





*Inter-Faith Council for Social Service*

# **GOOD NEIGHBOR PLAN**

**Inter-Faith Council @ SECU Community House**

1315 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Chapel Hill, NC

## Introduction and History

Inter-Faith Council for Social Service (IFC), which was established in 1963, provided emergency shelter services for the Chapel Hill/Carrboro community at the Old Municipal Building in downtown Chapel Hill from 1986 to 2015. In 1998, IFC relocated its shelter services for women and families to the new HomeStart campus on Homestead Road and soon thereafter began searching for a suitable site to relocate its residential services for homeless men. In 2008, UNC-Chapel Hill identified a parcel of land on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. that could be considered for the new Community House, subject to the Town's permitting and approval process.

At the Town's suggestion, IFC conducted a series of community discussions in the spring of 2010, prior to applying for a Special Use Permit, which happened in June 2010. IFC applied to build a two-story, 16,500 square-foot building at 1315 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. to accommodate both a 52-bed transitional housing program and a 17-cot emergency shelter for homeless men.

The Public Hearing for the Special Use Permit began on March 21, 2011 and was continued on May 9, at which time the Town Council voted 6-2 in favor of the Special Use Permit application and also adopted "Resolution C" requiring a Good Neighbor Plan for the new Community House project. Resolution C states that "establishing mutual understanding and respect for program residents and the community will be the primary goal of the Good Neighbor Plan," and that "a variety of interests...be represented during the creation" of the plan (see attachment for Resolution C).

Prior to writing the first draft of the Good Neighbor Plan, IFC staff requested examples of similar plans from the American Planning Association's Planning Advisory Service and later conducted an online search and found plans drafted in Toronto, Canada; Lawrence, Kansas; and Portland, Oregon. IFC drew heavily on the Good Neighbor Plan for the Hawthorne Homeless Shelter in Portland, Oregon (<http://gr8clay.com/hawthorneblvd/gnphmlss.htm>) for the outline of its first draft. IFC also reviewed and found some information that was helpful in the Management Plan for the Lawrence Community Shelter, Inc. in Lawrence, Kansas ([http://www.lawrenceshelter.org/pdf\\_library/06\\_2010managementplan.pdf](http://www.lawrenceshelter.org/pdf_library/06_2010managementplan.pdf)) and the Toronto Shelter Standards produced for homeless shelters in Toronto, Canada ([http://www.toronto.ca/housing/pdf/shelter\\_standards.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/housing/pdf/shelter_standards.pdf)).

IFC reached out to the stakeholders identified in Resolution C, as well as other neighbors, and invited an initial set of representatives from those groups to provide suggestions and advice to IFC in developing the Good Neighbor Plan. The 19 individuals who accepted IFC's invitation were convened by IFC as the Good Neighbor Plan Advisory Committee (the Advisory Committee), which met for the first time on July 11, 2011. At the suggestion of the Chapel Hill Town Council, four additional representatives, including a representative from the neighborhood organization known as A Better Site, were added to the advisory committee on November 1, 2011. The Advisory Committee included residents from six nearby neighborhoods as well as representatives from a nearby business, four congregations, three local social services agencies, the homeless population, UNC-Chapel Hill, Community House, and the IFC Board of Directors.

Professional meeting facilitation provided by the Dispute Settlement Center assured that all committee members were able to make suggestions and express diverse opinions during the process. The

Advisory Committee members were also given the opportunity to seek input from Town, IFC and other community resources during the drafting process. The Good Neighbor Plan was written by IFC staff in consultation with the Advisory Committee and was approved by the IFC Board of Directors on April 18, 2012.

At a meeting of the Chapel Hill Town Council on March 8, 2023, Council received a joint report from Town staff and the Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness on the state of homelessness in Orange County. Among other things, the report indicated that Chapel Hill and the surrounding community would benefit from updating the model of Community House to be in line with federal best practices for shelters, local homeless system written standards, and to be consistent with the Town's values and commitment to equity. Town Council expressed an interest in the Good Neighbor Plan being updated for consistency with best practices. IFC's Board of Directors then approved proposed changes for consideration by the Town Council.

## **Good Neighbor Expectations**

IFC's Community House campus is primarily intended to shelter community members experiencing homelessness.

Consistent with its initial intent, the Good Neighbor Plan sets an expectation for mutual respect between community members residing at Community House and those living and working in neighboring properties:

- Community House residents are encouraged to be welcoming and courteous to neighbors in the community and to follow the organization's health and safety policies as well as other policies and procedures outlined in program materials. Such policies will change and evolve over time.
- Neighbors of Community House are encouraged to be welcoming, equitable, and inclusive to Community House residents and to consider contacting IFC about ways to contribute needed services or items.
- IFC is encouraged to maintain standards of behavior for Community House residents and staff and to support other community members in being good neighbors to members of the community who are experiencing homelessness.

## **Description of the Community House Program**

IFC's Community House campus is primarily intended to shelter community members experiencing homelessness with a capacity that is in compliance with all regulations and the underlying special use permit. Program design, services, access, and lengths of stay may vary over time, depending on community need, best practices, funding regulations, and applicable laws.

## **Statement of and Provision for Resident Needs**

Residents and guests of Community House will be treated with dignity and respect. They are provided with sleeping and shower facilities, limited storage of belongings, and other services and amenities as available. Staff and community partners work together to support residents in transitioning into more permanent housing and with linkage to other available services in the community.

## **Details of off-site pick-up and drop-off location(s) for emergency guests**

Residents and guests will use the mode of transportation available to them in order to access Community House.

## **Safety, Health, and Security Rules for Community House Residents**

IFC is committed to working with its neighbors and community partners to promote a safe and healthy environment on the Community House campus and in the surrounding community.

To that end, IFC will:

- Provide trained staff during hours of operation.
- Maintain health and safety policies that outline standards of behavior for residents, guests, and staff of Community House. Violation of policies will be addressed through a progressive disciplinary procedure that may include coaching, warnings, and suspension from services.
- Connect residents to a wide range of services and supports in the community.
- Follow established protocols for handling inappropriate or dangerous behavior on campus, including suspending individuals from services when necessary.
- Follow all applicable laws, including those that limit access for community members on the sex offender registry.
- Maintain an appropriate level of external lighting and surveillance.
- Engage local fire, safety, and emergency personnel, as needed.

## **Crime Prevention Strategies**

IFC has established policies in order to maintain health and safety in its programs. Such policies prohibit behavior that is against the law. Residents will be required to comply with these policies in order to reside at Community House, and IFC will reach out to public safety authorities for assistance, as needed.

## **Control of Loitering**

IFC will address individuals who are not authorized to be on our property in accordance with our policies and procedures.

## **Control of Litter**

IFC will strive to maintain clean, well-kept facilities and grounds and will perform routine maintenance on the property, including picking up litter and disposing of trash.

## **Standards and Procedures for Communications and Reporting**

IFC promotes positive relationships and believes that open communication channels with community partners and neighbors are critical. IFC endeavors to effectively respond to difficult challenges and

other issues that may arise at Community House. Community members who have concerns are encouraged to call or email IFC leadership directly. While staff will do their best to address issues, there may be limitations to what the organization is able to do, especially if concerns or challenges are related to gaps in larger systems.

## **Community Education**

IFC will work with its governmental and community partners to collectively provide education about homelessness, including causes, consequences, and solutions.

## **Referral of Concerns**

Concerns about Community House and its operations should be referred directly to IFC leadership. Leadership will do its best to address issues that arise while also recognizing that some concerns are related to gaps in larger systems.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the Community House Advisory Committee (CHAC)**

A Community House Advisory Committee will be convened as needed to support communications between IFC and the larger community. IFC will determine the need to convene a committee and will schedule both committee and community-wide meetings.

## **Mediation and Dispute Resolution**

IFC is committed to resolving conflicts that may arise between Community House and nearby residents and/or other parties. In the event there are challenges that cannot be resolved between IFC leadership and other parties, mediation may be recommended by IFC. If mediation is pursued, costs will be shared by all involved parties.

## **Amending the Good Neighbor Plan**

Recommendations to amend the Good Neighbor Plan can originate from IFC's Board of Directors or the Town Council. Any recommendations to amend the Plan must be approved by the IFC Board of Directors before being voted on by Town Council.

## **Appendix A - Chapel Hill Town Council Resolution C**

### **RESOLUTION C**

Attachment to Approved Special Use Permit

#### **A RESOLUTION REQUIRING A GOOD NEIGHBOR PLAN FOR THE INTER-FAITH COUNCIL COMMUNITY HOUSE MEN'S SHELTER (FILE NO. 9880-21-3142) (2011-05-09/R-10)**

WHEREAS, the Council of the Town of Chapel Hill has reviewed and acted upon a Special Use Permit application for the proposed Inter-Faith Council (IFC) Community House Men's Shelter development, on property identified as a portion of Orange County Property Identifier Number 9880-21-3142; and

WHEREAS, the Council of the Town of Chapel Hill requires that the applicant for the proposed Inter-Faith Council (IFC) Community House Men's Shelter development provide a stand-alone Good Neighbor Plan; and

WHEREAS establishing mutual understanding and respect for program residents and the community will be the primary goal of the Good Neighbor Plan; and

WHEREAS a variety of interests are to be represented during the creation of the Good Neighbor Plan; and

WHEREAS it is important that some of the stakeholders be invited to continue their role as stewards of good neighborhood relations by serving on a Community House Advisory Committee (CHAC); and

WHEREAS the Town Council has an interest in specifying a framework for the Good Neighbor Plan, including a communication plan for sharing information about the Plan's progress; and

WHEREAS the Town Council recognizes that the Good Neighbor Plan will be a tool for communicating expectations and intents between the IFC and the Community and as such will include some flexibility to respond to special needs and circumstances through mutual agreement on the Plan's framework; and

WHEREAS the Town Council has a responsibility as the lessor for the development property; and

WHEREAS as lessor the Town Council will review and approve the Good Neighbor Plan as a condition of the lease.



NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that:

1. The stakeholders for the Good Neighbor Plan will include but not be limited to the University of North Carolina, the Town of Chapel Hill, the United Church of Chapel Hill, nearby business representatives, representatives of nearby neighbors, residents of Community House, and representatives of Freedom House and other social service agencies such as Housing for New Hope; and
2. The IFC will review work done by other social service agencies in the creation of similar plans for their facilities and document that review for the benefit of the stakeholders during the development of the Good Neighbor Plan; and
3. The Good Neighbor Plan will include but not be limited to the following elements:
  - a. Description of the Community House Program;
  - b. Roles and Responsibilities of the Community House Advisory Committee, including the regular scheduling of both committee and community-wide meetings;
  - c. Standards and Procedures for Communications and Reporting;
  - d. Safety, Health, and Security Rules for Program Residents. This section may refer to Community House case management policies and procedures for residents including “Rights and Responsibilities” and “Actions and Consequences;”
  - e. Control of Loitering;
  - f. Control of Litter;
  - g. Statement of and Provision for Resident Needs;
  - h. Crime Prevention Strategies;
  - i. Community Education;
  - j. Referral of Concerns;
  - k. Mediation and Dispute Resolution; and
  - l. Details of off-site pick-up and drop-off location(s) for emergency shelter guests; and
4. The IFC will invite a selection of stakeholders from the creation of the Good Neighbor Plan to serve on a Community House Advisory Committee (CHAC); and
5. The CHAC will monitor and participate in reporting on the Plan to the Town Council; and
6. The IFC or the CHAC will report to the Town Council on the following items quarterly for the first two years of occupancy of the Shelter:
  - a. Communications between program staff, volunteers, residents and surrounding neighbors and neighborhoods about the Good Neighbor Plan
  - b. Identification of success implementing each element of the Good Neighbor Plan
  - c. Identification of issues implementing each element of the Good Neighbor Plan
  - d. Proposed changes to any elements of the Good Neighbor Plan; and
7. At the eighth quarterly report, the Council shall decide the frequency of continued reports on the Good Neighbor Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that prior to the execution of the Inter-Faith Council Community House Men's Shelter lease, the IFC shall submit a Good Neighbor Plan to be reviewed and approved by the Town Council for consistency with the requirements of this Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that prior to renewal of the Inter-Faith Council Community House Men's Shelter lease, the Town Council will review an updated Good Neighbor Plan for consistency with the requirements of this Resolution.

This the 9<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2011.

Amended May 10, 2011.