



September 13, 2024

Updates on Relocation of Adult Homeless Shelter

Dear Neighbor,

We are appreciative of the input and questions we have received from many of you regarding the relocation of SHC's adult homeless shelter since our last Neighborhood Engagement meeting in August. We're thankful to have had meaningful collaborations with neighbors, including one-on-one discussions and other communication exchanges which have helped to shape key updates to this project.

We know concerns remain, especially tied to the operations of our relocated shelter at First Church Somerville and we have been working with your feedback and have drafted the enclosed updated FAQ document. This document is in response to many questions we have collected via community meetings, email exchanges, online community survey and one-on-one discussions. In the interim, we'd like to share three specific project updates:

- **Timeline and phased bed increase:** To ensure that neighbors and abutters continue to have the opportunity to be heard and have concerns addressed before the relocated shelter opens, and to resolve project delays, we will not be opening on October 1st as originally planned. We will not be opening the new shelter operation earlier than November 1st.
- **Reaching SHC staff 24/7:** We have received many valid questions about the process for communicating security or operational concerns related to the shelter. The safety of our shelter guests and neighbors will continue to be a priority, and we are committed to implementing 24/7 phone coverage for neighbors to reach SHC to report concerns. We have shared this in the attached FAQ document.
- **Pest management:** We will be doubling our pest management program, contracting with our vendor to have two pest control visits per month, as needed. We are confident that this increase, in addition to our trash removal procedures, will alleviate any concerns. We will also continuously assess the need for more comprehensive services, if needed.
- **Building/Maintenance:** We received feedback about the upkeep of the church building and grounds and there is now a dedicated Facilities Manager for FCS. If neighbors have church-related questions about church-related events or exterior building concerns they can reach the church at office@firstchurchsomerville.org. To address concerns or questions about shelter operations both SHC and FCS can be contacted simultaneously at shelterinfo@shcinc.org.



We will be holding our next neighborhood engagement meeting on

Wednesday, September 25th at 6pm

at Community Baptist Church

located at 31 College Avenue in the Community Hall

- please see the attached agenda.

While our first several meetings were focused on soliciting input and capturing concerns from the community, the primary focus of this meeting will be us to communicate specific initial answers and responses for discussion to your inquiries to date. Additionally, in response to feedback and remaining consistent with our community process to this point, this meeting invite is extended to **neighboring abutters within 300ft of FCS and all residents of Francesca Avenue and Kidder Avenue (up to Liberty Ave)**. While we appreciate interest and offers of support from other community members outside of this neighborhood, our goal is for this meeting to have conversations and discussions with those neighbors identified as abutters, as mentioned above.

We're committed to continuing to listen, discuss and respond to you and that we continue to be transparent throughout this process. You can always share more feedback or questions/concerns with us by emailing shleterinfo@shcinc.org.

We look forward to continued collaboration with our valued neighbors and hope to see you on September 25th.

With Thanks,

Michael Libby

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Libby".

Executive Director
Somerville Homeless Coalition

Reverend Jenn Macy

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rev. Jenn Macy".

Pastor
First Congregational Church