

COMMITTEE REPORT

To: All Community Board Members

**From: Zion Halili and Steve Pivawer, Co-Chairs
Group Home Site Selection Committee**

Date: April 18, 2008

**Re: Cerebral Palsy Association of NYS Group Home site selection
63-40 255 Street
51-34 Marathon Pkwy.**

On Thursday, April 17, 2008 the Group Home Committee held a meeting to discuss the proposal by the Cerebral Palsy Association (CPA) conjunction with the N.Y.S. Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) to establish two group homes in Little Neck.

Present at the meeting were Board members Zion Halili and Steve Pivawer Co-Chairs, Dennis Novick, Edith Basom, Frank Skala, Rose Bruno, Christine Haider and Joan Ferrari; Susan Seinfeld, District Manager, Duane Schielke, Marc Becker, Joseph Pancari and Steven Mosenson from CPA and Linda McCawley from OMRDD. Five neighborhood residents were present.

The two homes will each house four (4) female residents who have cerebral palsy and have ambulatory issues, some have walkers and others have wheelchairs. The average age is 40. Currently, they reside in an apartment in Queens that due to the conversion to a condominium the owner is not renewing the lease. All residents will attend Adult Day Programs during the week and travel by busses provided by the CPA center. The residents will require 24 hour care. There will be 2 staff members in the morning and throughout the night and three during the hours of 3pm to 11pm. Residents will at all times be accompanied by a staff member. There is a manager and a nurse who visit the homes a few times a week.

The house at 51-34 Marathon Pkwy. is vacant and requires renovation. They have entered into a conditional contract with the owner of the house. They plan to renovate the three bedroom home to a four bedroom home by eliminating a dining room. There are two bathrooms that will be renovated to accommodate wheelchairs and provide other safety features. A ramp will be installed in the front and it will be landscaped. A new sidewalk has to be installed.

The home at 63-40 255 Street is in very good condition. This too will be converted to a four bedroom home and two full baths will be provided. A ramp will be built in the front and landscaped. No expansion will be made to either home.

CPA did not have the final costs for renovations and Mr. Mosenson the attorney stated that he was not allowed at this time to disclose the selling price as requested by the owners. He stated that he would ask permission of the owners to allow him to disclose this to the Board. Ms. McCawley stated that OMRDD supports the purchase and that the homes must be appraised and must be purchased at a fair market value.

Residents next to the 255 Street home were concerned because of its proximity to Little Neck Parkway and the number of vehicles that would be parked at the house. The home does not have a van on site, staff will have personal cars or they use public transportation. There is parking for three cars. Similar questions were asked about the Marathon Pkwy. house because of its proximity to MS 67 and the lack of parking during the week. This house has parking for two cars. Residents also wanted to be assured that there are no signs identifying the house as a group home.

Discussion followed about the comparative costs of housing the developmentally disabled and federal and state money that supports the homes, and the financial status of the CPA.

Section 41:34 of the New York Mental Hygiene Law on site selection states that there are three options the "municipality" has in commenting on the selection: 1-approve the site recommended; 2- suggest alternative sites; or 3- object to the establishment of a residence at the site because to do so in the Board's opinion, would result in such a concentration of residential facilities that the nature and character of the neighborhood would be substantially altered.

Frank Skala made a motion to approve the site selection of the 255 Street home. Dennis Novick seconded the motion. The motion was carried, with five yes votes and two no votes and one abstention. The same was done for the Marathon Pkwy. home and the motion carried with the same votes.