

ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 8A

Government of the District of Columbia
Fairlawn/ Historic Anacostia/ Hillisdale/ Sheridan

July 30, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

At a time when Ward 8, particularly Historic Anacostia is raising from the ashes yet another fire is taking place. We have recently learned another social service program is moving into the community. While there may be a need for social service programs in the city, we already have a fair share in our community. The continued revitalization and restoration of Historic Anacostia hinges on retaining and bringing in homeowners who can support the businesses and shops that presently exist and will come to this historic community of Ward 8.

Calvary Women's Services plan to open a homeless shelter at 1217 Good Hope Road to house 50 women overnight and hand out over 200 meals a day does not support the desired goals and plans of the residents and shop owners of Historic Anacostia. As I stated our community already has enough social services. A homeless shelter is in the 2100 block of 18th street, S.O.M.E. is located at 18th and V Street SE, Bread for the City is at the corner of 17th and Good Hope Road SE and a Methadone Clinic – Good Hope Institute – is located on Good Hope Road. Residents say it is just too much to bring another community outreach or social service program into our community. We do not need any more.

Another social service coming smack in the middle of the Historic Anacostia has the potential to render it “a neighborhood which is undesirable to live and shop.” The citizens of Ward 8 see this plan as a major blow to our developing community. The residents are concerned these women will have nowhere to go during the day and not leave the neighborhood but will loiter so they can get a bed at night or a meal during the day. One resident has firsthand experience with this process, years ago she worked with a group who wanted to bring homeless men into a shelter in Anacostia Park, which is less than a block from the proposed site and the future home of major development which will take place at Poplar Point. She said “We were in the Park in previously used buildings. We stayed for 6 months and moved everyone out, but it was not good for Anacostia. Men did not stay in the Park or at the Center, they walked the neighborhood streets, they panhandled, etc....and please don't let them tell you Ward 8 is where the need is the greatest. People that are homeless are from everywhere....not just in Ward 8.” The people who run the Good Hope Institute said they would control that population...they don't. Their clients line up in the morning, get their medication and don't disburse. They hang out for an hour or more and that influx of people makes residents un-comfortable when they travel in the area of the Institute.

Some residents have already expressed they are considering moving out of the community because it is being overrun with social programs. Homeowners are very nervous and uneasy. Since these people have no place to go in the day residents feel crime will rise. Anacostia and all of Ward 8 should continue to become a place where homeowners and residents don't just sleep overnight it is and should be a place where we live, shop and play.

Bringing another social service to the business corridor of Anacostia will make it all the more difficult to bring in more businesses and shop owners. Merchants and business owners will not open stores in a corridor where they perceive there is only minimal support. Businesses which already exist feel people, like those who work in the Gateway Building, which houses DHCD, will not visit their businesses because the women add to the people who already loiter all day and deter anyone from stopping or coming into to purchase their wares. Major developers like Four Points and the Curtis Brothers have concerns about their investments. The plans these developers have are to bring new homes, office space, and retail space to the Anacostia community of Ward 8. All of their major development in Historic Anacostia is less than 2 blocks from Calvary Homeless Shelter.

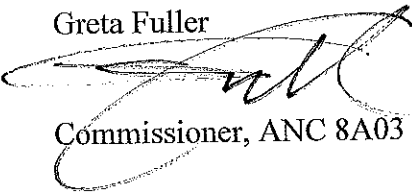
With the addition of more businesses like Uniontown Bar and Grill, Fireside Restaurant, Spirit Anacostia Health and Wellness Center, the Hive, and the 11th Street Bridge project, Anacostia the Gateway to Ward 8, stands ready for major restorative change.

As the Commissioner for Historic Anacostia ANC 8A03, I strongly oppose a homeless shelter at the location identified by Cavalry Women's Shelter.

I strongly urge all involved to reject the use of this property as a homeless shelter. The success of Historic Anacostia's restoration hinges on this decision.

Sincerely,

Greta Fuller



Commissioner, ANC 8A03