

Township of Manalapan

Office of the Mayor

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Mayor
SUSAN COHEN



Deputy Mayor
JACK MCNABOE

Re: Manalapan Manor Facility; Manalapan New Jersey

Dear Governor Murphy:

On behalf of the residents and Governing Body of Manalapan Township, we would like to bring to your attention a serious issue in Manalapan Township that has been going on for over six years. Mayor Susan Cohen, Deputy Mayor Jack McNaboe, Police Commissioner Mary Ann Musich along with Assemblyman Robert Clifton and his Chief of Staff T.J. Mann have worked tirelessly on this issue. They have met with neighboring residents and businesses who have all experienced numerous unsatisfactory encounters with residents from Manalapan Manor. This facility needs to be shut down immediately.

This residential care facility located on State Highway Route 33 houses a population of New Jersey residents who are truly disadvantaged and caught in a system that robs them of their dignity and self-worth. These residents need residential care – often permanently - in facilities licensed by the NJ Department of Community Affairs as Residential Health Care Facilities. This atrocious facility located here in Manalapan named Manalapan (formerly Marianne) Manor is located at 327 Highway 33, Manalapan. It has a RHCF license – 1312-1007.

The Township, primarily through its Police, Emergency Medical Services and Health Departments, have struggled with issues relative to the management and care of residents at this facility for many years. The 50 or so residents at this facility are housed in a manner that should not be acceptable with anyone. The Township has made it very clear to the Division of Codes and Standards and the Bureau of Rooming and Boarding House Standards of our concerns with the conditions of the facility and the management. The Division and Bureau essentially hide behind the existing regulations and insist there is nothing more that can be done to improve the conditions. Following are some pertinent details:

1. Three residents of Marianne Manor have been killed by motor vehicles in front of the facility on State Highway 33 since 2014 – one each in 2014, 2015 and 2016 - as they walk along or across the Highway to access retail stores in the vicinity.
2. A resident was found dead in the facility in 2012, and one of the secondary causes listed on the death certificate was malnutrition.
3. A resident was found dead due to a heroin overdose in the facility in 2016.
4. A resident suicide on June 13, 2019
5. For the period, July 1, 2019 – November 5, 2019, the Manalapan Police Department responded to 339 calls at the Manalapan Manor. These calls included multiple numbers

of - disorderly persons, missing person reports, EMS Support, assault, Mental Health/Suicide concern, and theft.

6. Additionally, the Manalapan Police Department responded to 56 calls during the same time period to the Walgreens business, 69 calls to the WaWa; (both located on Route 33 a ¼ mile to the east) for issues being created by Manalapan Manor residents on the property including disorderly persons, harassment, trespassing & suspicious persons.

In the summer of 2017, there was an ownership change and the situation has only gotten worse. The Township continues to receive multiple complaints daily from family members of persons living at the Manor, community members who interact on the site about unsatisfactory conditions, residents who live in the area and business owners and workers who are being harassed and mistreated by the residents of the facility.

Some examples of these complaints include residents having to forfeit their social security checks leaving them no money to spend or save to find housing on their own, multiple inoperative toilets at the same time, backing up sewage in bathtubs, infestations of cockroaches, bedbugs and flies, strong odors of cigarettes, insufficient food and generally dirty and un-clean conditions. The town is aware that there are community residents, so moved by the conditions of the residents who they see walking on Route 33, that they have self-organized supportive initiatives and have made it a mission to help the residents by taking them into their homes for dinners and donating clothing, games and food to the residents.

The residents of the facility are often wandering on the State Highway and dangerously panhandling in the middle of the road and at the local Wawa, Walgreens and CVS. They are putting themselves in danger and frightening residents who drive along the highway and are frequenting these places of business. This issue is effecting every facet of Manalapan – Police and EMS, residents, business owners, those who utilize local businesses and drive through the Township on State Highway 33.

Since 2013, Township representatives have met with DCA officials several times to air our concerns. In 2018, we met with Lieutenant Governor Oliver who was shocked at the condition of the facility. Videos of unsanitary conditions, residents being poorly cared for and interactions between residents and facility medical practitioners and interactions between ownership and DCA inspectors are available for review.

The Township believes there needs to be a better standard of facility maintenance, management and care than what is currently being expected and mandated. Further, the Township is particularly concerned that using a facility located on a four (4) lane highway with no median barrier, where traffic speed can be excessive, and where no sidewalks are available forcing the residents of this facility to the curb and breakdown lanes of the highway to access retail businesses – is only going to result in more very unfortunate situations involving passing motorists.

We had a full house at a recent community meeting about this topic as residents came together to air their very legitimate concerns and fears. The news media outlets have been notified and are being copied on this letter.

The only option the Township believes is viable now is for this facility to be shut down. The deplorable conditions for the residents of Manalapan Manor and the safety of our residents is paramount. The resources being wasted on this failing facility are often too much to quantify, as it is a constant cause for concern on so many levels. No human being should have to live like that. Residents of Manalapan should not have to fear driving down Route 33 and killing someone or driving into a panhandler.

We implore you for assistance in getting this facility shut down. We respectfully request you contact us for additional detailed information about this issue and we thank you in advance for any help you can provide to the residents of Manalapan, Monmouth County and the State of New Jersey.

Sincerely,

Mayor Susan Cohen - *Susan Cohen*

Deputy Mayor Jack McNaboe – *Jack McNaboe*

Committeewoman Mary Ann Musich – *Mary Ann Musich*

Township Administrator Tara L. Lovrich – *Tara L. Lovrich*

Police Chief Michael Fountain – *Michael Fountain*

CC: Lt. Governor Oliver; Bernard Raywood, Ricardo Morales, Tom Ertingu, Stefan Brandecker - DCA; Joe Strupp – Asbury Park Press; Steve Livingston – WABC TV; Mark Rossman- Greater Media News; News 12 NJ; Mahir Patel – Owner Manalapan Manor