the Homeless Prevention Group have openly verbalized that the city's intent is to tear these buildings down.

We realize the sensitivity of this issue and the danger of rubbing certain individuals the wrong way, but we did not come this far to just give up all the battles that we have already fought. It is so sad to have so many people tell us that we can not save these apartments when the "establishment" - meaning city leaders and Down Town Greensboro, Inc. - wants them destroyed for their own personal agenda. We have had people call the city leaders the "Greensboro Mafia".

Mr. Lucas, we do not live in a slum house or area, therefore, we do not promote this type life style for anyone. Our goal is to create an environment that we would feel safe and comfortable living in. We opened the Prince of Peace Haven for substance abusing men in 1999 and we are pleased to inform you that there has never been a need to seek assistance from the police department. We have never received a complaint from any of the people living in this community and we have at least two of our City Council Members in this area.

As you are probably aware, HUD has notified us that the \$500,000 in grant funds are to be withdrawn because we have not moved forward with this project. We have contacted the HUD office in Washington, DC and we are planning to appeal that decision. The first plan of action, however, is to continue to aggressively seek funds to purchase the St. James Homes II property. Secondly, we want to meet with the appropriate city staffers that are in positions to address our concerns with the manner in which this entire St. James scenerio has been handled. Thirdly, we are going to appeal HUD's decision to withdraw the funds.

In addition to the above, we are working with contractors to establish a rehabilitation training program for our talented clients to work on two buildings. We are continuing to work as though we will be able to obtain money to pay off Bank of America and retain the grant money. Our goal is to obtain ownership, repair 16 units and have them occupied by September 30, 2004. We will then move to the other two buildings. We are continuing to maintain the grounds at St. James. Yes, it may appear that we are using a "bandaid approach at this

time. Our ultimate goal, however, is to work with an interested party to use tax credits to create buildings second to none.

The most urgent and important plan that we have now is to address the City of Greensboro with the concerns enclosed in this letter. We believe that it will contribute toward a more user-friendly system and maybe develop some trust from the less fortunate working class.

While we are sure that this is not the plan of action that was expected, this is where we are at this time and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Donald Graham

Sarah Graham

Donald and Sarah Graham