

July 22, 2015

Planning Commission
Planning and Development Review City of Richmond
900 East Broad St., Room 511
Richmond, VA 23219

Re: Community Alternatives Consortium Assisted Living Facility

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Denesha Alexander, principal of Community Alternatives Consortium. It is my understanding the Ms. Alexander is seeking approval to make improvements and/or additions to her existing assisted living facility in Church Hill.

The service that Ms. Alexander provides to those with mental health disabilities is invaluable to the community and vital to those in need. Having a family member who currently resides at her facility makes us realize the importance of these services and appreciate Ms. Alexander's tireless efforts. The difficulty in securing good, reliable living arrangements for someone with a mental illness has been an issue for us in the past, as I am sure it has also been for others.

I have no reservations about recommending and supporting Ms. Alexander in her effort to expand, improve, or modify her facility, and would appreciate the Planning Commission's consideration of the proposals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ann Thedieck', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ann Thedieck

July 17, 2015

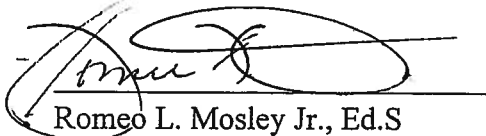
Zoning Division
Planning and Development Review
City of Richmond, Virginia
900 E. Broad Street
Room 110
Richmond, Virginia 23219

RE: Community Alternatives Consortium

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Romeo L. Mosley and I am writing to give my support for the expansion plans for Community Alternatives Consortium's assisted-living facility located at 618 N. 32 Street in Richmond. I was previously employed as the State Hospital Liaison with the Norfolk Community Services Board and I was responsible for transitioning long-term state hospital patients to the community when they were ready for discharge. Community Alternative Consortium was the only facility in Virginia that was willing to give my clients the opportunity to live outside of the state hospital. Ms. Alexander and her staff ensured our clients received the care and supportive services they needed to be successful in community living. There is a severe shortage of assisted-living facilities in Virginia willing to accept and care for young adults with severe mental illness. Ms. Alexander and her company provide an invaluable service to mental health agencies with clients that require supervision and a supportive living environment to transition effectively to community living. Her agency's plans to expand their existing facility would serve to enhance the high quality of services they currently provide and allow more individuals with severe mental illness to receive the care needed for them to be successful. Please contact me at 757-589-4046 if you would like to discuss the quality of services provided by Community Alternatives Consortium.

Sincerely,



Romeo L. Mosley Jr., Ed.S



Charlottesville

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July 8, 2015

Planning Commission

Planning and Development Review City of Richmond
900 East Broad Street, Room 511
Richmond, VA 23219

Re: Community Alternatives Consortium Assisted Living Facility

Dear Members of the Richmond Planning Commission,

I am writing to support the application of Community Alternatives Consortium to build an addition on their assisted living facility in Church Hill. These additions and modifications are to ensure that Community Alternatives Consortium can provide important services for more people with mental challenges, those who are often difficult to serve and place in congregate, community based settings. Community Alternatives Consortium has been a real blessing to my daughter, to my family, and to the community.

As a parent of a special needs daughter, I know firsthand that there is a legitimate need for residential services for young adults with mental illness. A real need.

I also know that everyone benefits when young adults like my daughter are properly housed and mental health needs are supported.

Thanks for the opportunity to share my views with you, and thanks for your public service.

Take care,

Joe Szakos
Executive Director



July 20, 2015

To: City of Richmond, Planning Commission

From: Jimmy Christmas, LCSW, ADS, 200-RYT

Re: Community Alternatives Consortium Assisted Living Facility

LETTER OF SUPPORT

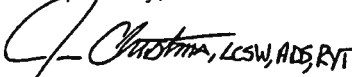
Our organization has enjoyed a wonderful professional relationship with Community Alternatives Consortium Assisted Living Facility since 2009. Dr. Alexander and staff demonstrate the highest level of professionalism in their day-to-day operations, as well as operating one of the cleanest and aesthetically pleasing facilities in the area.

As a professional behavioral health professional in the Richmond Area since 1993, I have worked in numerous professional settings and know that providing safe affordable housing is the number one priority of our community service boards (CSBs), hospitals, and numerous private providers. Without safe and affordable, and "supervised" housing, it is very difficult to discharge or transition clients back into the community. Safe, affordable and supervised housing is critical in preventing their return to hospitalization or incarceration. I have been actively engaged with various workgroups that involve heads of CSBs, hospitals, supportive housing organizations, Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Corrections (DOC); and after identifying and evaluating all of the variables that ensure that clients will have increased community success, housing is again number one on the list of priorities to address. It has continually been shown that when safe and affordable housing is provided, clients and program outcomes may be enhanced.

It is to this end, that we are in support of Community Alternatives Consortium and wish that they be granted the ability to further develop and/or modify its Assisted Living Facilities (ALF) in a manner that protects the safety and dignity of its clients, enhance the community and help protect the public safety.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,


Jimmy Christmas, LCSW, ADS, RYT
CEO/CCO
1011 Hull Street
Richmond, VA 23222
jchristmas@rivercityccs.com
804-230-0999 X119

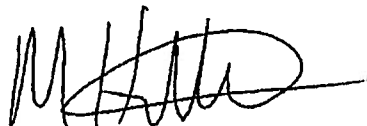
Planning Commission
Planning and Development Review
City of Richmond
900 East Broad St., Room 511
Richmond, VA 23219

Re: Community Alternatives Consortium Assisted Living Facility

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in support of additional residential services for young adults with mental illness. Our experience with the Community Alternatives Consortium Assisted Living Facility has been positive. The director of this facility is truly concerned about providing satisfactory facilities and services to this population and treating each individual served with dignity and respect. There is a high need for quality services such as this, one willing to support these young adults. All stakeholders benefit when such individuals are properly housed and mental health needs are supported.

Please consider our support for this facility as you make decisions that will greatly impact the lives of these young adults in your community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Hartsock', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael Hartsock, MSW
ICT Team Leader - Senior Clinician



RIVER CITY

Comprehensive Counseling Services

1011 Hull Street
Richmond, VA 23224
(P)804.230.0999
(F)804.230.0998

215 N. Market St
Petersburg, VA 23803
(P)804.479.3343
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Planning Commission
Planning and Development Review, City of Richmond
900 East Broad St., Room 511
Richmond, VA 23219

Re: Community Alternatives Consortium Assisted Living Facility

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you to inform you of my support for the expansion of Community Alternatives Consortium so that they may continue to serve a greater population of the mentally ill in our community who so desperately need it. For the last ten years I have worked for agencies that provide services to those with struggle with developing the skills needed to manage their mental health disorders. In recent years I have begun to also facilitate therapeutic art groups to various assisted living facilities in the Richmond and Petersburg area. I cannot express how it important and imperative it is to our community that assisted living facilities are available to those in need of this supportive housing, especially the younger population. I have facilitated therapeutic art groups in three of the Community Alternatives Consortium homes, in Richmond and Chesterfield. Community Alternatives Consortium has a continued to impress me with the level of care and services provided to the younger population they serve. There are limited options available to those younger mentally ill adults in our community as most facilities are geared towards the older population. Community Alternatives Consortium has a proven track record of providing quality services to this population for years. With approval for expansion Community Alternatives Consortium would be able to further their mission to serve this younger population of adults who are not able to care for themselves and live independently in the community due their diagnoses. Community Alternatives Consortium is a reputable and vital resource to our community.

Sincerely,

Kim Engleman, BFA, QPPMH
Community Engagement Coordinator
River City Comprehensive Counseling Services
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Planning and Development Review, City of Richmond
900 East Broad St., Room 511
Richmond, VA 23219

To Whom It May Concern:

I ask that you support the expansion of Community Alternatives Consortium so that they may continue their mission to serve an underserved and disenfranchised population. Maintaining housing and independent living is a constant struggle for those experiencing mental illness in lower-income, urban areas. Working in this field, I can attest that most members of the seriously mentally ill (SMI) population have difficulties with developing and implementing the skills necessary to financially, physically, and emotionally care for themselves on a long-term basis due to their symptomology. They have often alienated or confounded their natural support systems over time and are left homeless. Since the deinstitutionalization of state facilities, our community has observed a dramatic increase of the phenomena referred to by many as the "walking mad" (i.e., those with mental illness so severe they cannot care for themselves, have no supports, have no housing nor any way to go about obtaining or maintaining it living on the streets). From a theoretical paradigm regarding a person's hierarchy of needs, we cannot begin to tackle some of the more complex issues such as mental illness symptoms and social functioning if an individual's basic needs (shelter, food, etc.) are not being met.

There are some assisted living facilities that have sprung up in the Richmond area to try to meet the needs of this population, but they are generally either geared towards or, just by happenstance, house only older adults so that younger individuals are not eligible, not accepted, or further estranged. There are so few options for younger individuals suffering from mental illness who have different needs specific to their cohort, such as having to be rehoused for the first time to somewhere other than the home they were raised in, being new to their mental illness since the age of onset for many SMI's are prior to age 25, and not fully understanding the impact these symptoms have on their daily living. Community Alternatives Consortium has been providing assisted living services with satisfactory efficacy to this identified population for years, which has benefitted all stakeholders in the area including the individuals themselves, mental health professionals, law enforcement, and the community as a whole. They have been a vital community-based resource and have provided younger adults with assisted living that both promotes independence and provides support when necessary in a least restrictive environment.

Kind regards,



Alison Youmell, LCSW
Chief Clinical Officer
River City Comprehensive Counseling Services
1011 Hull Street
Richmond, VA 23224
Phone: (804) 230-0999 ext. 186
Email: ayoumell@rivercityccs.com

July 20, 2015

Planning Commission
Planning and Development Review City of Richmond
900 East Broad St., Room 511
Richmond, VA 23219

Re: Community Alternatives Consortium Assisted Living Facility

I have an adult son with a severe mental illness that requires supervision and care coordinated with the affiliated community service board. He has been struggling with his illness for 14 years.

Over the course of time he has resided in Totty House in Ettrick, VA, Gateway Homes in Chesterfield, VA and recently CAC in Chesterfield and Richmond locations. Due to the nature of his illness he has required hospitalization on many occasions. There is a tremendous need for proper housing and constructive programs to support this population. It's very important that family can be close by to support and intervene when necessary.

It has been a difficult task to find housing in a nurturing environment and close to support systems including family, mental health professionals, laboratory and medical care.

I highly recommend Community Alternatives Consortium for providing this level of care. They show concern, offer support to the residents including outings and encourage participation in day programs and rehabilitation. Please give serious consideration to this request. Most of the existing facilities do not offer services to this age group (18-45) or prohibit persons with mental illness history.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terry Martin".

Terry Martin
Hanover, VA 23069.