

**Remarks of Mayor Noam Bramson**  
**Bethesda Housing Proposal**  
**July 8, 2008**

I recognize that this project is quite distinct from the senior housing development approved last month by the Council. Nonetheless, some of the comments I offered during the Shiloh vote in June also apply to this vote tonight. Rather than repeat those comments, I would simply refer those interested to my prior statement, which is a matter of public record.

With respect to the Bethesda proposal in particular, let me add that middle-class individuals and families, at about the median income level for Westchester, may be the segment of our population with the fewest quality housing options. For the most part, there are no public subsidies available to create middle-income housing, and absent such subsidies, market forces tend to drive prices higher than is affordable for the average purchaser. The Bethesda proposal is one of very few in Westchester that aims to serve this chronically under-served portion of our community.

This project, as has already been pointed out, does present a series of difficult planning challenges, and that is among the reasons it has been subjected to more than two years of intense discussion and revision. It is current, final form, however, it is in scale with its surroundings, which include the Joe Evans and Carrington Arms Apartments, it provides, at the City's insistence, all the parking required by zoning, without any variance, and it is specifically restricted to a middle-income target population.

For these reasons, and with the additional context offered last month, I vote yes.