

Brooklyn Community Board 14
Attn: Alvin M. Berk- Chairman
810 East 16th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11230

Dear Members of the Board,

In response to the emergency community board meeting held on Thursday, July 23, 2009 I have responded to the questions posed by the board and community members, on behalf of Common Ground Community.

- 1. There appears to be no on-site 24/7 security, so what measures will be taken to ensure public safety both inside the building and the surrounding areas?**

The landlord has installed 16 cameras in the hallways, public areas, and just outside the entrance to the Brooklyn Hotel (800 East 12th Street). The cameras are web-based and are viewed on a regular basis by the landlord and his staff as well as periodically by Common Ground Street to Home staff. Since it is web-based, we have the ability to view the cameras when we are off site.

Common Ground conducts rounds at the Brooklyn Hotel on each shift (12am-8am, 8am-4pm, and 4pm-midnight). During these rounds staff checks the hallways, bathrooms, and all public areas as well as each of the 12 units where Common Ground has a client residing. Staff has access to all rooms where we have clients residing and may, at their discretion, enter a room if deemed appropriate and necessary. Staff documents their efforts and it is reviewed by supervisory staff on the following shifts. Each shift is staffed with at least two team members. Often the team is equipped with Master's level social work staff that has supervisory oversight of the shift operations. Senior management staff is available 24 hours to receive calls from staff and provide direction in situations that require further guidance.

Criminal activity will not be tolerated in and around the Brooklyn Hotel. If a client commits a crime the police will be notified and the person will be arrested. Any behavior of concern that is less than criminal will be assessed by clinical and senior management staff to determine the most appropriate course of action. When necessary, a client may be removed from the Brooklyn Hotel and placed at another facility.

- 2. What percentage of the clients come from Community District 14? How many from what other locations?**

The majority of the clients are coming from the CB14 and surrounding areas of Coney Island. Currently 8 of the 12 clients placed in the Brooklyn Hotel fall into that category and it is our intention to use this as a resource primarily for the people who are street homeless in the CB14 area. A few people may be coming from other parts of Brooklyn and Queens and are also a part of our Street to Home program and well known to our outreach and clinical staff.

3. Are there any statistics about, e.g., drug use incidence, available on the clientele living at this facility?

Due to client confidentiality we cannot provide specific information about the clients residing in the facility. However, I have provided additional attachments that describe the demographics of the street homeless population in NYC as well as best practices for housing and service intervention.

4. What kind of staff are on-hand during the night at the facility?

The landlord has a live-in superintendent who oversees daily activity of the tenants and monitors the traffic coming in and out of the building. He has direct access to Common Ground outreach and management staff as well as the landlord in case of any concern. The landlord also has 16 security cameras in and around the facility. Common Ground staff conducts rounds on each shift (3 times per day) and have the heaviest presence during the daytime hours of 9am-5pm.

5. Are there any individuals who are registered sex offenders?

We cannot answer this due to client confidentiality. Common Ground's Street to Home program is not required to collect information about sex offender status. It is the responsibility of the individual and parole to ensure compliance with the reporting laws. It is not our intention to place anyone here who is a sex offender and internally we would make the decision not to place someone here who is a sex offender if we are aware of their status.

Common Ground is happy to address the questions and concerns from CB14 and its constituents. I may be contacted at 718-360-8035.

Respectfully,



Amie Pospisil, LMSW
Director of Outreach and Housing Placement- Street to Home
Common Ground Community

Cc: Lyle Churchill
Jody Rudin
Linda Bazerjian