

October, 2021

Hennepin County and the Salvation Army are exploring a proposal to relocate an existing women's program to 2400 Stevens Avenue South, the former location of the Minneapolis Hostel. To better inform the community on what is being proposed and how the operations would work if approved, Whittier Alliance has taken in community members' questions and feedback for the County and Salvation Army staff to respond to in advance of their City of Minneapolis Planning Commission hearing on November 15th. Survey question responses are included below. [More info on the project is available on the Whittier Alliance's Development Tracker.](#)

What questions do you have about the project, if any?

Thirty people is way too much but 50 more people would double the number of residents on our side of the block along Stevens Ave. ... doubling the population on a single lot!

There is not much street parking available due to the MIA immediately across the street.

Street parking is very tight in this neighborhood with spaces needed for residents, renters, MCAD and MIA students and patrons.

I understand 3 meals a day will be provided. That's 150 meals a day going in and 150 containers going out every day, seven days a week. We already have to deal with the numerous trucks using the MIA loading dock on Stevens Ave.

It would be awesome to see as many awesome things to celebrate in this project as possible!

Personally, I do not believe that the proposed location for the women's shelter is a safe or calm location for these women going through bad times. There is a lot of crime in this neighborhood and I believe it is not the safest neighborhood for vulnerable women.

I believe it will negatively affect the small struggling local businesses. I own and run a restaurant on Eat Street and we are already struggling to survive during the Covid-19 pandemic.

None. I support this project.

What do you like about the project? What would you like to see improved about the project?

I don't see much detail here at all.

The project is something that is needed just not at 2400 Stevens. There is already too much of a concentration of similar types of housing next to 2400 Stevens. 17 East 24th Street is an apartment housing for African American Women and their children called Passages Community Housing. Across the street from that are three properties(2401, 2405 and 2409 1st Avenue) that house mentally challenged people and is directly across the alley from the proposed emergency shelter.

Just 4 blocks south of the proposed shelter, Simpson Church has plans for a new building which will house 70 homeless men and women just 4 blocks south of this proposed location.

Adding 30 and up the 50 homeless women next to the existing supportive housing is too much concentration and not healthy for the residential neighborhood and institutions and their visitors along Steven's Avenue South between 24th and 26th Streets.

The current Hostel at 2400 Steven's floor plan is not designed to hold that many women and allow for privacy. The County representatives reported at the WA Housing meeting on October 19, that the women most appreciated (even cried) about getting a private room at the County's temporary shelter at a leased hotel.

A historic building has been maintained and recently upgraded.

A straightforward number of projected occupants and staff.

I like that it is in a great location AND the Minneapolis Institute of Art has security constantly "patrolling" their building 24 hours, being that the proposed shelter is literally across the street, it would provide some extra security.

I'm very excited about the project!!!! This is an urgent need.

Whittier has carried the majority of group homes, supportive housing, social service agencies, homeless shelters in our city for the 50 years I have lived at my address. We have a lot of large old homes that fell on hard times and the city and agencies stepped in to convert them, maintain the tax base for the city and in the process make Whittier a campus for all things social service. That plus 85% rental does not make a balanced or healthy neighborhood. The three half way houses that were behind me were not a problem and the men who did not make the lottery at St Stephens were not a problem when they slept on my porch instead of the park and hung around for the next lottery. But, at this time. there is nothing about this project that I like. It is just another opportunistic maneuver to slip in yet another group home in an already loaded neighborhood. And this does not qualify as a NIMBY example. The three halfway houses directly behind me should speak for itself as well all of the others along 1st Ave and throughout the neighborhood. Further, the city has not been able to control the drug use and crime in Fair Oaks park and a woman shelter next to it does not seem appropriate.

Asking solely 'What you like about the project?' is a leading question that impugns the survey's integrity. I don't 'like' the project because it is another request for a conditional use permit for yet another institution that congregates supportive care in a segregative public service philosophy. I have received a brief from City Attorney Susan Segel that it became necessary to request because large food delivery vehicles serving the two mental health facilities at 24th Street and First Avenue persisted in driving down the narrow alley between 24th and 25th streets and then continuing down the alley between 25th and 26th streets continuing to service the Signe Burckhardt Manor Senior Manor. The sound volume of these regularly scheduled, large delivery trucks is annoying in a residential neighbor and continues to block resident access to the alleyway, The nuisance persisted despite registering complaints with US Food Service. A facility housing continually and temporarily from thirty and up to fifty residents insures that the quality of private residential living will degrade.

Want real programming not just shelter, fencing for safety, security for women-24hr. More security in the neighborhood.

I think this would be a wonderful addition to our neighborhood. Especially as the colder, deadly months are getting closer, we need to back and support dignified shelter options for our neighbors navigating homelessness.

We need more housing-centered emergency shelter. Local, small options that are in scattered sites is a great model. However, we continue to place these permanent structures here in Whittier and I'm wondering why other neighborhoods with high walking scores (Seward, Longfellow, et al) are not also being targeted for these important structures.

The need for this type of housing is enormous and I'm glad Hennepin County & Salvation Army are stepping forward to address it. I see no need for improvements beyond the current project plan.

I love this project!! Excited to see this property be put to good use. Possible improvements: private play set/play ground, outside cooking area, water feature, allow pets.

I like that it is a dedicated shelter for female-identifying residents, with supportive services, located in a dignified, historical building. It seems like a lot of thought and care went into this project, too.

I don't like it. While Minneapolis needs more homeless shelters, Whittier neighborhood already has two, large homeless shelters and several other transitional housing houses. Please distribute services more evenly around the city.

I like the project a lot..... In another neighborhood. I strongly oppose adding yet another shelter/supportive housing project in this area of Whittier. We are completely and overwhelmingly inundated with shelters and supportive housing in this corner of Whittier and it's unhealthy for all involved for there to be such a high concentration of supportive housing in one small corner of the city. My imperfect understanding is that historically this corner of Whittier has been a prime area for supportive/sober/special needs group housing because there has been a total lack of push back against such housing here, thereby most areas of Minneapolis have ZERO supportive housing while we are inundated. Ed Feilein many years ago had a great idea to impose a 500ft minimum distance between each such housing arrangement, in order to more evenly and equitably distribute it around the city. This would obviously fail that test.

I like the idea of providing 30+ day shelter for people (women in this case), so that they have time to rest and regroup and to access services. I am not sure how I feel about this project proposal, because there is already an abundance of special-services housing in this immediate neighborhood. I'm not sure that adding yet another building devoted to persons and services like this is appropriate, given our already heavy saturation along 24th? Also- I see many unhoused people (generally men, and frequently using alcohol and other substances) in Washburn park basically every day, which is directly across the street from this property. I wonder how that ever-present population will interface, if at all, with the women sheltering in this building? Has the county/salvation army considered that?

I am not categorically opposed to new designated-shelter space occurring in the neighborhood; for example I support creation of the large St Stevens building (which also includes longer term housing) that's going to go up on 1st and 28th. I just am unsure of more special services housing along that 24th/1st Ave corridor.

This is not an appropriate location! We have so many houses of people at risk. It doesn't help anyone to add more.

I do not support this project. We already have shelters/halfway houses at 24th and 1st. I understand there is a City objective to NOT locate shelters etc. closer than 1/4 mile so as not to create a massed shelter area.

It provides housing to those in need.

The project aligns with my values and beliefs that women have a right to protection, safety, shelter, and well-being. I like the intensive staffing, services, and care offered and that it was designed with input from an advocacy group with lived experience.

I like that it's within proximity to public transit, a beautiful park, and isn't a new/enormous building.

This proposal sounds like a very bad idea. We already have our share of supportive housing on this block which all too often creates problems.

Generally a very strong project. It meets a critical shelter need for the community; provides 24-hour access (no waiting lines, long-term access, good staffing); uses an existing structure and so is already integrated; and won't drive traffic congestion or parking overflows. Excited to welcome them in!

I don't like anything about this project as proposed. The building isn't big enough to shelter 50 people along with the necessary staff without seriously impacting the neighbouring residential properties. I certainly appreciate that shelters are needed but this proposal is just too intense for a lot that is zoned C1 ... especially adjacent to residentially zoned property.

I don't like anything about it. This area is saturated with shelters and services. It will not better serve anyone to locate this shelter in this location. There will just be more people here unable to get all the services they need, on top of the current rather large population of people in the same boat.

Women's shelter is a vital resource - this looks to be a reasonable scale for a dignified shelter program and valuable to the community.

Nothing. I'd like to see it placed in a neighborhood that isn't inundated with services. I'd like to see something else like a small hotel in that old home. I'd like the poor to have better housing choices and be given the resources to live in market rate housing of their choice. Current social services more often keep people trapped in poverty then help move them out of poverty. I'd like the WA to be a more vocal supporter of eliminating poverty and push the City, State and Federal government to make major reforms to things like the Affordable Housing Trust Fund so it isn't just lining the pockets of developers but helps people who are dramatically underpaid be able to afford to live. Every community needs some level of supportive house and services but they should be spread out in every neighborhood.

I would like to see this project not happen. I agree housing needs to happen for homeless people, but look at the Simpson housing. Are they currently full? No! We already have shelter and housing for men and women in recovery or with mental illness around the blocks we live. How would it help to have women living next to a park with men dealing drugs and prostitution. I have a child, she already witnesses women walking from the homeless shelter down the alley to the park stop and stay in our back yard, drinking and doing drugs at 6, 7 am and all hours of the day. I get tired of picking up needles in my alley back yard. I want change for my daughter to live and thrive in this neighborhood and currently we do not have that. Please help the families that currently live her. We will keep supporting the people not sheltered in the neighborhood. But I don't think we can keep doing more.

There are already too many like projects in only a 1 mile area.. I dont think it's a good idea

We desperately need a shelter for women. This project has an experienced provider, serves a relatively small number of women and has staff on duty 24/7.

I like that it helps our unhoused neighbors

I would like the project to be elsewhere, not in the Whittier neighborhood. We seem to be over -zoned for this type of housing here.

I like the idea of women having a safe and comfortable place to find reprieve and transition into a healthier living environment. I want to see it succeed. I am glad people are listening to what female-identifying people need, to have a space that will help them feel truly safe and rest to feel more peace.

I support it completely. We need more housing spaces for those in transition. These people deserve a safe space and this site will reduce the number of unhoused using preventative methods, rather than after the fact. I live a few blocks away and this is a great location. Quiet and safe but close to retail and public transit.

I agree that there is a strong need for shelters that specifically address the needs of unsheltered individuals who identify as women. Easy access to transportation and a number of supportive organizations based in this neighborhood likely make this a good location. It is hard to make recommendations for improvement with so little information.

I like the fact that they are renovating an existing building to be used to provide shelter. Too many tear-downs. I also appreciate the fact that it is being built here in my neighborhood, as I know we are centrally located and have plenty of public transit options and green space.

I support this project as it is and my support also comes with a desire to see Hennepin County, Salvation Army - and other orgs who are doing the critical and necessary work of supporting folks go through struggle - explore policy / practice around a street outreach/resource program in whittier - a small team of trained folks out in the streets who are equipped to address the needs of folks who are struggling with personal and structural issues.

Props to everyone who is a part of making this project a reality!

Women-only shelters help to increase the feeling of safety and support. Are there additional support programs that go hand in hand with this?

I like the whole concept. Although Whittier has taken on a lot of these types of projects in the past and they could cause some problems I think given the economic circumstances the city is facing right now it is a good idea. I would like to see a counseling program set up, including job counseling so that these women can become independent and happy.

I'm glad there has been input from unhoused community members and that it is intentionally trying to keep women-identifying people safe by not co-locating near a men's shelter.

It is important for us to provide shelter to our neighbors in Minneapolis. We don't have enough shelter. I like that this is focused on women too.

People need help, and I don't mind if our neighborhood is viewed as a place where people can find shelter and get help.

A shelter seems like a great use for this building. Would be a welcomed addition to our neighborhood.

It's vital that spaces exist for non-men in the shelter system and that we expand the amount during the ongoing pandemic as the eviction moratorium has ended. So many people stay in abusive situations because of housing and knowing that sleeping in shelters or outside isn't physically safe for them.

I am firmly in support of the project. Clearly there is a need for emergency shelter services in our city, especially services for women, and I am happy for those services to be located in my neighborhood.

I already submitted my responses earlier but I wanted to add a few questions.

I like that the project creates shelter with a track to long-term housing and job stability, and that it supports and creates security for women experiencing homelessness and domestic violence. Shelters are an imperfect solution but are a necessary part of the process in ensuring an alternative to sleeping on the street.

I am really excited about this project and fully support it as someone who will live a few blocks away. I am glad to see that Whittier will be home to another dignified housing option for people who need the safety and stability that a compassionate shelter with case management services. This neighborhood has been and should remain welcoming to people with all life experiences and in all phases of their lives, and this project sends a powerful message that, indeed, all are welcome here.

A women's only shelter would serve a crucial need: inviting women to recover from homelessness in a single-sex space. What I would like to see improved is the communication about whether this is, in fact, a women's-only shelter, or if it welcomes both women and "female-identifying" men. You either have a female body or you don't, regardless of how you identify. If this shelter admits "female-identifying" men, it is not a women's shelter.

As a resident of Whittier, I support this shelter in our neighborhood!

Happy to welcome this kind of care and support for all Minneapolis neighbors into Whittier

The fact that this issue is at least being discussed.

Like helping people but this area is over concentrated.

Nothing. Nothing.

Not good for the neighborhood. B.a.d.

This project is a form of red line districting. The Dept of Human Services is trying to consentrat those recurring bennefits to one area out of laziness

I stand in opposition to this project. The concentration of social service residence both long and short term in what amounts to half a city block is detrimental to those who own property in the neighborhood.

Email

My name is *[name redacted]* and I live at *[24XX]* Pillsbury and I'd like to express my support for this proposed shelter.

I am often concerned about our neighborhood being over "group -homed". I have live and worked in Whittier for most of the period from 1985 through present. I've seen many group homes come and go and I've certainly had some issues as a result. But I am committed to Whittier becoming an even more inclusive community. I vote for officials who support a balanced approach to our community with a priority it social justice and equity. This being said, we need to look at each proposal and weigh the need among a select/specific community and the challenges that they face.

I worked at the MIA for 5 years in the 1990s and I know that that location will receive great support and protection due to its proximity across the street from the museum. I live 4 blocks west and I feel that this specific proposal does meet our communities overall vision for an inclusive community.

Please include my feedback where it can be evaluated among the other community feedback.

If you would like to talk with me more or ask any other questions please reply to this email and we can schedule a phone call.

Thank you for your review and consideration.

[name redacted for privacy]
[24XX] Pillsbury Ave S