



Community Action Center
OF NORTHFIELD

TO: Housing & Redevelopment Authority
City of Northfield

FROM: Jim Blaha, Executive Director
Community Action Center

DATE: February 22, 2017

RE: Proposal to lease 517 Washington

The duplex property at 517 Washington, dedicated as the "Mary Wood House," has recently been used for low income housing through a previous partnership with the Community Action Center and Three Rivers Community Action (Chamomile Housing Project) until May, 2016, when our funding contract ended and was not renewed.

At that point the lower tenant was permitted to continue residency on a private lease until June, 2017. The upper level apartment has had renovation being done. Slated still, is the replacement of the southern windows, both up and down.

The Community Action Center is interested in using the facility for emergency shelter. We currently place people into shelter for up to a two week stay and meet with them during that period to help them find stable housing. Housing staff at the CAC, however, are lobbying for longer periods of stay for say, 1-3 months, to enable the tenant adequate time to identify affordable housing and obtain it. That would be ideal and perhaps possible, given additional sites for emergency two-week stays. The Mary Wood House site, being on the edge of downtown, allows the clients proximity to needed amenities, food, laundry, etc., without the need for private transportation; they are indeed closer to access by CAC staff, too, for meetings and appointments.

The CAC proposes to pay a lower than market rate for the units and would request a subsidized rate for rent from the City. I would ask that utilities be included. We would provide cleaning and readying services upon change of tenants. I estimate a rent of \$600 per month per unit is affordable given the extra demand for homeless service we currently face and our other obligation to meet that demand. Last year CAC sheltered 99 individuals, 60 adults and 39 children. This level of demand is expected again; thus, I ask your partnership in this endeavor.

I would ask your reaction to this proposal and would be happy to attend the upcoming HRA meeting for more discussion.

Thank you for your consideration.