



JAMES F. BRENNAN  
44<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Kings County

THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

CHAIR  
Committee on  
Corporations, Authorities  
and Commissions  
COMMITTEES  
Codes  
Education  
Real Property Taxation

December 4, 2015

Dear Neighbors:

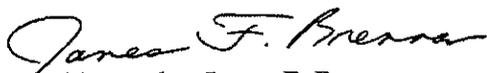
Many of you may know that the City of New York is locating a shelter for homeless families at 385 McDonald Avenue, between Caton Avenue and Albemarle Road. This is a 64 unit vacant building which will house primarily mothers and their children. This is not a specialized facility, such as for the mentally ill or victims of domestic violence. At a meeting on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, City officials informed local residents that families would begin moving in on December 7<sup>th</sup>. Another community meeting to provide further information is scheduled for **Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30PM at PS 230, 1 Albemarle Road, corner of McDonald Avenue.**

Thirty years ago, the State's highest Court ruled that City and State government had an obligation to provide shelter to the homeless. When the City sought to place shelters in Williamsburg and Bedford Stuyvesant around the same time, local residents and elected officials sued to block the shelters but the courts ruled that the City had a right to open the shelters on an emergency basis and the lawsuits were unsuccessful. Generally speaking, the City does not have to schedule community board or other public hearings with regard to opening shelters on private property; it continues to act on an emergency basis. There are no formal mechanisms for public notice which is why I am providing this information to you.

The City has contracted with an experienced social service agency, CAMBA, to operate the facility. It will arrange for 24-hour security and there will be a 9:00pm curfew. It will provide three meals a day and help people get jobs and provide other social services. About 30% of the homeless are working. I am quite familiar with CAMBA; they are the operators of the Park Slope Shelter, and provide many social services across the City and are quite competent. There has been a shelter for 100 mentally ill women at the Park Slope Armory just one block from my district office for more than twenty years without major problems. The City will establish a Community Advisory Committee and agreed to schedule additional meetings with local residents at my request. 385 McDonald Avenue is in the 66<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct, and Captain Quick, the commanding officer, and other police officers were present at the meeting. The 66<sup>th</sup> Precinct Community Council meets at 7:30 P.M. every third Thursday of the month at 59-10 13th Avenue. I recommend local residents concerned about the facility attend Precinct Council meetings, where opportunities to discuss concerns with senior police officers are available.

I understand many people may be anxious about this matter and it is legitimate to be concerned. Don't forget - nobody wants to be homeless. With rents rising and many families with very low incomes, circumstances sometimes overwhelm people. City and State government need to keep working on programs to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place and build more affordable housing. Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Assemblymember James F. Brennan