



June 10, 2022

Mr. Keith McCarthy
Associate Commissioner
NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports
1450 Western Avenue
Albany, NY 12203

Dear Mr. McCarthy,

I am in receipt of the letter you received from Anne McCaffery regarding her concerns for Recovery Center of Niagara. I will address each point directly but prior I feel it is important for me to provide a background.

We purchased the Eastern Niagara Hospital facility in Newfane with open communication regarding our intention of creating a detox and residential recovery center. This information is not new to her or anyone else in the SUD treatment field or NYS Agencies connected to the application and approval process. We were asked by many upstate referral sources to help provide a solution for the growing need in Niagara County. We went through the local process and obtained approvals 2 years ago. As indicated in Anne's letter, an additional hearing by the local board took place on May 16th where Anne presented her case against opening the facility and she was turned down. We were unanimously granted approval. Her claims were found to be unjustified. Her attempt once again to prevent our opening is an attack on the entire community that badly needs SUD treatment options and services.

Here is a list of points that I have extracted from her letter, and I will be addressing them all;

1. Anne claims that by opening our treatment center there will be a great negative impact on the existing providers due to the following three reasons;
 - a. Current staffing crisis.
 - b. Lack of demonstrated need.
 - c. Lack of coordination with current local providers.

2. Anne claims that our application states that emergency services will be provided by Eastern Niagara Hospital.



3. Anne claims that there are inconsistencies in our application specifically related to linkage agreements.

4. Anne claims that our intention is to ship people from NYC to Newfane NY for treatment.

Firstly to address the first point, there is no negative impact that will take place. To the contrary, our facility will have a great positive impact.

a. There is clearly a shortage of jobs available to qualified professionals in the Niagara area. We have received close to 300 resumes in a two-week period simply by posting a few job listing on indeed. We have also received dozens of calls and walk ins who requested job applications. We are also employing individuals who were laid off by Anne when she closed the Newfane hospital and sold us the property.

b. We have received statistics from referral sources in the area showing that year to date, hundreds of referrals have been denied and were sent to other areas for treatment. Eastern Niagara Hospital (Reflections) was sent YTD over 450 referrals by a single source and only accepted 24. The other 400+ had to be placed in other facilities. This one referral source has placed 491 individuals in treatment YTD.

Niagara County has a population of over 200,000 people. It is part of Buffalo–Niagara Falls metropolitan area which has a population of 1.2 million people. Reflections has a total of 30 licensed beds for 818 residential treatment only. Cazenovia has zero 818 or 816 licensed beds. There is a total of 99 licensed 818 beds and 24 licensed 816 beds between all 4 facilities that she mentioned in her letter and covering the entire area. Those numbers are a direct indication that facilities such as ours are absolutely necessary.

c. Regarding coordination with local providers, we have attempted to work out an arrangement with Eastern Niagara Hospital however they did not wish to work with us so we established relationships with others.

2. We have established a working relationship with Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital to provide emergency services should we need them. We originally tried to work with Eastern Niagara Hospital, but they would not work with us, so we chose an alternative. The information related to Millard Fillmore is stated explicitly in our policy and procedures section 901. We also have a linkage agreement with them that was submitted as part of our application.



As for the concern that ENH may need to close their emergency services, I am not sure how or why that is related to us. They have gone bankrupt, closed facilities, laid off many employees and already publicly indicated that they are closing those services and completely going out of business.

3. Regarding any issues with our application all those were addressed with the OASAS team and our team over the last several months. I lack the understanding of how Ms. McCaffrey has the right or need to review, comment, or suggest regarding our application. That information is confidential between us and OASAS. The fact that she has a copy (albeit an original extremely old version) is extremely concerning to me and potentially a threat. Where did she get that from and what right does she have to review that type of personal and confidential information?

4. Anne has developed and fabricated some sort of conspiracy theory regarding our intention to ship people in from NYC. She could not be more inaccurate. Our intention is only to service the Niagara area. We have extremely strict policies regarding transportation and an entire section on travel distance etc. in our policy and procedures. We have no intention of servicing NYC residents in Newfane NY. It's an 8-hour drive.

I look forward to your response and to our launch of this newly renovated state of the art facility.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zevi Friedman', is written over a horizontal line.

Zevi Friedman
CEO