

***A Resolution of the Mt Vernon District Democratic Committee***

***Calling on Chairman McKay, Supervisor Storck and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to relocate the Eleanor Kennedy Shelter to a new facility at 2801 Beacon Hill Road co-located with a new fire station and affordable housing***

WHEREAS Fairfax County has made sincere efforts to prevent and end homelessness over the past decades, reducing the homeless population by 40 percent;

WHEREAS the Eleanor Kennedy Shelter, a 100-year old water pump house at Fort Belvoir-- one of three county homeless shelters for individual men and women-- has housed homeless residents since the 1980s and has been scheduled for replacement with funds from a 2016 public bond issue;

WHEREAS the Kennedy Shelter cannot be updated according to architects and because homeless residents need a clean, safe location near transit to services and employment, county staff has recommended a new shelter be built at Beacon Hill Road and Richmond Highway. According to county policy, this shelter would be co-located with other services including a new Penn Daw Fire Station and affordable housing;

WHEREAS Supervisor Storck has led an 11-month-long task force process of meetings among firefighters, housing and homeless advocates, and local residents as well as several public community meetings by Zoom and in person, and maintained a project a web site with Q&As, meeting summaries, slide shows and other relevant information;

WHEREAS the county staff has evaluated nine possible locations for the shelter in Lee and Mt Vernon districts finding no other site that meets the criteria of the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Planning and Development Department for this use;

WHEREAS many community members, faith communities, social justice groups, business owners, and even many residents near the proposed site support this project;

WHEREAS we encourage the supervisor's office and the Department of Housing and Community Development to continue working with immediate neighbors who have concerns about the shelter to take actions to alleviate those concerns; and

WHEREAS It is urgent to began work soon on a new shelter because the current shelter is physically unfit as a residence and no other suitable site has been located in a reasonable time frame;

Therefore, be it resolved that the MVDDC supports the Beacon Hill location for the new Kennedy Shelter and asks the Board of Supervisors to encourage Mt. Vernon Supervisor Storck and all other concerned parties to formally accept that location and begin work on the project as soon as possible.

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