Mr. Mayor and City Council Members,

We are shocked and outraged to learn that you are using Carlsbad City funds restricted for veterans on tenants of the Windsor Pointe homeless apartments that the developer says, and I quote, “may or may not be veterans”. To make matters worse, you were confronted with this misappropriation of funds by Council Member Cori Schumacher at the April 21 City Council meeting and failed to take her lead to correct this. Needless to say, the optics on this are NOT good and public outrage is gaining momentum among veteran supporters and neighbors that understandably don’t want dozens of “Seriously Mental Ill” homeless dumped next door to their kids. Ms. Bhat-Patel, if you don’t care about the concerns of residents of the Barrio district, you should know that an entire, veteran-heavy retirement community in District 3 is very worked up about this.

This 2 minute video is going out to the media and it’s pretty damning: https://vimeo.com/415230064

We are also incredibly underwhelmed by your lack of interest in assessing the legitimate voter concerns presented about the facility at that Council meeting. Your lack of effort to seek even the simplest of binding, substantive answers by the developer for the community concerns below was quite dismissive. The developer’s materials are so transparently inadequate on major issues, I can’t help but feel that you’re asleep at the wheel. The flaws that we feel placing “homeless with Serious Mental Illness” in our neighborhood & near our elementary school include (but are not limited to):

- The objection to the fact that the project would place a population with “Serious Mental Illness” near Jefferson Elementary School so soon after a seriously mentally ill man shot kids at nearby Kelly Elementary School.

- Concerns for the fact that onsite security promises by the developer do not help the surrounding neighbors when tenants leave the premises. This would not be a lockdown facility and tenants could come and go 24 hours a day. We also noticed that the developer noted at the meeting that “the tenants won’t necessarily be criminals” which, of course infers that many or most will be.

- The objection that, in addition to the improper funding source, this facility was sold to the public as a service for “homeless veterans and lower income veterans and their families” and has instead, without proper community involvement, been swapped with something that the developer states “may or may not be veterans”.

- The developer has claimed there would be some kind of vague criminal background check but their No Place Like Home funding requires that:
"Sponsors must accept tenants regardless of sobriety, participation in services, or history of incarceration"

- The developer also purports there will be an enforceable no drug "house rules" policy. However, the No Place Like Home funding requires that:
  - "Tenants shall not be required to maintain sobriety, be tested for substances, or participate in services or treatment."

- The noncommittal and non-binding assertion that this facility will prioritize local resident applicants despite California State fair housing laws that forbid housing discrimination of that nature. We are well aware that the City has, in actuality, gifted the developer a tenant prioritization waiver by amending the original Resolution to bind the developer to this prioritization only "to the best of its ability". This "attempt" is, of course, worthless because the developer does not have that legal ability to discriminate in the first place. As a result, this will not likely affect the local homeless problem whatsoever and social workers from across the county will be sending their homeless HERE. You will be making the homeless situation here worse, not better.

And this doesn't even mention the colossal waste of public funds this is, because if you really wanted to help the homeless, you would fund apartments in a much cheaper part of the city, somewhere you could service many, many more people, and not on prime real estate at the beach.

Signed,
Furious Barrio Neighbors

Resources:

No Place Like Home Guidelines: (page 47)

The violation letter the City of Encinitas received from the State Department of Housing, documenting Fair Housing violations, demanding they cease local resident prioritization for their homeless developments:

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