

# MILTON DISABILITY AWARENESS COMMITTEE (MDAC)

Wednesday, November 3, 2010, 7:00 p.m.

Executive Conference Room, Milton City Hall

**Attendees:** Ann Coggins, Sharon Lockwood, Travis Allen, Patti Silva, Laura York, Gary Arnold, Eric Jacobson, Rita Young, Van Black, Randall Coggins and Sudie Gordon.

Welcome and Introductions

## **Discussion on Proposed Assisted Living Center**

- Eric Jacobson
  - I am here to speak about the proposed assisted living center for autistic individuals.
  - This facility was introduced as a place with individuals with disabilities could live like the rest of us.
  - Ann, Caitlyn, and I met with the Mayor, City Manager, City Development Director, and City Lawyer before the planning commission meeting.
  - We expressed our concerns as to what was being proposed.
  - This facility that is being proposed is by an architect that wants to build a facility that holds around 70 individuals with autism for them to live in.
  - They will have 3 levels of studio apartments that are attached by common areas.
  - They will have congregate meals and resting areas for visiting.
  - The buildings they are proposing are actually very beautiful.
  - Adjacent from the living facilities there will be a building for a workshop.
  - I am concerned about this facility for a number of reasons.
  - Everything that we know about disabilities and about people with autism and what is happening in Georgia says that we are not congregating people with disabilities to live together.
  - This will be zoned as an assisted living facility.
  - People with autism and behavioral issues tend to pick up attitudes and actions from other individuals around them.
  - Any family that moves someone in will not be eligible for Medicaid dollars.
  - Because of the congregate nature, they can only accept private pay individuals.
  - At a minimum, it will cost a family \$5,500 a month.
  - Federal Department of Justice and State of Georgia Mandates – Current state run institutions will all be closed by 2015 and those residents will move into community based housing to reside with no more than two “disabled” individuals in the home.
  - Proposed Developer is an architect and has no experience with individuals with disabilities. Architect has hired “Grace Management” (Minneapolis) for operations management of assisted living facility.
  - Milton is one of the first facilities of this type (dealing with autism in an assisted living environment) and MDAC would like to obtain marketing study to see why Milton was chosen.
  - There is one facility in Chicago that is called LAMB by a Christian organization that houses individuals with disabilities.

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- MDAC will contact Marcus Autism Center (clinical, not residential center) (Briarcliff, Atl.) re: information.
- I don't want to put down individuals that would want to use this facility with no other options.
- The management company, "Grace" doesn't have any background in building these types of facilities.
- The Marcus Institute is a clinical facility for autistic individuals.
- The Marcus Institute is not residential.
- I don't believe this center will be good for Milton's reputation.
  
- Ann Coggins
  - Five individuals expected to make Public comment at Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting.
  - On the 15<sup>th</sup>, we can organize speakers to protest this center.
  - MDAC will speak with the City Council before the meeting on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - We can contact parents of autistic children to speak at the meeting.
  - Rick Swanson has not set a date for us to meet.
  
- Patti Silva
  - Will speak with the press in regards to the proposed Center.
  - Neighborhood Newspaper can be contacted.
  - Speak with Jason Wright about who to contact?
  - I would like to speak at the meeting on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Discussion On Members of the MDAC Board**

- Ann Coggins
  - Marcia O'Shaunessy is leaving the Committee.

**Discussion on MDAC Awareness Meeting**

- Ann Coggins
  - Make the meetings bi-monthly instead of monthly.

**Discussion on MDAC Name**

- Ann Coggins
  - Voting on the changing of the MDAC name.
  - Everyone will come up with three names and they will be sent out via email for a vote on December 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Next Meeting Date**

- December 1, 2010

After no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:34 P.M.

**Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_, 2011.**

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