



THE CITY OF NEW YORK MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 7

250 West 87th Street, New York, NY 10024 • Phone (212) 362-4008
Website: <https://nyc.gov/mcb7> • E-mail: mn07@cb.nyc.gov

RESOLUTION

Date: May 2, 2023

Re: MCB7 Public Hearing on the Safe Haven at 106-108 West 83rd Street.

Full Board Vote: 27 In Favor 6 Against 3 Abstentions 0 Present

The following information was taken into consideration:

- As a result of court actions between 1981 and 2008, homeless people in New York City have a permanent right to shelter. In January 2023, a record high 70,525 people slept in NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS) shelters, an increase of 51% since the start of 2022.¹
- New Yorkers experiencing unsheltered homelessness are a uniquely challenging segment of the homeless population to engage. Efforts to aid this population require persistent and compassionate outreach and dedicated services including stabilization beds, safe havens, and drop-in-centers which are tailored to meet their needs.
- CB7/M's Capital Budget Priorities for several years have included a request for a safe haven which meets "best practices for the population being served" and provides housing for no more than 50 individuals in mostly single and double rooms.
- The New York City budget has allocated \$300 million a year beginning in FY23 to address unsheltered homelessness.
- DHS has selected 106-108 West 83rd Street as the site for a safe haven. Previously, this site was used by the DHS as a shelter annex for homeless men for over 10 years. The buildings are in the final stages of being refurbished for use as a safe haven.
- Community Board 7 was first informed of DHS's selection of the site in February 2023.
- DHS has selected Breaking Ground, an experienced non-profit service provider, to operate this safe haven in addition to five other safe havens it manages in other neighborhoods of the City.
 - The safe haven will be equipped with on-site services including health and mental health services, case management specialists and other professional staff and resources to provide wraparound support to help stabilize the lives of individuals as they transition off the street and move on to permanent housing.
 - The planned staffing ratio is approximately 1 staff to every 2 residents.
 - Breaking Ground has agreed to organize a Community Advisory Board for the safe haven, including representation from CB7, local elected officials, resident associations, NYPD 20th Precinct, schools and community-based organizations.
 - It is the practice in Breaking Ground facilities that whenever residents re-enter the building, they undergo a search to prevent the introduction of weapons, alcohol and drugs.
 - Breaking Ground has offered to maintain and publicize a phone line that the public may use if serious issues arise.
- Breaking Ground will coordinate with DHS's HOME-STAT outreach teams, managed by Goddard Riverside, a member of the Manhattan Outreach Consortium assigned to homeless outreach on the Upper West Side.

¹ City Limits, January 17, 2023

- Street homeless individuals will have access to a bed in the safe haven only if referred by a HOME-STAT outreach team.
- In many cases, outreach teams have extended contact with and understanding of the needs of those they refer.
- Outreach teams reserve beds for those they refer and check that the client has no record of a criminal offense that requires residence restriction under New York State law.
- The site will prioritize services for vulnerable unsheltered homeless in the Community District and nearby areas of Manhattan.
- Breaking Ground data that compare the number of 311 street homeless complaints in nearby neighborhoods six months before the opening of a safe haven and six months following opening show a significant decline.
- The announced capacity of the safe haven is 108 residents to be served in a mix of single, double, triple and quadruple rooms. Men and women will reside on separate floors.
- A reduction of the planned capacity of the safe haven to 84 residents would permit all clients to be housed in single and double rooms.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **supports** the establishment of the planned Safe Haven at 106-108 West 83rd Street with Breaking Ground as its service provider **with the expectation** that all applicable building codes and zoning laws will be complied with.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, where Breaking Ground determines it to be advisable, cubicles be created to provide privacy for residents where single rooms are not available, as many residents are likely to have chosen street life after negative experiences in congregate shelters.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **strongly urges** DHS, Breaking Ground, the NYPD 20th Precinct and the PS 9, Center School, and Brandeis Campus communities to work together to develop safety protocols to ensure the safety of students, families, school personnel and the public in the immediate area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **requests** that the DHS provide notice to community boards of the opening of a homeless facility in the district when construction permits for a site are filed and a minimum of 60 days before opening (rather than the 30 days' notice that is current practice). The gathering of information to inform and engage the public and address concerns requires a longer lead time.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, due to the concerns expressed by some parents at nearby schools, Community Board 7/Manhattan **requests** that DHS consider close proximity to schools when locating safe havens.