

Dear Neighbors:

As SoHo residents, we all know the frustration of stepping over homeless people in our doorways, in bank lobbies, on the street and in the subways. For many of us, the last ten years have also brought the pain of watching people we love die from AIDS. Some of us are now living with AIDS ourselves. Where should we direct our frustration about these problems? With local and federal governments that seem incapable of addressing homelessness, drug addiction or HIV, it's easy to get angry with the people who are actually bearing the heaviest burden. Since we don't know how to solve the problems of homeless people or addicts, and since they obviously can't do it on their own, we just want them to go away.

At the same time, we have managed to find ways to confront that sense of hopelessness. Gay Men's Health Crisis, ACT UP, and Housing Works are just a few of the organizations that have grown out of our community's response to the AIDS epidemic. Many of us have volunteered with these and other organizations, written them a check, attended one of their rallies or passed on information about them to a friend in need.

None of us fool ourselves into thinking that any one effort will end what have become multiple and interlinked epidemics. But we also know we can't afford the luxury of burying our heads in the sand or wishing all the services away into somebody else's neighborhood. Homelessness, AIDS and drug abuse exist in every New York neighborhood. **This is our problem.**

As business owners and residents in SoHo, as parents of schoolchildren, as artists and professionals, we naturally have concerns about any new program or facility that opens in our neighborhood. But it is the lack of information about a proposed AIDS day treatment program — and the wheatpasting and printing of misinformation about that program — that has moved us to action. Over the phone and in evening meetings, we spoke with staff and clients from the organization proposing the program, with other AIDS professionals in the city and state, and with each other to find out first-hand what a day treatment program would mean for people with AIDS, and for SoHo.

We learned that many people living with HIV are juggling multiple problems: lack of housing, substance abuse, isolation, unemployment and histories of physical and emotional trauma. When a woman with HIV needs housing, for example, that basic need can overwhelm her most earnest efforts to deal with other issues like medical care and meals. The most effective AIDS programs are those that offer a comprehensive range of services and structured support. Village Nursing Home's day treatment program in Chelsea is an example of a program that has pioneered this approach. Housing Works, the organization that is proposing to establish a day treatment program in SoHo, is another.

In its two years of operation, Housing Works has created what is by all accounts a cost-effective, sensitive and successful new kind of housing program. While city programs send the homeless to disease-ridden shelters, Housing Works gives people permanent housing and a range of services to help them regain independence and stability. Services that Housing Works provides include private apartments, individual counseling and referral to health care, help in obtaining benefits, legal advice, job training, a TB education and prevention program and support groups in English and Spanish.

Unlike other housing programs, many Housing Works services have been designed by the same people they serve. A majority of Housing Works Board members are people living with AIDS or HIV-illness, and 40% of the Board members have themselves experienced homelessness related to HIV infection.

For More Information, Contact:

Anna Blume, 925-5805

Linda Salerno, 925-1360

Daniel Wolfe, 925-5619

Questions or Letters of Support can also be faxed to Larry Bogdanow, 941-8875

What would an AIDS day treatment program mean for SoHo? See inside...

Questions and Answers About the Proposed AIDS Day Treatment Program

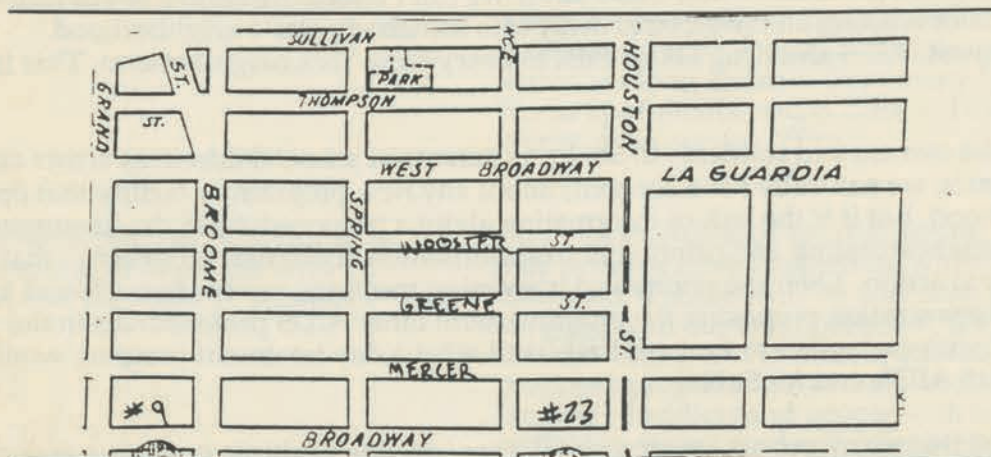
Housing Works is trying to develop a new Adult Day Health Care Program in SoHo (currently proposed for 38 Greene Street, at the northeast corner of Grand). The program will provide meals, basic medical services and referrals, counseling, support groups, recreational activities, trainings and other services to registered clients of Housing Works.

Is the Housing Works program really needed in SoHo? Are there enough AIDS cases in this neighborhood to make this worthwhile?

There are thousands of homeless people with HIV in lower Manhattan, including SoHo, and the Department of Health reports that AIDS cases in our neighborhood increased by 52% between 1989-1991.

But why SoHo? Don't we already have a glut of services here for chemically dependent and homeless people?

In fact, as the map below shows, there are no social services at all in the central SoHo area. And there is only one other program in all of New York City like the day treatment program proposed by Housing Works. That program, Village Nursing Home, is located in the Gay Men's Health Crisis building on West 20th St. in Manhattan.



Social Svcs. in SoHo: #23 is Housing Works' main office at 596 B'way; #9 is the Chinese American Planning Council at 480 B'way

Could this facility draw hundreds of homeless, mentally ill or drug-addicted people from other neighborhoods into central SoHo?

No. The program is only open to Housing Works clients, all of whom have gone through a comprehensive intake and needs assessment process. In fact, the vast majority of program participants will already have obtained permanent housing through Housing Works. Anybody who is not yet housed will be well into the process of obtaining housing. The program can by law serve no more than 70 people a day.

What about homeless people in the neighborhood? How can they get in?

The day treatment program will give first priority to community residents and homeless people in the neighborhood. Anyone who is not a Housing Works client who comes to the day treatment program will be referred to Housing Works' main office for an intake interview.

Who will the clients be? Might they put me or my family in danger?

Many of the clients at the program will be people with families themselves. 50% of Housing Works clients are women and children. Because the safety of their clients, as well as the safety of their

neighbors, is crucial to their success, Housing Works has clear policies about how to defuse potentially threatening situations. To date, Housing Works has had virtually no need to implement these policies, though if a client were to become disruptive he or she would be escorted home by a case manager. All clients are also tested for TB, and those who are shown to have active TB are hospitalized until they are no longer contagious.

When will clients come to the program?

The program will operate between 9:30-4:30. The center will be open a half-hour before and after the hours of operation to allow people a place to stay while meeting others or waiting for transportation. An ambulette is available to provide clients with door-to-door service to and from the program. A security officer will be on duty at all times that the program is operating.

Can programs like these lower property values or increase crime rates in a neighborhood?

Chelsea real estate brokers report no decrease in property values as a result of the Village Nursing Home Day Treatment Program. The 13th precinct, which handles complaints in that area, has had no reported crimes involving clients of the Village Nursing Home and reports no increase in crimes since that day treatment program opened in 1988.

What happens if community residents are unhappy with the impact the program is having on the neighborhood?

Get involved. The Housing Works program will have a Community Advisory Committee that will include representatives of the Block Association, local institutions and concerned individuals. Call 966-0466 if you are interested in taking part.

Why didn't Housing Works ask the community for feedback before going ahead with its plans?

Housing Works is extremely interested in helping neighborhood residents learn about their programs, and that process is still very much underway. All community board and block association meetings that have happened so far have been initiated by Housing Works, and not because they had any legal obligation to do so. Residents interested in visiting Housing Works can call 966-0466 to tour their existing facilities and meet their clients. Many SoHo residents attended the meeting of the Social Services Committee of Community Board #2 in March, and another, full community board meeting will be scheduled to help residents learn more about the proposed program. If you or your neighbors are interested, call Community Board #2 for at 979-2272 for more information.

Rumours and Misconceptions About the Proposed Day Treatment Program

Misconception

"The proposed day treatment program will not serve artists or other community residents with HIV."

"Housing Works has agreed to pay an exorbitant \$22/sq. foot for the Greene Street space."

"Housing Works is trying to overwhelm the neighborhood by applying for spaces all over SoHo, including the former Library for the Blind on Sixth Ave. and Spring St. "

In Fact...

Housing Works will give preference to community residents, including those with public insurance, private insurance, the ability to pay or the need for

Housing Works is negotiating a base rent of \$12/sq. foot for the Greene St. space. An additional \$10/sq. foot would be paid to the landlord ("a work letter") to reimburse him for necessary rebuilding and capital improvements.

Housing Works has applied for use of the former library, though their goal is to provide a continuum of AIDS care in SoHo, not to take over the neighborhood. Services housed in the library would be for a small number of people and would be developed with community input.

SoHo Housing Works

Rumours and Misconceptions About the Proposed Day Treatment Program

Misconception

"The day treatment program says it will serve 70 clients a day, but it can expand at will."

"Housing Works plans on giving out needles at Greene St. and two other SoHo sites."

"There are dozens of buildings all over the city where Housing Works could site this program."

"The day treatment program will put us in danger by exposing us to people with TB, mental illness and problems of substance abuse."

In Fact...

The program by law can serve no more than 70 clients daily. To expand, Housing Works would have to file a new Certificate of Need with the State, and go through another complex approval process.

Housing Works has no plans to distribute needles from the day treatment program. Housing Works' main office already operates a legal needle exchange for 35 clients in the context of a range of appropriate, effective, state-sanctioned substance abuse services.

Buildings that both meet the city's zoning requirements and those of Housing Works clients are relatively difficult to locate. The proposed Greene St. site has ample space, is within walking distance from many Housing Works apartments, and is close to Housing Works' main service office.

All of these problems are frightening, but they're much more frightening when left untreated. People with TB and drug problems are already in our neighborhood. The truth is that the testing and treatment offered by the proposed program will actually reduce the number of addicts and people with active TB on SoHo's streets, and will offer homeless people with AIDS some new and badly needed services.

INFORM YOURSELF! LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW SOHO CAN HELP FIGHT AIDS AT A MEETING ABOUT THE PROPOSED AIDS DAY TREATMENT PROGRAM

MAY 18, THE DRAWING CENTER
35 WOOSTER ST., bet. BROOME AND GRAND
6:30 pm

• Including presentations by Housing Works clients and staff

It's An Informational Meeting, not a Debate, so please come!

SoHo for AIDS Care Organizing Committee: Anna Blume, Larry Bogdanow, Richard Elovich, Elizabeth Hess, Loring McAlpin, Frank Moore, Jacki Ochs, Anne Pasternak, Virginia Reath, Linda Salerno, Debrah Shaffer, Sue Simon, Mike Starn, Joni Wehrli, Carol Vizier, Daniel Wolfe

Handwritten signatures and notes at the bottom of the page, including names like "Loring McAlpin" and "Carol Vizier".