

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Joint Civic Associations and Community Council Safe Neighborhoods Committee Opposing Wyndham Garden Hotel Housing Homeless Ex-Inmates

SEEKING TO MAINTAIN QUALITY OF LIFE IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD Opposing NYC using the Exodus Program to House Homeless Ex-Inmates at the Wyndham Garden Hotel

August 10, 2020 - In late June 2020, residents of the communities near the Wyndham Garden Hotel located at 61-37 186th Street, Fresh Meadows, NY, became aware that the hotel was housing over 100 homeless people who had been released from Rikers Island and other correctional facilities. Use of the Wyndham Hotel for this purpose had actually begun as early as April 2020. This program is managed by Exodus Transitional Community Inc.

The New York City Mayor's office had never informed the community or our elected officials that this alleged "temporary" housing would be taking place.

The Safe Neighborhoods Committee, a joint Civic Association (Flushing Heights Civic Assn., Fresh Meadows Homeowners Civic Assn., Fresh Meadows Tenants Assn., Hillcrest Civic Assn., Hollis Hills Civic Assn, Meadowlark Gardens Cooperative, Utopia Estates Civic Assn., West Cunningham Park Civic Assn.) and Community Council (Queens Civic Congress Community Council) is extremely concerned. We represent over 10,000 homes, tenants and businesses in and around the Fresh Meadows area who are all very much concerned for their personal safety and well-being.

Inasmuch as neither the Mayor's Office nor Exodus Transitional Community, Inc. has been forthcoming with important information, such as occupancy numbers, placement numbers, and other facts that can and should be at their fingertips, we, the Safe Neighborhoods Committee, do not welcome such a program in our community.

Accordingly, we demand that not only should the Mayor's office not renew the program, but that the current contract to house released inmates be promptly terminated. In the interim, we further demand that the conversation Exodus and the Mayor's representatives began on July 21 be held on a regular basis with the leaders of the undersigned civic associations, in a community dialogue, to monitor and maintain the safety in Fresh Meadows and the surrounding neighborhood.

Concurrent with the development of this Community Dialogue Group, we also call for the following:
Meeting with Deputy Inspector Scott Henry of the 107th Precinct to establish a program to enhance the safety and quality of life of the Fresh Meadows Community including residents and businesses; Call for NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer to review the contract with Exodus with special attention to the level of compensation so that we can ensure that it is appropriate, and request that he also review the metrics that are employed or are lacking, to ensure that Exodus is meeting the objectives of the contract, e.g. success rate of job placement and integration of individuals into the general society.