

City of Woodbury
GLOUCESTER CO.

WOODBURY, N.J.

September 24, 2018

Dear Residents and Business Owners of the City of Woodbury:

As you may be aware, at recent City Council meetings several residents have raised concerns with regard to sober living homes in certain locations in the City. This letter is to provide an update on status the City's review of the issues that have been raised.

The Federal Fair Housing Act (FHA) prohibits state and local zoning laws, policies and practices that discriminate against persons with disabilities. Drug & alcohol addiction is a disability as defined in the FHA and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The City is committed to complying with its obligations under the FHA and ADA. As the issues related to the obligations of the City with regard to the FHA involve highly sensitive and complex legal issues, on August 14, 2018, the City Council commissioned special counsel to advise the City. On September 11th, the governing body held a closed session to allow the governing body to meet with Special Counsel for the first time to allow him to provide the Council with legal advice. On the advice of our attorneys City Officials will not discuss the matter, or respond to written inquiries, until all of the facts have been gathered and the issues have been properly researched.

Here is the latest update that we are able to share with you:


On September 17, 2018, our special counsel has submitted an OPRA (Open Public Records Act) request to the NJ Department of Community Affairs (NJDCA) requesting the following:

- 1) Information listing all Rooming Houses, Boarding Houses or Cooperative Sober Living Residences licensed by the NJDCA pursuant to NJAC 5:27-1, which are located in Woodbury, identifying the name of the licensee and property address.
- 2) Copies of all applications filed with NJDCA for Rooming Houses, Boarding Houses or Cooperative Sober Living Residences in Woodbury licensed by the NJDCA pursuant to NJAC 5:27-1, or any renewal license filed between 1/1/2003 and 9/17/2018.
- 3) Copy of all licenses, certificates of approval, letter approving an application for a license, or any other document indicating approval of a license pursuant to NJAC 5:27-1, for a Rooming House, Boarding House or Cooperative Sober Living Residence located in Woodbury, issued between 1/1/2003 and 9/17/2018 by the NJDCA.

On the agenda for the Council meeting on September 25, 2018, is a resolution for City Council to consider – Resolution to authorize a contract to Professional Planning Consultant, who would perform research into issues related to sober living residences and prepare a report that will be reviewed by Council before it addresses the issues raised by residents at the City Council meetings. Upon receipt of that report City Council will review its findings and any recommendations with its attorneys. The recommendations will be made public after they have been reviewed by City Council with its attorneys.

City Officials will continue to work together to provide the Woodbury Community with an open dialogue on matters where possible, and please be assured that we are working for a better Woodbury for today, and in the future.

Sincerely,



Robert Law

City Administrator