

Elsen, Nikki

From: Alan Billings <billings.alan1@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 31, 2020 10:38 AM
To: Elsen, Nikki
Subject: Rezone of 508 S. 5th Ave., La Crosse, Wisconsin

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Dear City Plan Commission Members:

I became acquainted with the works of Catholic Charities (CC) of the Diocese of La Crosse through CC's development of the House of Mercy (HoM) In Loyal, Wisconsin. I am from Loyal, Wisconsin. The HoM is a homeless shelter for women with children in Loyal, Clark County, Wisconsin.

There was initially some concern from some members of the Loyal community about having the shelter. Accordingly, staff from CC came to Loyal and presented to the community the rigorous scrutiny and standards utilized by CC in the development of and the admission to such a shelter. After considerable public discussion, the concerns of the Loyal community were allayed and the HoM came into being. Now, several years later, the HoM continues to serve the urgent needs of homeless women with children in this community.

Most important, the rigorous scrutiny and standards promised by CC in the development and operation of the HoM remain in place. Those standards have not been relaxed over the years that the HoM has operated in Loyal, Wisconsin. The Loyal community has come to accept the HoM and prides itself on its contribution towards resolving the crisis of homelessness.

Although CC's facility at 508 S. 5th Ave. in La Crosse will serve urgent community needs other than homeless women and children, I am confident that CC's standards will apply to that facility as well. I recommend and urge the City Plan Commission to proceed with the rezone of 508 S. 5th Ave., La Crosse, WI so that CC may develop the facility for its intended purposes. I want to allay any concerns of the Washburn neighborhood and the larger community that such a facility might blight the neighborhood. On the contrary, the facility, under the operation of CC, will enhance the community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Alan Billings

Sent from my iPhone