



August 12, 2016

The Honorable Scott M. Stringer
Comptroller
City of New York
One Centre Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Comptroller Stringer:

We respectfully request that you reject the City's plan to convert an existing Holiday Inn Express in Maspeth, Queens into an adult-only homeless shelter. The current plan is ill-conceived, inadequate, and not in the best interest of New Yorkers in need.

We believe that the City's proposal does not comport with current law or the stated policy positions of the Mayor. The Holiday Inn Express located at 59-40 55th Rd., Maspeth, NY lies within the boundaries of an Industrial Business Zone (IBZ). Currently, no residential use is permitted within an IBZ. According to point 4 of the Mayor's "10 Point Industrial Action Plan" announced on November 3, 2015:

"No residential uses are currently permitted in IBZs, except by rezoning. The Administration and the Council have agreed to further strengthen that prohibition to curb speculation. Going forward, no private applications for residential uses in IBZs will be supported by the Council or Administration." [1]

A homeless shelter is not industrial, nor is it a business. By definition, it is residential and should be treated as such. Relegating New Yorkers in need to a corner of a borough that is bordered by industrial warehouses, the Long Island Expressway, and cemeteries is not a solution. Neither is it dignified.

Section 93(g) of the New York City Charter provides your office the power to take any action needed to ensure that an agency does not expend funds for any purpose other than that for which they were appropriated:

"The comptroller shall have the power and duty to audit all vouchers before payment for availability of funds and prepare warrants. No warrant shall be

prepared by the comptroller unless sufficient appropriations are available to cover the payments involved. No agency shall expend or commit any funds otherwise than for the program and purposes for which the funds have been appropriated and the comptroller shall conduct audits and take such other action as is required to assure compliance with this provision.”

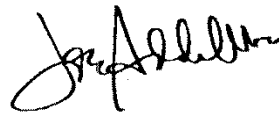
Should a contract be presented to you that authorizes the conversion of the Maspeth Holiday Inn Express into a homeless shelter, we insist that you use your authority to reject it. We are unaware of funds that have been specifically appropriated with the intent to undermine Mayor de Blasio’s 10 Point Industrial Action Plan, and believe that any agency operating to the contrary is acting beyond its statutory authority.

Converting hotels into homeless shelters is not the policy prescription homeless New Yorkers need. It is not appropriate within Maspeth’s Industrial Business Zone, and it is not appropriate elsewhere. Thank you for allowing us this opportunity to register our concerns. We look forward to pursuing a suitable shelter alternative with the City that addresses the needs of all New Yorkers.

Sincerely,



Grace Meng
U.S. House of Representatives



Joseph Addabbo
New York State Senate



Margaret Markey
New York State Assembly



Elizabeth Crowley
New York City Council

CC: Hon. Bill de Blasio- Mayor, City of New York
Mr. Steven Banks- Commissioner, Human Resources Administration (HRA)
Mr. Vincent Arcuri, Jr. – Chairman, Community Board 5
Mr. Gary Giordano – District Manager, Community Board 5