



UNIVERSITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

OFFICE OF CITY CLERK
66 WINTHROP STREET
(DUNSTER AND WINTHROP STREETS)
JUN 10 1985
CAMBRIDGE, MASS. 02138 TEL. 876-3256
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

PASTORS:

H. FREDERICK REISZ, JR., Ph.D.
SUSAN P. THOMAS

PASTOR EMERITUS:

HENRY E. HORN, D.D.

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY:

VIRGINIA B. LEAVENS

Board of Zoning Appeal
Cambridge City Hall
795 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA. 02139

June 3, 1985

Dear Staff:

I am writing in support of the petition of Shelter, Inc. to open a shelter facility in the former church on Prospect St. During the past three winters I have advised groups operating an Emergency Winter Shelter at University Lutheran Church. This past winter, we housed 23 persons every night for six months. Almost every night we turned away 4-6 people because we were filled. Some nights we turned away as many as 18 persons. In our shelter persons were allowed to stay for up to 14 nights in a row. Then they had to go back to the first-come-first-served line.

It is my understanding that David Witte and Shelter, Inc. proposed to open a shelter which will provide room and 24 hour care for up to 20 persons. The philosophy of this shelter would allow residence up to three months for persons judged to be coming out of the cycle of homelessness. I facility of this sort would greatly help the problem of homelessness in Cambridge. It would allow a measure of stability which is not offered in any other local sheltering facility or food program. That stability has been shown to be crucial for the eventually ability of people to break out of the situation of homelessness. We are all well aware of the housing difficulties in Cambridge and Boston. This plan might be a serious alternative to present band-aid approaches to homelessness. Most staffs working in shäleters for the homeless are well aware of the ned for stability, an address and more than overnight concern to help people stabilize their lives enough to get a job and begin to save money for permanent housing. Similar plans in other cities have proven successful and helpful.

Shelter, Inc. has ably shown its ability to administer responsibly such projects. It does not create exterior lines of people waiting for food and beds. Its staff is well trained. I am confident that the existence of this shelter would not cause significant disruption of the lives of persons on Prospect St.

Here we have an opportunity to take a significant forward step in the social services provided the citizens of Cambridge. Further there is an existing group with a commendable and responsible record of community service and able administration available and willing to provide this service. It is an opportunity which our community should enable while the resources are at hand.

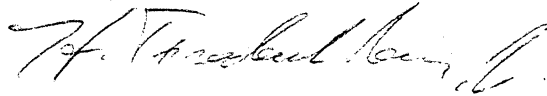
In this case, the need is evident. The resources are available. The project managers have proven responsible and competent. The proposed method of

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operation takes due regard for neighborhood residents and the needs of the homeless.

I strongly urge your acceptance of their petition and other actions of the city departments which will enable Shelter, Inc. to operate this shelter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "H. Frederick Reisz, Jr.", written in dark ink.

Dr. H. Frederick Reisz, Jr.,
Senior Pastor
University Lutheran Church

CC: Cambridge City Mayor
Cambridge City Council

13.

S-464

Comm. from Dr. H. Frederick Reisz, Jr., Senior Pastor, University Lutheran Church, in support of the petition of Shelter, Inc. to open a shelter facility in the former church on Prospect St.

N

In City Council,

June 10, 1985

Placed on File