

**EXHIBIT G: LETTER FROM CONNECTIONS BOARD PRESIDENT PAUL KALIL;
ADDITIONAL EMAILS OF SUPPORT**



2121 Dewey Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201
847.475.7070

Letter from Connections Board of Directors to City Council and Land Use Commission

Dear City Council and Commission Members,

As the Board of Directors for Connections for the Homeless, we submit this letter in support of Connections' Special Use Permit application for the operation at the Margarita Inn.

The strength of the application comes from the Margarita's proven record of success, and the professionalism and experience of the Connections' staff. Their case for approval of the Special Use Permit is based not only on nationally acclaimed best practices, but also on the learnings gained from having operated the hotel as a shelter for more than two years. There is little guesswork involved regarding future results as the Margarita has a proven track record and the quantitative data to demonstrate the positive impact this critical service has had on the Evanston community.

From March 2020 until September 2022, nearly 60% of the Margarita's residents transitioned into stable housing. That is a remarkable level of success, outpacing the national average of less than 40% achieved by similar programs. And when you hear the stories of the people behind the numbers, the results are even more compelling.

"Marybeth"¹ was the executive director of an Evanston arts organization when she was raising her children here in the early 2000's. After her kids graduated from ETHS, she moved to Iowa to care for her elderly mother. After her mother passed, Marybeth and her partner lost their housing in Iowa and moved back to the community she loved the most, Evanston.

But when their temporary housing with friends fell through, Marybeth and her partner found themselves sleeping on Evanston beaches, having nowhere else to go. Connections' Street Outreach team began meeting with Marybeth and her partner regularly and added them to the Margarita Inn waiting list. They eventually moved into the Margarita and began working with a Housing Case Manager, as is required of all participants in the program. With this intensive support, they eventually secured a long-term housing voucher. With a housing voucher in hand, they continue to work with their Case Manager through the lengthy, onerous processes of securing a rental unit. Simultaneously, they have also taken full advantage of the other services offered at the Margarita Inn, participating in Art Therapy groups, receiving care from the healthcare team, participating in resident advocacy meetings, rebuilding their resumes and looking for work.

The reason this program is so successful is directly due to the skill, training and experience of Connections and its staff based at the Margarita Inn. The team includes:

- Trained operations and security staff, and case managers with decades of experience providing services to people experiencing homelessness
- A Certified Nursing Assistant and Registered Nurse
- Licensed behavioral and mental health specialists
- Skilled and experienced management staff who oversee programming, monitor results and who support the team through hands-on teaching, mentoring and training

¹ Name changed to protect participant anonymity

Finally, Connections is supported by the community, as evidenced by the many letters of support attached to our application. As with any community contemplating the placement of a shelter, be it relatively large, like our partners at the nearly 200-bed Hased House shelter in neighboring Aurora, or the much more modestly sized Margarita Inn, there is discussion of the potential for negative impacts of that shelter in the community. But as community leaders, we, the Connections for the Homeless Board of Directors, know how critical this service is, are fully confident in Connections' expertise, effectiveness and nearly 40-year track record, and are certain that the whole of Evanston is better off for having such an innovative, well-run, and impactful operation in its midst.

Sincerely,



Paul Kalil, President of the Board of Directors

On behalf of:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Pastor Monte L.G. Dillard, Sr. | Vice President |
| Sheryl Bartol | Secretary |
| Karen Hunt | Treasurer |
| Vickie Horn | Executive Committee Member-At-Large |
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| Gene Combs | Director |
| Robin Rue Simmons | Director |
| Abigail Aziza Stone | Director |
| Elena Navas-Nacher | Director |
| Alex Plakas | Director |

Elle Ullum

From: Stephen Wilke <wilke.stephen@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 7:58 PM
To: Elle Ullum; Max Seeley
Subject: Supporting Margarita Inn

Hello,

I am an Evanston resident and would like to support CFTH's operating the Margarita Inn. I'd like to mobilize more people in my church community to write community letters of support for the project. Sadly, I missed Wednesday night's "lessons learned" meeting to discuss the findings from the listening groups. Do you have a summary document from that meeting, which I could use to help educate folks in my network so they can write more well-informed letters?

Thank you,
Stephen Wilke

Elle Ullum

From: Mr. G <clgillock@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 3:53 PM
To: Elle Ullum
Subject: Margarita Inn

Hi there - I'm responding to your email regarding the Margarita Inn. I live near St. Francis Hospital, so I do not have the day-to-day experience of living near the residents of the building. It's possible that I would be irritated by the neighborhood changes; I have noticed nothing when I am in that area. With that caveat, I do have some general thoughts:

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a long-time Evanston resident - I arrived in 1976, left in 1984 and returned in 1992 for good. I have lived primarily in the southern part of town, between Greenleaf and Howard (4th, 8th and 9th Wards). I have been a financial supporter of Connections for the Homeless and have occasionally volunteered for the organization for over 20 years. It seems to me that the number of unhoused people has increased markedly through the years, and the pandemic has led to a spike in people with no roof over their heads. Evanston now has panhandlers in front of many grocery stores and restaurants; we are now seeing people begging at stoplights, walking in the middle of the street. While some of these folks may not be homeless, a significant portion are without stable housing.

Connections for the Homeless has been striving to mitigate this crisis in the communities it serves. I have been an occasional volunteer, preparing dinners for folks that receive services from Connections. I believe Connections to be a positive force in our community that has helped many people stabilize their housing, which is a prerequisite for stabilizing their lives.

Housing costs in Evanston and other north shore communities have spiked. When the pandemic hit, many people struggled - I remember the lines of cars at James Park during the food bank days in the parking lot. Connections for the Homeless took action immediately when the pandemic hit, enlisting local hotels and restaurants in the effort to house and feed people that were displaced by the crisis. This organization is compassionate but pragmatic. Connections has embraced the Housing First approach - in order to effectively address the issues that cause homelessness, unhoused people need to have a home.

The short-term housing offered by the Connections program at the Margarita Inn is a key component to addressing homelessness in our community. It takes political will to address these issues. It is tempting to push these folks out of our town and make them "someone else's problem." A quick drive past Touhy Park on Chicago's far north side demonstrates the outcome of this approach - tent cities and public health hazards. Well-managed, decent shelter ultimately serves the best interests of our community, including the people that live close to the Margarita Inn.

With proper management and a sensible "good neighbor" policy, a permanent short-term housing facility at the Margarita Inn will be an asset to Evanston.

Regards, Chris Gillock

Christopher L. Gillock
1126 South Blvd.
Evanston IL 60202
847-612-4896

Elle Ullum

From: Libby Ester <birchpoint@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 3:16 PM
To: Elle Ullum
Subject: Fwd: The Margarita Inn

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Libby Ester** <birchpoint@comcast.net>
Date: Thu, Sep 22, 2022 at 3:13 PM
Subject: The Margarita Inn
To: <eullum@connect2home.or>

I have been a resident of northwest Evanston for 36 years, and I have been connected with Connections for the Homeless for 33 of those years. Thirty three years ago, I helped out at Hilda's Place every Friday for a few hours by folding blankets that had been washed by Evanston Hospital for the shelter beds. I began making annual donations to Hilda's Place about that time and have been a donor ever since. I have devoted both my time and my funds to what is now Connections because they have provided, and continue to provide, not just homes but also *hope* for people in our community without homes. I sleep better in my own home every night knowing that Connections is providing not just safe and comfortable housing for people but also a wide array of services to help them stay in that housing.

The Margarita Inn plays an important part in the options Connections has for people in our community who, but for Connections, would not have a place to put their heads at night. I strongly support the renewal of the special use permit for Connections to continue to use the Margarita Inn. Using its Housing First principles, Connections has had a great success rate in keeping people housed; we need to make sure it can keep being successful by continuing to use the Margarita Inn.

Thank you for keeping Evanston at the cutting edge of services for people in our community who need those services most by approving the special use permit for Connections to use the Margarita Inn.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Ester
2324 Hartzell St.
Evanston 60201
847-525-1457

Elle Ullum

From: Letitia Mann <katnat1220@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 11:13 AM
To: Elle Ullum
Cc: Jeffrey Michael Mann; Sheryl Bartol; Nia Tavoularis
Subject: Margarita Inn support

Dear CFTH,

My husband and I have lived in Evanston for over 20 years, and our kids are ETHS graduates. We feel very connected to the people and the issues in our community. We are a special community who cares about making a difference for those who need support, and there are many examples of our community helping to making life-long changes for those who need care.

CFTH's plans for the Margarita Inn will help people and families at their most vulnerable state - being housing insecure. Before the pandemic, we were supporters of CFTH's mission to find housing for those who needed it, and our interaction with the leadership team (with Betty Bogg as Exec. Director) has shown us again and again that CFTH finds ways to ensure that the housing solutions fit within the neighborhood, and that they take a collaborative approach with neighbors. One of the first projects to demonstrate this was CFTH's "Our House" in Evanston, which is a home for young adult men in an established single family neighborhood, supervised by CFTH clinical support and on-site mentorship. We were involved in the beginning of that project (and remain involved) through the establishment of the service and know from experience that CFTH cares not only about their mission, but also about how their solution works for the neighbors over the years.

We wholly support the conversation of the Margarita Inn to a residential site managed by CFTH, and urge the City and Council members to grant the permissions needed to do so.

Sincerely,

Letitia and Jeff Mann

Elle Ullum

From: Kristine L <ehansmom@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 23, 2022 10:58 PM
To: eullum@connect2home.or
Subject: Letter in Support of Margarita Inn

I'm writing today in support of the special use permit for the Margarita Inn. My name is Kristine Lofquist. I have been a volunteer at Connections for the Homeless for several years now. I have mainly been involved in meal making, including breakfast for residents of the Margarita Inn.

The Margarita Inn is an important part of our community, as it provides transitional housing for those who are experiencing chronic homelessness. Utilizing places like the Inn is a creative way to help alleviate the increased homelessness in our community, caused mainly by a lack of affordable housing.

Until we as a community can figure out how to provide more affordable housing in our community, we will need to continue to support creative ideas for reducing homelessness. The Margarita Inn is a perfect example.

Thank you for your time and please grant the special use permit for the Margarita Inn for the good of our community.

Best regards,

Kristine Lofquist
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Elle Ullum

From: Jori Kovarsky <kovarsky.jori@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 21, 2022 11:47 AM
To: Elle Ullum
Subject: Email/Letter for Margarita Support

Hi Elle,

I hope all is well - here is my letter/email in support for the Margarita.

=====

To Whom It May Concern:

I am an Evanstonian and have lived in the 4th Ward for the past five years. I am writing in support of the proposal for Connections for the Homeless to assume ownership of the Margarita Inn to continue offering transitional housing services.

During 2019, I started volunteering at Connections, specifically working with participants in need of transitional housing. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, I was hired in a full-time role to serve that same community, including residents of the Margarita Inn. There, they are able to get case management, therapeutic services, and a dignified living space while they wait for available permanent housing. There are careful intake procedures in place to determine demonstrated need, as well as to ensure the safety of Margarita residents and of the 4th Ward community.

Providing support to some of the most vulnerable members of our community makes it more possible for them to get back on their feet. Blocking Connections' ability to provide care will not eliminate the needs of the Margarita Inn's 200 residents or the increasing need for affordable housing and supportive services.

Best,
Jori Kovarsky

--
Jori Kovarsky
kovarsky.jori@gmail.com

Elle Ullum

From: Jessica Lieberman <jessilieberman@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 12:36 PM
To: Elle Ullum
Subject: Letter of Support

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Jessica Lieberman. I'm a life long resident of Evanston, originally from the Northeast neighborhood, and am now located in the Southeast neighborhood for 15 years.

Given my current location, the number of people who are homeless and visible in our community is staggering. This marginalized population is in desperate need of shelters and support, such as the Margarita Inn and Connections. To date I haven't been directly involved with this effort, however, after learning more about their mission and its efficacy, I fully support the continuation of its existence, along with the intention to become personally involved. My stance is also fueled by the recent article ("Enough," which I believe was shared in Evanston Now) and the supporting comments it evoked, most simply stated as insensitive and intolerant.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts.

Best,
Jessica

Elle Ullum

From: Ellen Zemel <ezemel@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 10:33 AM
To: Elle Ullum
Cc: eullum@connect2home.or
Subject: Support for the Margarita to continue to support

Dear Connections for the Homeless,

The services you provide are worth millions both in physical security for people unhoused, but also emotional and mental well being. Most of us may never have to experience being unhoused and have no place to live. But for the people who do, it is painful and hard to get back on your feet without the help of the community and agencies like yourself.

My name is Ellen Zemel and I have been a lucky Evanston resident with a roof over my head for the last 30 plus years. But I still have much empathy for those who are not as lucky. So when I heard that the Margarita was going to be a place to give people a place to live, i was thrilled. I go by the Margarita house often on my way to the YMCA. I am proud to say that Evanston has different programs, providing housing for people are unhoused and working to get people back on their feet. I really like the location of the Margarita especially as it is near the YMCA where many services can be of use helping people feel a sense of belonging and support.

I hope we can keep the Margarita, this source of great support, for those otherwise not having any place to go. It is comforting knowing they are not in nightly shelters and needing to get out every morning and wondering if they will have a place to stay the next night.

Thanks for your commitment in helping us, giving others a place to call home.
Ellen

Elle Ullum

Subject: CFTH: We Need Your Voice

From: Richard O'Brien <dickobrien@me.com>

Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 10:30 AM

To: Communications <communications@connect2home.org>

Subject: Re: CFTH: We Need Your Voice

I have lived at 1212 Noyes Street for 30 years. I have raised two children in Evanston and am in the process of raising a third. Homelessness is one of our most serious social problems, along with untreated mental health issues. It is inexcusable and embarrassing that the wealthiest nation in the history of the world does not adequately address these issues. The work of The Margarita Inn and Connections is an extremely valuable and important contribution to addressing our pernicious homelessness problem. It should be allowed to continue its work with the full support of the community.

Dick O'Brien

dickobrien@me.com

Elle Ullum

Subject: CFTH: We Need Your Voice

From: Megan Lutz <mlutz@allchicago.org>

Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 12:04 PM

To: Communications <communications@connect2home.org>

Subject: Re: CFTH: We Need Your Voice

Hi CFTH,

I am an Evanston resident of over 30 years and live in the Sixth Ward.

I support Connections for the Homeless' efforts to renew the Special Use Permit for Margarita Inn. Evanston prides itself on being an inclusive community and we need to extend that support to those who are at risk or have experienced homelessness. The work that CFTH has done to use Housing First practices and stabilize over a hundred households is something that Evanston should be proud of.

Evanston Staff, Economic Development, and the Council constantly approve and grant Special Use permits for all kinds of business uses. It's time that they also apply those exceptions to support human services.

I will also reach out to my council member to give my support.

I saw the Roundtable article about the meeting last night and I'm sorry that I missed it!

Megan Lutz | Director of Technology Operations

Pronouns: she/hers/her



All Chicago

651 W. Washington, Suite 504 Chicago, IL 60661

Direct/Text: 872-291-1229 | mlutz@allchicago.org

Main Number: 312-379-0301

www.allchicago.org

Subject: CFTH: We Need Your Voice

From: Marybeth Schroeder <mbschroeder@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 12:13 PM
To: Communications <communications@connect2home.org>
Subject: Re: CFTH: We Need Your Voice

To Evanston City Council and Evanston community,

Growing up in another suburb, my first involvement in advocacy was working for affordable housing to be part of the plans for land sold by a religious order. We didn't win that fight. At the same time, as the editor of my high school newspaper, I got to know Evanston through a newspaper exchange. I vowed then that I wanted to move to Evanston when I grew up because it seemed to be a community committed to being open to everyone and to caring about its residents.

I eventually got to move to Evanston 31 years ago and became immersed in the community, especially through my work in the nonprofit community. Through my involvement, it has been clear that housing is the central challenge of our beloved community. Without affordable housing options, we will never be the community we say we want to be - equitable and inclusive and diverse in many ways.

When Covid arrived in 2020, it illuminated our community's strengths and challenges that already existed. I'm very proud of how the nonprofit community and individuals came together to compassionately and creatively address those challenges. My biggest pandemic heroes are the staff and board of Connections for the Homeless, who worked tirelessly to gather financial support and provide housing for our vulnerable neighbors.

We can't go back now and tell those neighbors that we don't care about them and that we as a community can't accommodate housing for them. That would be breaking not just our commitments to them but to Evanston's own vision for itself. The Margarita Inn needs to remain part of the housing solution. Connections can be proud of how it has organized and managed the facility. I pass it often at many times of day as I visit downtown and have never seen any kind of disturbance or problem.

I strongly support the Margarita Inn's use by Connections for the Homeless and sincerely hope that Evanston will do the right thing and approve its ongoing use.

Marybeth Schroeder
Nonprofit consultant
2734 Asbury, Evanston
847.650.8086

Because survival is insufficient. -- Station Eleven

On 09/22/2022 10:12 AM Connections for the Homeless
<communications@connect2home.org> wrote:

Elle Ullum

Subject: FCFTH: We Need Your Voice

From: Cortney Lederer <cortney@cortneylederer.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 3:37 PM
To: Communications <communications@connect2home.org>
Subject: Re: CFTH: We Need Your Voice

Hello,

I live in Northeast Evanston and have been here for over 5 years. While I have not had significant interaction with Margarita Inn, I believe that we need more permanent housing for our homeless population and that Connection for the Homeless has built trust in this community by offering the right resources to help find solutions and aid in the care, health and support of the houseless population in Evanston. I believe in the the mission and vision of Connection for the Homeless and would like to see it establish a permanent home for houseless folks as it would help create a positive, secure and direct impact on the lives of so many. We need solutions for our homeless population and this is a critical first step.

Sincerely,

Cortney

Cortney Lederer

CNL Projects | CNL Art Consulting
Consultant | Project Manager | Arts Advocate
Adjunct Assistant Professor, School of the Art Institute of Chicago
773.726.4346
cortney@cortneylederer.com
cnlprojects.org

personal pronouns: she/her/hers

Elle Ullum

Subject: CFTH: We Need Your Voice

From: Ann Raney <ARaney@tpoint.org>

Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 5:09 PM

To: Communications <communications@connect2home.org>

Subject: RE: CFTH: We Need Your Voice

I am happy to send this letter of support for the renewal of the Margarita's special use permit.

I have been a resident of NW Evanston for five years and a resident of SE Evanston for 20 years before that. I've also been the CEO of Turning Point for the last 21 years. In both roles, I have been impressed by the professionalism and compassion shown by Connections for the Homeless. They have supported our programs and services and we have worked together to address the many needs of our deserving clients for decades.

Housing First makes sense and it should be a right for all our residents. Without permanent housing, progress toward recovery is very difficult, if not impossible.

When Housing First principles of choice, autonomy and control are extended to our homeless residents and they can accept an invitation to establish their homes in Evanston, our community will be stronger. This is not only the right thing to do, but when individuals are treated with respect and invited to become actively involved in their recovery, everyone benefits.

Please let me know how I can help.

Ann Fisher Raney, LCSW
Chief Executive Officer
(she, her, hers)

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Elle Ullum

Subject: CFTH: We Need Your Voice

From: Jane Syh <janesyh@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, September 23, 2022 9:42 AM

To: Communications <communications@connect2home.org>; Elle Ullum <eulum@connect2home.org>

Subject: Re: CFTH: We Need Your Voice

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to voice my support for the renewal of the special permit re: CFTH and their continued operations at the Margarita Inn. I have been a resident of Evanston since 2015, currently living near St. Francis Hospital, but have rented units on the Main-Dempster mile as well as further north, close to NU campus.

I'm a social worker, currently employed with Lutheran Social Services of Illinois and assigned to a program advocating for residents of nursing facilities to be able to live a higher quality of life and to advocate for an appropriate level of care; however, in the past--during the summer season of 2020, right as operations at the Margarita were rolling out--I also worked as a housing locator and case manager at Connections. I've seen the impact Connections makes on our local community. I've witnessed the staff's commitment to this seemingly idealistic goal to end homelessness...and yet I've seen how tirelessly and passionately they pursue this goal to the benefits of the individuals and families they serve. In my current job position, I interact with nursing facility residents in the North Shore suburbs, including in Evanston, and I meet many people who were once homeless and without shelter for many years, to the point where their physical and mental health symptoms intensified, leading to hospitalizations, surgeries, and stagnation in state-funded facilities where they no longer need to be and yet are stuck due to lack of resources and supports. Connections and the Margarita Inn are both great resources to step into that pipeline before health diagnoses worsen to that point, and for this shelter to shut down or not allowed to continue to flourish would be a step backwards for the Evanston community as a whole.

To reiterate, as a 7 year resident of Evanston (with zero intent to leave), I fully support the renewal of the Margarita's special use permit!

Thank you,

Jane Syh

Elle Ullum

From: Catherine Leonard <catherine.leonard@bairdwarner.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 2:01 PM
To: Elle Ullum
Subject: Connections

Thoughts on Connections for the Homeless and the margarita Inn-

This shouldn't be complex, in my opinion. People need homes, people have a right to safe shelter, and here is an opportunity right in front of us to help. Having a home leads to mental, emotional and financial stability. Period. I have lived in Evanston for 22 years, and know that this initiative to house people in the Margarita Inn would alleviate homelessness for many people. I do not understand the resistance to it-- would we rather step over people on the sidewalk? This is the right thing to do, and I applaud Connections for their work.

- Catherine
Designated Managing Broker
Baird Warner Evanston
2926 Central St Evanston IL 60201

 Sent via [Cloze](#)

Elle Ullum

Subject: Support Statement

From: Monique Parsons

Sent: Thursday, September 22, 2022 2:52 PM

To: eulum@connect2home.or

Subject: Support Statement

My name is Monique Parsons.

For the last four years, I have led McGaw YMCA as their President/CEO and been at McGaw for eighteen years. Like McGaw, Connections is known for its dedication to our community and helping our most vulnerable during difficult life transitions. It is because of their resiliency and commitment – their stance on the frontline - that I fully support Connections' goal to move through the application process to occupy the Margarita Inn.

In solidarity,

Monique Parsons (she, her)

President/CEO

MCGAW YMCA 1000 Grove Street, Evanston, IL 60201

847.475.7400 x 223 | moniquep@mcgawymca.org | www.mcgawymca.org

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Elle Ullum

From: Cate Cahan <catecahan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 21, 2022 4:31 PM
To: Elle Ullum

To Connections for the Homeless:

This note is in robust support of your organization's request for rezoning so the Margarita Inn can be used to help provide shelter for people who are unhoused. I applaud your work to create housing for people who are in need.

I've lived in Evanston for eight years, on Greenwood near Chicago Avenue.

I spend a lot of time walking around downtown and neighborhoods in Evanston. I often ask people who ask for help if they know about shelters and food service. When it comes to shelter, many people tell me they've tried and there is no room. That is their reality. I do not know whether that's accurate, but I do know that when I walk through parks and by the lake in the mornings and I see people sleeping on park benches.

Thank you again for your work.
Sincerely,

Cate Cahan

--

Cate Cahan
Independent Editor
catecahan@gmail.com
847.722.9245

Elle Ullum

From: Sharon Pines <sharonlpines@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 21, 2022 4:24 PM
To: Elle Ullum
Subject: Why I support Connections

My name is Sharon Pines, and I live in a building diagonally across the alley from the Margarita Inn. Never have I seen evidence of illegal or nuisance activity in the alley.

I do not have a car and, consequently, I walk back and forth through downtown streets daily, often two or three times a day, on my way to shop for groceries, go to the library or go to the el station. I also run to the lake three or four times a week and come back home late at night after going to a play or concert in the City. All this to say that I am extremely familiar with the type of panhandling that exists in Evanston, who panhandles, how often, where and when. I am also familiar with the behavior of those in the streets from early morning to late at night.

I see a lot of the same people hanging out and/or panhandling on the same corners or in front of the same stores, day after day after day. I am familiar with these folks and they with me. In fact, we greet each other and often chat a bit.

Almost none of the panhandlers or those who hang out on the sidewalks are residents of the Margarita Inn. And, by the way, there is no "aggressive panhandling". There is a three or four word or one sentence ask and then silence if the ask is ignored. I have witnessed these interactions literally hundreds of times over the past three and a half years that I have lived in this area.

Margarita Inn, in offering wrap-around services to its residents: physical care, mental health screenings and therapy, financial counseling, help finding permanent shelter, etc. in addition to the basic human right of housing is doing our community a huge service. We should be grateful for the fact that Evanston has such a professional, evidence-based, compassionate organization offering its crucial services here. Without them, 65 people would be out on the street without supportive help.

I thoroughly support Connections for the Homeless and the wonderful and necessary work they do in our community. If Evanston wants to live up to its reputation as a welcoming, caring community, all residents should thank them, and City Council should ensure that they can continue providing services at the Margarita Inn.

Sincerely,
Sharon Pines

Elle Ullum

From: Alex Piper <piperseed@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 9:24 PM
To: Elle Ullum
Subject: Connections for the Homeless and the opportunity of the Margarita Inn

I have been an Evanston resident for 22 years. I raised my family in the 3rd ward for 20 years, then downsized in 2021 to a coach house in the 4th ward.

I started my relationship with Connections back around 2008. I learned about Hilda's Place and signed up to cook meals for the residents. It was the only place I had ever found that would allow whole families to volunteer together. My family and I were so proud to provide home cooked meals. I was able to connect our school, Chiaravalle Montessori School, with Connections and we did drives and had a regular rotation for cooking at Hilda's. The community coordinator was an amazing advocate for the organization and engaged with the kids and the adults on the importance of our help and the realities of homelessness in Evanston. It always stuck with me that a person needs to make at least \$17 an hour (this was 2008 so much has probably changed) to afford living in Evanston. We loved our connection with Hilda's and had clothing drives, can drives, shelter cooking, cooking classes....we built community with Connections.

During the pandemic, I was able to give my time to help cook and deliver breakfasts to the individuals housed at Margarita Inn. As I dropped off the meals, it was not transactional, it was a community experience. Connections coordinated support for their clients, engaging community partners to help in an immediate and organic way. I was proud to be a small part of the solution.

Connections is an amazing organization. People give of their whole hearts to minister to those in need. Evanston is lucky to have such an incredible organization healing those who have deep needs and structural losses. I am so proud of Connections. Having a home like Margarita Inn to help house those in need is crucial to help people overcome the burdens and bumps that they have encountered. Connections is there to provide nurturing and supportive help on so many levels to help heal people, families and communities.

I cannot say enough about my admiration of Connections. I am 100% supportive of their work, for over 15 years, and am constantly amazed at how they keep supporting and inventing new pathways to help. Having the Margarita Inn as an anchor for their work is crucial. I would love Evanston to be a town that commits to this work, in a world that is combating "NIMBY" issues in their neighborhoods. Evanston is better than that and Connections is absolutely the right organization to carry on this incredible work.

Please reach out with any questions or to talk more.

Alex Piper

1220 Sherman

Evanston, IL 60202

847 691 3704

From: [Jon Seed](#)
To: [Elle Ullum](#)
Subject: In Support of The Margarita Inn Helping the Housing Disadvantaged
Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 9:11:48 PM

Dear Alderman Nieuwsma,

As a twenty year resident of Evanston (mostly in our mutual friend Melissa Wynn's 3rd Ward but in the last 2 years, yours), I'm proud of the support the city has provided to the many worthy non-profits. In my opinion, Connections For The Homeless' efforts to provide a safe and secure place for those displaced at Margarita Inn is one of the most worthy and important. Their efforts in helping the disadvantaged are a reflection of us and who we strive to be.

Yes, questions should and have been asked about the adequacy of Connections support for their clients. I'm confident you'll agree Connections have been taken those concerns seriously and have adequately addressed each question specifically.

Sincerely,

Jon Seed
1220 Sherman Ave

Elle Ullum

Subject: Connections for the Homeless Margarita Inn Updates Inbox

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Newland Smith** <farnssn@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Sep 20, 2022 at 4:10 PM

Subject: Re: Connections for the Homeless Margarita Inn Updates Inbox

To: Jacqueline Eddy <jmeddy2@gmail.com>

To whom it may concern:

I have lived in Evanston between 1963 and 1966 and 1969 to the present. I remember the early years of the homeless shelter in the lower level of the then First Baptist Church and would volunteer occasionally for a night shift. Extending hospitality and shelter to the homeless in our midst is an essential part of the Gospel. I remember attending Seabury-Western Theological Seminary events at the Margarita Inn in the 1990s. It would be most appropriate for the Margarita Inn to be able to be a place to shelter homeless persons.

Newland F. Smith, 3rd
2323 McDaniel Ave., Apt. 3133
Evanston, IL 60201
847 530 3818

Elle Ullum

From: Evelyn McGowan <em4mail@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 18, 2022 8:03 AM
To: Elle Ullum
Subject: Margarita Inn special use permit support

I moved to Evanston as an adult and have lived here for nearly 25 years. I was immediately impressed with our actions to assist homeless and hungry people. I first learned of the work of Interfaith Action providing communal meals. Then I learned of Connections for the Homeless and volunteered sorting donations, which included a tour of their shelter. A few years ago they gave Margarita Inn (floundering as a hotel) a renewed life and also gave people a home, which is the first step in renewing their lives with employment and stability. I support renewing the special use permit.

-Evelyn McGowan

Elle Ullum

From: Sheran Fiedler <fiedlers1947@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 16, 2022 7:14 PM
To: Elle Ullum
Subject: I Support the Margarita Inn As A Shelter

Dear Ms. Ullum:

I am writing this note to let you know of my support of *Connections for Homeless*. I am one of the many people in an Evanston faith community who volunteer to bring food to the shelter and I also volunteer at the day center at St. Marks Episcopal. I am a member of First Congregational Church of Evanston, UCC and have been a volunteer at the Interfaith Action sack lunch program hosted by my church and I have been a volunteer dinner provider for the homeless at the Margarita Inn for the last two years. *Connections for the Homeless* has done an excellent job in providing housing these past few years. I strongly support the special use permit application for the Margarita Inn. The program at the Margarita Inn is a win for Evanston. The building is right in the middle of town, it is near good transportation, and it is an older building that fits right in the neighborhood.

Evanston definitely needs a permanent homeless shelter and the Margarita Inn has proved to be an effective housing alternative for homeless people during the Covid crisis. *Connections for the Homeless* has done a wonderful job organizing volunteers, providing support for those who need it and has provided a stable environment for homeless people until they get back on their feet. This program is working well and the City of Evanston needs to support it. Why reinvent the wheel?

I have lived in Evanston for 48 years and people who are homeless seem to increase every year. We now have a program that works, we have dedicated volunteers providing meals, and we have an organization that is instrumental in helping homeless people to get their lives back together and get into permanent housing. The City needs to support this proven program!

Sincerely,

Sheran Fiedler
2720 Central St. 5B
Evanston, ILL 60201

From: [Jenni Suvari](#)
To: [Elle Ullum](#)
Subject: Letter of Support for The Margarita Inn
Date: Friday, September 16, 2022 11:35:44 AM

I have resided in Evanston for 24 years and a 4th Ward resident for 16 years.

As a donor and volunteer at Connections since 2013 with authority I can say it is a well run, professional organization. I have personally seen their experienced, highly-trained, dedicated staff in action at The Margarita Inn, Hilda's Place and the Dewey Drop-in center. I know first-hand that they are doing their work well and effectively.

The pandemic has increased poverty and homelessness in our community. Connections for the Homeless is a service provider that works to create solutions that end homelessness. They don't manufacture homelessness and the Margarita Inn doesn't attract homelessness. 86% of the people served at the Margarita Inn are Evanstonians. People are made homeless by a lack of affordable housing, a lack of physical and mental health care, the criminalization of poverty and the intersection of poverty and race, deep inequities in our schools.

My husband and I purposefully moved back to Evanston after graduating from Northwestern to raise our three children here - a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment. I hope the City will put into action the values it claims to hold.

Jenni Suvari

Subject: Connections for the Homeless Margarita Inn Updates Inbox

From: Tom Mulhern <tom.mulhern@gmail.com>

Date: September 15, 2022 at 9:10:16 PM CDT

To: Jacqueline Eddy <jmeddy2@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: Connections for the Homeless Margarita Inn Updates Inbox

Dear Jacqueline,

I am writing to register strong support for the re-purposing the Margarita Inn as a site for transitional supportive housing for unhoused people in our community.

My wife and I have lived in Evanston for over 25 years. We are residents and homeowners in the 8th Ward. Our children attended and graduated from Evanston Public Schools. Dawes, Chute, ETHS. We are also long-time members and supporters of the McGaw YMCA and other community institutions, including more recently Connections for the Homeless.

I am often in the neighborhood of the Margarita site when I go to work out at the Y or patronize LeMoi Hardware, Bennison's Bakery, and other nearby businesses or the post office. I have not experienced any concerns for safety or public order in the time when the Inn began to serve its new, higher purpose.

The model applied in the Margarita conversion is evidence-based, successful on many levels, and above-all it is aligned to the values of our family and many families in Evanston.

We live in a society that has allowed capitalism to dictate how we live and treat one another. Housing (like healthcare and education) has become a commodity instead of a fundamental right. And as we have shifted to the market-based approach to housing, we have abandoned our responsibility to our fellow citizens.

I urge the City to approve the special use permit, and to not just enable but CELEBRATE the leadership and hard work of the Connections team in making this happen.

Respectfully,

Tom Mulhern
115 Florence Ave. Evanston 60202
847-219-4337

Elle Ullum

From: Annette Braden-Rozier <roziera@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 15, 2022 4:25 PM
To: Elle Ullum
Subject: In support of the Margarita Inn

To Whom it May Concern:

I'm adding my voice of strong support for maintaining the Margarita Inn as a transitional shelter. The location in the center of Evanston is perfect.

I'm an Evanston resident, homeowner on Mulford Street since 2014. I'm leasing two apartments for under-the-market price, because I feel the rents are too high in this area. I'm also a member of Lake Street Church and occasional volunteer for Interfaith Action.

I've gotten to know many homeless people in Evanston since I first volunteered at the Hospitality Center in 2015. I've come to admire the work that the Connection and Interfaith Action are doing.

The Margarita Inn came in for me personally as a godsend two years ago. At the time I tried to help a mentally ill friend of mine, whose immense needs were way beyond my capabilities. The Connection was there for him, and after many months of in-and-and-out of places (including my own) and living on the street in the cold, he was eventually housed in the Margarita Inn. What a relief to know him safe! Another homeless friend found a room at the Margarita Inn while recuperating from major surgery.

Homelessness is such a huge and growing problem in this country!!!
Evanston is doing its share and should keep doing it and support this perfect shelter.
I trust that the concerns of those neighbors, who are opposed, will be addressed.

Annette Braden-Rozier

September 15, 2022

TO: Members of the Land Commission
From: Suzanne Calder
RE: Margarita Inn

My family has lived about three blocks from the Margarita Inn for the past 43 years. In earlier years we enjoyed dining there and were disappointed when financial hardships closed those facilities and the owners became behind in maintaining the beautiful building.

I have been a member of the board of Connections and chair of the Evanston Alliance on Homelessness, thus gaining much knowledge of the issues that surround homelessness. The Margarita Inn facility houses men and women; and for the first time here, houses families. Housing families is a big deal – most other facilities that house families accommodate only mothers and their children, and boys would have to leave when they turned ten; Dads were not allowed. Keeping a family intact provides these children with unmeasurable security and will help them grow up to be better adults. What more could we ask for?

I urge you to recommend to Council that Connections receives a special permit use permit to continue operating this program at the Margareta Inn. This type of facility can be challenging to operate, but Connections provides trained staff and professionals to help our neighbors in need and make Evanston a leader in addressing the needs of our needy neighbors.

From: [Jacqueline Eddy](#)
To: [Elle Ullum](#)
Subject: Re: Connections for the Homeless Margarita Inn Updates
Date: Thursday, September 15, 2022 1:28:56 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Hi Elle, Here's my letter of support to send to the council...

Dear City staff and City Council Members,

I have been an Evanston resident for over 40 years, and currently live in the First Ward. I moved to Evanston because I believed what the community says about itself on the city website:

"With a vision to create the most livable city in America, Evanston celebrates the diversity of the City's opportunities and residents. Evanston is diverse in many ways, much to the delight of its visitors and residents. Stretching north from Howard Street and west from Lake Michigan, Evanston is a vibrant community comprising many strong neighborhoods, races, religions and levels of income. The City of Evanston welcomes diversity and believes that all individuals living in or visiting the city of Evanston should be treated fairly and with respect and dignity."

While we have not totally lived this vision, many citizens in our community have joined hands and worked toward it over the years.

I am proud to live in the city that created the first model of reparations for African Americans. While there are issues with the model, it is a beginning. No amount of money will ever be enough to repair the damage done to people of color in this country, and so much more needs to be done at all levels – by individuals, institutions, and government entities.

The wealth-gap from years of bias against people of color in this country, the insanely low federal minimum wage of \$7.25/hr or state minimums that are not livable wages, the skyrocketing housing prices and lack of any affordable housing, combined with shrinking resources devoted to addressing mental health and substance abuse issues has increased poverty and homelessness across the country. Our way of life is unjust and our systems of support are broken.

I am a person of faith who believes that all people have a right to a safe, secure home. And from that place of stability, individuals are more successful at finding work and getting the medical and emotional support they need. I also celebrate community...how we are part of and responsible for each other. That is why I endorse the work that Connections for the Homeless does as they walk alongside those they support, and the other social service organizations across the Evanston Community working with persons experiencing hunger and homelessness in our midst.

Stabilizing people through shelter, moving them into permanent housing, and implementing assistance programs to keep them in their housing, cannot only reduce, but eliminate, homelessness. With the resources available in Evanston (institutional,

financial, intellectual, creative) we can certainly work to reduce and even eliminate homelessness in our community. Establishing the Margarita Inn run by Connections as bridge housing is a great step toward that goal.

Jacqueline Eddy,
First Ward Resident
Member of Northminster Presbyterian Church

On Tue, Sep 13, 2022 at 9:42 AM Elle Ullum <eulum@connect2home.org> wrote:

Hello!

You're receiving this email because you expressed interest in the work Connections for the Homeless is doing at the Margarita Inn. You may have recently received an email from Max to invite you to the public meeting scheduled for September 21 at 6:00 pm to review the findings from our community listening sessions. You can find [more details and RSVP here](#).

The Margarita Inn and Connections are entering a crucial time in our history. In the next few weeks, we'll be able to officially begin the application process to renew the Margarita's special use permit – a huge step toward ending homelessness in Evanston. This is where we will make our case for the Margarita to continue operations. After two years of running the Margarita, a new cutting-edge model for providing shelter, using Housing First principles, we've successfully transitioned people off the street and into stable housing. These results are higher than the national average. Once again, Evanston is leading the way.

An essential part of this application process is the voice of the community. We need letters from supporters to help us tell our story through your words and experiences. A typical letter would include the following: Where do you live in Evanston? For how long? How have you interacted with the Margarita? Why do you believe in our mission and in helping the homeless? It doesn't have to be formal or on letterhead or anything like that. Just write down your thoughts and email it to us at eulum@connect2home.or or reply to this email. We'll be sure to include it in our submission.

And if you have other ideas on how to help, send them our way. We're so close to achieving our goal, but we need our supporters to help us get there. Attending the meeting on September 21 and emailing us letters of support for the special use permit application are two easy yet important ways to acknowledge the success of the Margarita and its importance in addressing homelessness in Evanston. Thank you so much for being a part of the solution.

Thank you!



Elle M. Ullum

Associate Director of Development

Communications & Donor Engagement

(she/her/hers)

p: 847.475.7070 x 141

a: 2121 Dewey Ave, Evanston, IL 60201-3057

e: euillum@connect2home.org | connect2home.org

CLICK TO HELP US END HOMELESSNESS. ONE PERSON AT A TIME

Ellen Waggoner Roeder
1130 Michigan Avenue
Evanston, Illinois
ellenwroeder@gmail.com

September 15, 2022

To whom it may concern:

I am a longtime resident of Evanston and have lived in both the Northern and Southern areas of the city throughout my time here. I lived here from birth until the age of 18 (2011) and attended preschool, elementary school, middle school, and high school here. I then returned home in 2019. I have lived a very privileged life in Evanston and was struck at the widespread disparities that exist in our town from an early age. I grew up with classmates who sometimes lacked clean clothes, food, or stable housing, and who at times existed in states of homelessness. While some resources existed for these peers, they were usually band-aids on larger systemic issues that have existed in Evanston since its inception.

I am also a lifelong member of Lake Street Church who has been in partnership with Connections for the Homeless for many years. I currently serve on the church's Peace & Justice committee and was made aware of Margarita Inn's work through the group. I am in full support of the renewal of Margarita Inn's special use permit, as their services are absolutely critical for a multitude of reasons:

- 1) There has been a very visible shift in the housing crisis that can be seen on every street corner in Evanston. Without proper access to the resources Margarita Inn and their partners provide, underserved populations will exist under absolutely untenable and inhumane circumstances.
- 2) Homelessness is not a product of individual failure but rather a collective failure in addressing systems of dehumanization enacted through unfair zoning laws, predatory lending schemes, unlivable wage and benefit structures, lack of a quality healthcare, and generalized discrimination.
- 3) Margarita Inn's model is unique in that its ultimate goal is not just to provide temporary housing support but also find long term housing placement for its beneficiaries.
- 4) To not renew the license would be an acknowledgement by the city that they would rather vulnerable populations rot in the prison system or die in order to protect wealthier residents from being mildly inconvenienced by the presence of individuals they have chosen to stigmatize. There is simply no other interpretation that could be derived from a non-renewal.

I understand there are concerns amongst wealthier Evanstonians that having shelters would welcome a greater population of homeless individuals to the city. They should be reminded that their wealth was largely created by and through the systems of social and economic exclusion that lead to homelessness to begin with. If visible poverty causes some residents discomfort, they should be doing everything they can to lift those individuals out of poverty. Step one would involve supporting Margarita Inn and their partners.

Sincerely,

Ellen Waggoner Roeder

Elle Ullum

Subject: Connections for the Homeless Margarita Inn Updates Inbox

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Thekla Metz** <thekla1014@aol.com>

Date: Thu, Sep 15, 2022 at 11:51 AM

Subject: Re: Connections for the Homeless Margarita Inn Updates Inbox

To: Jacqueline Eddy <jmeddy2@gmail.com>

I am an Evanston resident (4th ward) and a supporter of Connections plans for the Margarita Inn. My church, First Congregational Church of Evanston, has joined Interfaith Action in providing meals on a monthly basis. This has been a very positive experience. Connections is a well run organization that does an excellent, much needed job. We are all better for having them in our community. Thekla Metz

Sent from my iPad

From: [JEFFREY FORGASH](#)
To: [Elle Ullum](#)
Subject: Margarita Inn
Date: Thursday, September 15, 2022 10:23:22 AM

Reaching out in support of the continued housing at the Margarita Inn provided by CFTH. The housing has provided a significant benefit to both Evanston and the residents who were without housing and generally lived on the street. I have volunteered and been engaged with CFTH for approximately 20 years and know several housed clients that have been able to re enter the workforce and improve their lives as a result of staying at the Margarita Inn. I also reside a few blocks away and go past the Margarita Inn almost daily. The property is maintained well and the residents respect the neighborhood and neighbors.

Jeff Forgash
847 867 5695

Elle Ullum

From: Fran Wiechart <fran.wiechart@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 14, 2022 12:51 PM
To: Elle Ullum
Subject: Letter in Support of Margarita Inn

My name is Fran Wiechart and I live in SE Evanston. As a resident for 24 years, I have had the pleasure of working with numerous organizations in Evanston, Connections for the Homeless is absolutely my favorite local organization for so many reasons - inclusive community engagement, utmost professionalism, mobilizing others, and a clear vision and purpose to their work. Everything they do, they do well. I know that Connections will be an excellent neighbor and help so many of our most vulnerable neighbors. Please support their application for a special use permit.

Best,
Fran Wiechart

From: [Anna Grant-Bolton](#)
To: [Elle Ullum](#)
Cc: [Grant, Kathryn](#)
Subject: Greatest support for Margarita Inn
Date: Wednesday, September 14, 2022 11:57:51 AM

Dear Elle,

I am writing to express my great support for the incredible, much-needed human rights work being done at the Margarita Inn. I have lived in Evanston for 19 years and live in the 2nd ward. Throughout my time in Evanston, I have spoken to countless homeless or housing-insecure community members who unfortunately had to suffer through incredibly harsh conditions living outside. It is absolutely critical to justice in Evanston that the Margarita Inn exists and continues to take in our most marginalized community members. Thank you so much for taking such an important step to advance housing justice in Evanston.

In community,
Anna Grant-Bolton

From: [MK Halston](#)
To: [Elle Ullum](#)
Subject: Letter of support
Date: Tuesday, September 13, 2022 8:46:22 PM

We have lived in the 1st Ward for 22 years and have raised/are raising two sons here, Evanston is our family home. Others have not been as fortunate as we are; yet, everyone deserves a home. At the very least, everyone deserves shelter, basic needs, respect and their dignity. Connections for the Homeless comes in at times of great need for families and individuals. I have been a part of the organization as a volunteer for over 10 years and I know their work is a blessing to our community, the whole community. And, what they have achieved and will achieve to end homelessness is not a miracle. It is the result of extremely hard work and great vision, to say the least. I recommend the council approve their special use permit for The Margarita Inn. It's the good choice for Evanston.

-MK
MKHalston

September 13, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Patricia Blumen. I have lived at 1720 Maple Avenue, Evanston since 2004.

I support the Special Use Permit for Margarita Inn. There is a great need for this wonderful transition housing as is evidenced by the waiting list of over 50 people. The need will only increase as the weather turns cold. In addition, there is a substantial risk that Albany Care may be forced to close leaving over 200 more Evanston residents in need of emergency housing of some kind.

I understand the concerns of the neighbors and citizens, but I think Evanston as a community is working to address the issues. Our strength as a community is our ability to face the tough issues head-on, often in a pioneering way, eg. Reparations.

I am proud to live in this wonderful community and love it warts and all.

Sincerely,

Patricia Blumen

Elle Ullum

From: Robin Brown <rbrown1016@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 13, 2022 4:17 PM
To: Elle Ullum
Subject: Support for the Margarita Inn

To Whom It May Concern:

We have lived in the 4th Ward for 8 years. When deciding where to raise our family, we chose Evanston due to our belief that the community and city aligned with our values, primarily of justice. Over the past 8 years, we have supported Connections in many ways including donating funds, lunches, clothes, and hygiene products. All of these donations have been given from somewhat of a distance; meaning we haven't interacted with the Connections residents. We value the shelter services that have been in place for years and understand the limitations. However, we have always felt like the residents of Connections shelters have lived in the shadows. While church basements provide basic shelter, this environment lacks dignity.

We were thrilled to hear of the services provided at the Margarita Inn at the beginning of the pandemic. We recently attended a "listening session" and tour of the facility and were even more impressed. This is quality and dignified care that every person deserves.

Residents with unstable housing are our neighbors and should not be relegated back to the shadows. Any resistance to the Margarita Inn project is clearly based on fear and prejudice.

The current Margarita Inn services are a model for all communities. We strongly support the special use permit and ongoing Connections services at the Inn.

Sincerely,
Robin and Aaron Brown

Elle Ullum

Subject: [EXT] Connections for the Homeless Margarita Inn Updates

From: Grant, Kathryn <KGRANT@depaul.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, September 13, 2022 3:12 PM

To: Elle Ullum <eulum@connect2home.org>

Cc: anna gb <anna.grant.bolton@gmail.com>; mattgrantbolton@gmail.com; Grant, Gaylia <ggrant@nslsilus.org>; Doug Bolton <dbolton@fpschicago.com>

Subject: Re: [EXT] Connections for the Homeless Margarita Inn Updates

Dear Elle,

I am writing to offer my most enthusiastic support for the Connections to the Homeless work at the Margarita Inn. I live at 1415 Dewey Avenue in Evanston and am heartbroken by the fact that not all Evanstonians have a place to sleep at night or a place to stay warm and feel safe. There is nothing more important than a home. So, there is no mission more important than your mission to end homelessness. And, the innovative work at the Margarita Inn is a bold, exciting, giant step in that direction. It makes me proud to be an Evanstonian.

Gratefully,

Kathy Grant-Bolton

Elle Ullum

Subject: FW: Connections for the Homeless Margarita Inn Updates

From: christina calderon <chrisald34@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 13, 2022 12:00 PM

To: Elle Ullum <eulum@connect2home.org>

Subject: Re: Connections for the Homeless Margarita Inn Updates

I would love to help however I can! Hope this helps:

I have lived on Elmwood Avenue, off Main Street, in Evanston for about 13 years. During the beginning of the pandemic, I met a woman that was homeless in Evanston. My friend and I would bring her food and most of all, just listen and be a friend to her. Often we would pick her up and bring her back to the Margarita Inn. I was amazed to learn how much Connections was helping this woman. It wasn't just a place for her to sleep, there were actual activities happening and people there providing help with resources! Our friend got the help she needed and ended up being transferred to permanent supportive housing. I haven't seen her since but I'm so glad to know that Connections helped in more ways than one during a very difficult time in her life.

I believe everyone deserves housing no matter the situation they are in. I have met many homeless families and individuals that actually work full-time minimum wage jobs and still have to sleep in their cars, or on the streets, because they can't find affordable housing in our city. Many homeless people I meet are shocked and never thought they'd be homeless. They are traumatized and looking for someone to take a chance on them - to start a new life - and need temporary shelter and support to get out of the situation they are in. These people deserve dignity and hope. As a community, we should be taking care of each other especially when one of our members is going through a hard time in their life and seeking help. No matter their situation, we should stand with them. To know that individuals who are scared, feeling hopeless, and alone, might be able to stay at the Margarita Inn, a place that's safe, supportive, AND beautiful, brings so much joy to me.

From: [Deanna Langle](#)
To: [Elle Ullum](#)
Cc: [Leandra Hawkins](#); [Anika Velasco](#); [Nandi Siluma](#); [Garrett Short](#); [Charlotte Glanville](#); [Glory Lyatuu](#); [Rosa Gerner](#); [Rachel Spahn](#); [Tyler Heyl](#); [Oliver Yocum](#); [Laura Simmons](#)
Subject: Letter of Support for Margarita Inn
Date: Sunday, September 25, 2022 1:39:32 PM

To Connections for the Homeless,

The Lutheran Campus Ministry at Northwestern University, located at 2204 Orrington Avenue, where this ministry has been housed for over 50 years, would like to offer our support and encouragement in your efforts to secure a special use permit for the Margarita Inn.

Our campus ministry has had a relationship with Connections for the Homeless for over 20 years. We have worked with Connections for the Homeless (particularly through Hilda's Place transitional shelter, the Bridges to Home program, and the Margarita Inn) supporting their mission and efforts with financial donations, monthly suppers, bag lunches, clothing drives, and our volunteer time. Before the pandemic, we had first-hand experience of serving dinner and sitting down to eat with the residents at the Connections' transitional shelter where we heard the residents speak of their daily lives -- looking for jobs, going to jobs, searching for an apartment, preparing to move to their own apartment, the challenges of health and medical needs, navigating paperwork and the "system," and, then, of course, we also got to hear the stories of their families, their life experiences beyond being homeless, their goals and hopes. We've heard their stories and challenges directly from them, and we've also heard the concrete differences that Connections for the Homeless was making in their lives. During the pandemic, we saw how quickly Evanston could house and feed homeless people if we wanted to, and Connections for the Homeless was the agency who effectively implemented shelter. We have witnessed the difference that Connections for the Homeless and their Housing First principles have made with the use of the Margarita Inn, and we support its ongoing purpose as a shelter that can lead to stable housing which leads to a higher quality of life and more stability in our community.

As a faith community, we believe that we are to love and serve our neighbors and to care for the most vulnerable in our midst. We continue to provide bag lunches and monthly meals to the Margarita Inn residents, and, even though we miss interacting with the residents, we are grateful that they now have shelter that includes their own space in which they are eating these meals. We are grateful that we can support our neighbors as they seek to live on their own, and we know they have to be happier having their own space and place to call *home*.

Our ministry is in a historic and upper-class housing district in Evanston, and we occasionally have people who are homeless show up at our ministry asking for support. We do not provide cash support nor are we equipped to provide the support they need. However, we do direct them to Connections, and then we support the work of Connections as much as we are able as a student ministry because we believe in helping the homeless, and we believe the mission of Connections for the Homeless accomplishes this life-giving work.

With appreciation and admiration for the work you do,

The LCMNU Student Community, Student Leadership Board, and Pastor Deanna Langle