



Law Harrington Senior Living Center

Monday, July 22, 2019

The Vision

The vision is for elders to age with dignity and pride in a stable, safe and affirming community, with access to specialized services and support.

The proposed complex will be located in central Houston's Third Ward, less than three miles from the Texas Medical Center and one mile from the Montrose Center on two existing Metro bus routes and the prospective light rail University/Blue Line as part of Houston's Urban Transit Corridor planning. The proposed site is located at 2222 Cleburne, pending a generous donation from the Midtown Redevelopment Authority, whose leadership is committed to maintaining affordable housing.

The Problem

According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, [there are at least nine seniors waiting for one occupied unit of affordable elderly housing nation-wide](#). In some cases, a senior can spend three to five years on the wait list for access to affordable housing.

As in Montrose, many long-time senior residents of the Third Ward are seeing their rents and property taxes increase beyond their means. These are educators, nurses, technicians and skilled laborers — many of whom have lived in the area for decades and own their own homes. Unfortunately, there are few options for those who seek to downsize and remain independent, save for very poorly maintained and unsecured apartment complexes. The Greater Third Ward is currently undergoing rapid demographic shifts due to redevelopment trends and increased interest in the area's comparatively affordable real estate, creating gentrification.

Severely lacking are resources that are standard in other residential areas of the city, such as local businesses and grocery stores within a mile. The proposed senior housing complex will help increase population density needed to attract such businesses to the area.

The Daily Cougar reports that [there are no fresh food markets or commercial grocery stores in Third Ward, making it one of the many neighborhoods in Houston and the United States classified as a food desert](#). Without a vehicle to travel to the grocery store, or a supermarket within half a mile, this causes food disparity within a community; about 17 percent of Third Ward's roughly 34,000 residents are 60 or over, compared to the 13 percent city-wide. While 8 percent of adults age 65 and older are food insecure, [Black and Hispanic seniors are three times more likely to experience food insecurity compared to their white and Asian counterparts](#), according to AARP.

The vast majority of LGBT affirming neighborhoods, businesses, churches, and service organizations remain centrally located to Montrose and the surrounding areas. However, the lack of affordable housing in Montrose has pushed many LGBT low-income seniors, and long-time residents of Third Ward, to seek more affordable, yet less community-centric, areas.

The Solution

The Montrose Center is committed to the development of an affordable senior-housing community that is also LGBT *affirming*. This project will serve as the cornerstone of the comprehensive approach to support seniors, *regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation*.

Our vision is that seniors will be able to age with dignity and pride in a stable, safe and affirming community, with access to specialized services and support, including:

Primary medical care	Counseling & peer support	Advocacy & service linkage
Job resources & skills training	Congregate meals	Wellness & fitness programs
Social & recreational opportunities	Educational programs	Shuttle service

The complex will feature one- and two-bedroom, independent living apartments for low-income seniors ages 62 and above, with rents adjusted based on individual/couple income.

Eligible seniors will pay no more than 30 percent of their income for rent. Features and amenities include:

- Full disabled accessibility
- Secured entry
- Dining & assembly hall
- Activity rooms
- Library & lounge area
- Laundry facilities
- Outdoor recreational space
- Computer & fitness facilities

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