

# Finding/Establishing an Independent Living Facility for Your Child

FCSN Visions of Community  
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John Reichenbach, FCSN Board Member  
Marc Slotnick, President – New England Communities, Inc.  
Charles Silsby, President - Specialized Housing, Inc.

# Presenters

- \* John Reichenbach
  - \* Board Member of FCSN
  - \* Son, Ned, age 26 with Down syndrome, resident of 320 Lake Avenue, Newton Highlands, developed and managed by Specialized Housing
  
- \* Marc Slotnick
  - \* Founder of affordable housing non-profit and former Associate Director of state housing agency overseeing 50K units including 2K Special Needs
  - \* Developer of rental model independent living facilities at 40 Chase St in Newton and at 116 Cedar St. in Malden both opened in 2014
  - \* Developer of national award winning senior living, independent living and affordable housing projects
  
- \* Charles Silsby
  - \* Director and President of Specialized Housing, developer and manager for the past 35 years of 14 supportive housing facilities for adults with disabilities in condominiums and apartments in the greater Boston area and other locations in New England
  - \* Serves on the board of the Massachusetts Association of Community Residences for Independent Living
  - \* Board Vice President of PLAN of Massachusetts and Rhode Island

# What we're going to talk about

- \* Limited and prioritized state budget – unlike education, no entitlement to housing
- \* Existing facility or build new
- \* Hurdles to overcome in developing a new facility
- \* Types of independent living facilities
- \* Development costs
- \* Operating costs
- \* Providers

# Eligibility Process in Massachusetts

- \* DDS Eligibility
- \* MASSCAP Assessment
  - \* Supportive services
  - \* Community living services
  - \* Residential services
- \* Prioritization
  - \* Priority 1 – goal is to provide services within 90 days
  - \* Priority 2 – engage in active planning while waiting for services and funding
  - \* Priority 3 – no priority is assigned

# Existing Facility

- \* Spaces in existing facilities are nearly always available
  - \* SHI has 2 openings across its existing houses in MA and ME. SHI has two projects in development. One project in South Portland, ME with 3 openings and one in Newton, MA with 2 openings.
  - \* Other providers have openings too
- \* Consider existing facility vs. developing a new one, if:
  - \* Existing resident needs are similar to your child
  - \* Location is suitable
  - \* Provider is acceptable
  - \* Other families are compatible
  - \* Costs are tolerable
- \* Existing facility is **MUCH** easier than developing a new one

# Planning Residential Services – Ten Commandments

1. Start planning early!
2. Establish your non-negotiable items AND be ready to compromise
3. Don't buy real estate before you have a plan in place
4. Consider the potential neighborhood (access to transportation, shopping, etc.) and proximity to YOU, job and day supports
5. Research and shop around for a provider agency
6. Residential assessment, understand your child's readiness and skills
7. Be realistic about your ability, time, resources and reasons if you are considering developing and operating yourself
8. Focus on the essential – don't get distracted by endless possibilities
9. Include your child in the process where possible.
10. Resist the urge to design a residential arrangement based on your feelings of what is best – remember, you are planning for your child's future, not yours

# Development Stages

- \* Compare your vision to reality
  - \* Assess your goals
  - \* Analyze the local market
  - \* Prepare for opposition
  - \* Examine your finances
- \* Navigating the red tape
  - \* Identify a developer and/or provider, or
  - \* Develop it yourself
    - \* Build government relationships/get permits
    - \* Comply with regulations
- \* Establish your home
  - \* Find the right home site
  - \* Determine your budget
  - \* Develop the project
  - \* Hire good people
  - \* Open for business

# Residential Facility Types

- \* Group Homes
  - \* Staff works eight hour shifts to cover 24 x 7
- \* Supervised Independent Living
  - \* Some independent skills, < 24 hour coverage
- \* Hybrid setting
- \* Shared Living
  - \* Living with an existing family other than one's own
- \* Self-contained Community



# 320 Lake Ave Example

- \* 2006 – First contact with SHI, went to meeting with family group in formation, did not join group, group in formation never progressed
- \* 2012 - Started SHI discussions as part of two separate Newton/Brookline groups that wanted to use SHI as a provider to develop a 10 resident facility
- \* Early 2013 – Two groups combined and splintered, committed families went from 9 to 8 to 7 to 6 to 7 to 8.
- \* Mid 2013 – 8 families signed a development agreement with SHI, bid on but did not get first house
- \* Fall 2013 – bid and closed on second house, shared plans with neighbors, neighbors appealed building permit, engaged legal counsel, we packed house at zoning board of appeals and won, added 1 family
- \* Late 2013 – Construction started, 1 family backed out, later added another family to get back to 9
- \* Fall 2014 – finished construction and 5 residents moved in
- \* Winter 2015 – 2 more residents moved in, major ice dam problems
- \* Spring 2015 – final 2 committed residents move in to get to 90% capacity
- \* Summer 2015 – significant construction to fix ice dam and consequent mold damage, 2 residents move out due to medical issues, but 1 later returned, need to raise monthly fees 20% to cover 9 paying residents vs. 10 resident budget and uncovered ice dam repairs
- \* Winter 2016 – add final 2 resident commitments to get to capacity
- \* Spring 2016 – 9<sup>th</sup> resident moves in
- \* Summer 2017 – 10<sup>th</sup> resident moves in

# Lake Ave



# Hasseltine House Example

Winter 2011 - NECI approached JF&CS about creating group homes.

Spring 2011 - Planning began Cedar House in Malden that would be subsidized with Section 8 Housing Choice vouchers and housing grants.

Spring 2013 - A number of families expressed strong interest in Newton.

May 2013 - 8000 s.f. 1895 Victorian mansion three blocks from the Newton Centre T Station came on the market. NECI made an offer on the 13<sup>th</sup> and executed a P&S on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

September 2013 - Renovations began and abutters appealed the building permit to the city claiming a violation of zoning. Construction continued at NECI's risk.

November 2013 - Zoning Board votes unanimously to reject the appeal.

February 2014 - 14 residents and two staff move into Hasseltine House with temporary occupancy permit and waiver from Massachusetts Architectural Access Board

June 2014 - Elevator and landscaping completed. Final Occupancy Permit and MAAB approval issued.

January 2015 - Frozen pipe damages basement; repairs made at NECI expense.

# Hasseltine House - Newton



# Cedar House - Malden



# Development Costs

(\$MM)	Lake Ave	Hasseltine House
Acquisition Cost	\$1.1	\$2.3
Construction Cost	\$1.6	\$1.2
Developer Cost	\$0.3	\$0.3
Project Cost	\$3.0	\$3.8
Residents	10	14
Cost per unit	\$300K	\$271K
Developer	Specialized Housing/New Atlantic	New England Communities, Inc./JF&CS

# Monthly Operating Charges

	Lake Ave - Ownership	Hasseltine House - Independent Rental
Nominal Rent	\$800 (fixed)	\$355
Other Fees	\$1,800	\$2,065-2,885 (priv. bath)
Real Estate Taxes	\$200	Included
Total	\$2,800+ownership cost	\$2,420-3,240 inclusive
Staffing	Fairly heavy	Moderate(10-11hrs/day)

Note: Lake Ave – must buy \$300K condo unit, monthly expenses run until re-sold  
 Hasseltine House – \$25K letter of credit, 2 year lease

# Monthly Cost Breakdown

- \* Staffing and Management is close to 60% of the monthly cost
- \* Food is next biggest item, at about 10%
- \* Real estate taxes and utilities are each 5-8%
- \* Everything else combined is less than 20%
  - \* Landscaping/Snow Removal
  - \* Cleaning
  - \* Insurance
  - \* Maintenance
  - \* Other expenses
  - \* Allowance to build Maintenance Reserve



# Public Benefits

- \* SSI
- \* SSDI
- \* Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers/MRVP
- \* Medicaid (including Group Adult Foster Care)
- \* SNAP (formerly known as foodstamps)
- \* Utility and Food Assistance

# Potential Providers

	Location	Phone	Website
Advocates	Framingham	508-628-6300	advocates.org
Price Center	Newton	617-244-0065	thepricecenter.org
JF&CS	Waltham	781-647-5327	jfcsboston.org
Seven Hills	Worcester	508-755-2340	sevenhills.org
Specialized Housing	Brookline	617-277-1805	specializedhousing.org
TILL	Dedham	781-302-4600	tillinc.org



# Questions and Discussion

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