

Somerville Cambridge Interagency Task Force on Services For Elders

December 23, 1996

Member Agencies:

Cambridge Council on Aging
Cambridge Department of
Health and Hospital
Cambridge Housing Authority
Cambridge and Somerville
Legal Services
Cambridge Visiting Nurse
Association
CASCAP/ECHO
Community Alzheimer
Support Service
Geriatric Outreach Substance
Abuse Program
Geriatric Service
Harvard Community
Health Plan
Harvard Real Estate
Heritage Hospital
New Community Services
Paine Social Services
Somerville Cambridge Elder
Services/ElderLink
Somerville Council on Aging
Somerville Hospital
Stillman Infirmary
Windsor House Adult
Day Health
Youville Hospital

Mr. John Breneman
Editor
Cambridge Chronicle
240A Elm Street
Somerville, MA 02144

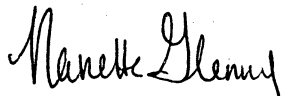
Dear Mr. Breneman:

As an inter-agency task force on elder issues serving the Cambridge area, we were very pleased to read Ken Maguire's article on 12-19-96 noting the city's intention to re-develop the former Harvard Manor Nursing Home into *Assisted Living* housing for low-income elders with supportive service needs. We can't emphasize enough the need for this type of housing alternative for the elders of this city. While the *Assisted Living* housing market has exploded in recent years, responding to market demand and fiscal common sense, the target groups have been only those with the highest of incomes who can afford the costly monthly fees. Thus, many low-income elders who need assistance with activities of daily living, but who do not need continuous skilled nursing support, have been forced to either remain at risk in their homes or to prematurely enter nursing homes.

While our community boasts an exemplary Housing Authority and high quality Home Care, key missing pieces are 24-hour access to staff and comprehensive services and service planning on-site.

Cambridge elders should not have to live at risk and should not be forced to enter nursing homes before they absolutely need continuous skilled nursing support. They should be able to have the privacy and dignity of their own apartments, the availability of services as needed on-site, and the security of 24-hour access to staff. They should not be forced to move from the community they know and love in order to seek appropriate options. The city is to be applauded for recognizing this enormous gap in elder housing and for taking the necessary steps to develop an innovative response to such a need.

Sincerely,


Nanette Glenny
Cambridge Hospital
Senior Health Center


Elizabeth Hastie
Paine Social Services


Susan Pacheco
Cambridge Council on
Aging

Contact:

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Steering Committee of the Somerville Cambridge Interagency Task Force on
Services for Elders (S.C.I.T.)

cc: Margaret Drury, City Clerk
Members of the Cambridge City Council

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DEC 26 AM 9:55
CAMBRIDGE, MA

Consent Communication #4

S-63

Communication was received from Somerville
Cambridge Interagency Task force on
Services For Elders, transmitting their
support for the city's intention to
re-develop the former Harvard Manor Nursing
Home into Assisted Living housing for
Low-income elders with supportive
service needs.

In City Council January 6, 1997

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