



City of Cambridge

Department of Human Service Programs

51 Inman Street Cambridge Massachusetts 02139 498-9076

To Robert W. Healy
City Manager

From Jill Herold *J.H.*
Assistant City Manager for
Human Services

Subject Council Order No. 11 of
September 24, 1984

Date: November 16, 1984

Ref:

In each of the last several winters, a growing network of human service agencies in the City of Cambridge have worked cooperatively to address the needs of the homeless in our community. On October 2, subsequent to Councillor Vellucci's order, the Department of Human Services re-convened a task force of such agencies to address the upcoming winter. Over forty individuals representing almost twenty-five agencies attended.

Within an average winter month, six to eight families in Cambridge face homelessness. In some instances, at least, the situation could have been prevented had the family known when and where to turn for help before eviction was imminent. The following plans were developed and are in the process of being implemented.

- D.H.S.P. has, and will continue, to strengthen its information and referral capacity both for families who need assistance to maintain their homes and those already homeless;
- In conjunction with other city agencies and those legal service agencies in the community who offer housing services, D.H.S.P. will develop an out-reach campaign to ensure that families are aware of their options and the services available to them before housing problems reach the crisis of eviction.
- D.H.S.P.'s Emergency Services Co-ordinator and the staff of the Housing Assistance Program will continue to provide advocacy, information on available financial assistance, and housing counseling to assist families in crisis in finding permanent housing;

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- Referrals will be made to the community's existing family shelters, including those operated by Shelter, Inc., Transition House, and appropriate Shelters in Boston;
- D.H.S.P. will cooperate with the Cambridge Welfare Advisory Board in recruiting community families willing to accept homeless families into their own home on a short-term basis;
- For those families for which no other suitable alternative is available, the Department has initiated a request for FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) funds to support families in low-cost hotels on a temporary basis; these funds will be administered by Cambridge/Somerville Catholic Charities.

Records of these efforts and their success will be maintained throughout the winter to assess the effectiveness and suitability of each of these approaches, so that plans and responses can be improved each year.

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CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
Tel. 498-9011

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

November 19, 1984

To the Honorable, the City Council:

With respect to City Council Order No. 11 of September 24, 1984 relative to establishing procedures to provide homeless families with temporary housing, enclosed please find copy of a report from Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mbf
Enc.

Agenda Item No. 4

S-704

Re: establishing procedures to provide homeless families with temporary housing.

In City Council,

November 19, 1984

11/19/84

Placed on File-