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Date: Thursday, October 2, 2025 at 3:36 PM

To: Laesch, John <laeschj@aurora.il.us>

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Subject: Email to Aldermen on Lydia Home.

Dear Mayor Laesch,

I hope you are settling in well as you have begun your service as Aurora's new mayor. As we discussed, several weeks ago, Lydia Home is under contract to purchase my property at 998 Corporate Blvd., a 49,332 sq. ft. facility on 8.9 acres. Their purchase is contingent on obtaining a conditional use permit and text amendment from the City. I am scheduled to go before the Aurora Planning and Zoning Commission on October 8th, 2025. In light of that, I am sending you this email and copying the City Council Members. I will also be sending a copy to the Planning Commission Members.

Lydia Home is a respected organization with more than 110 years of experience serving children and families across Illinois. Their vision for Aurora is to establish a secure, residential treatment center for youth ages 12–21 who have suffered trauma, abuse, or neglect. These youth, all wards of the State placed through DCFS, will receive:

- Individual and group therapy by licensed clinicians*
- Psychiatric care, including on-site nursing and medication management*
- Specialized services such as occupational and art/movement therapy*
- Education provided by accredited Lydia Home school staff*

The ultimate goal is to stabilize and rehabilitate these children so they can return safely to foster families or their own homes.

This property is uniquely suited for such a program. It was originally entitled for special-needs residential care in 2011–2012 and expanded with unanimous City approvals in 2016. Over the years, I have invested nearly \$7 million to build and maintain the site as a purpose-designed residential treatment facility.

Because these children are considered “disabled” under the Federal Fair Housing Act, federal law obligates municipalities to make reasonable accommodations for facilities of this type. Lydia has retained attorney Andrew Kolb, who specializes in this area, to guide them through the zoning process.

Most importantly, Lydia brings a proven model, financial stability, and a commitment to excellence. They expect to create several hundred jobs in Aurora over the next two to three years, while restoring the site to its intended mission: providing high-quality care to vulnerable youth.

I respectfully ask for your support, and the support of the Plan Commission and City Council, in granting the text amendment and conditional use so that Lydia Home can bring this important work to Aurora.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Daniel T Dolan

PS: Below are brief bullet points that I believe are prudent for the upcoming public hearing on October 8th, 2025.

998 Corporate Blvd. – City of Aurora Approvals & Investment History

Property Overview

- 49,332 sq. ft. residential treatment facility on 8.9 acres
- Purpose-built for youth mental health and residential care

Key Approvals & Milestones

2011–2012

- Aurora Planning Commission and City Council approved zoning for an autistic & special needs mental health facility.
- Redevelopment agreement established, building remodeled for this use.
- Permanent Certificate of Occupancy granted (2012).

2015–2016

- Facility expansion from 38,400 to 49,332 sq. ft. to serve additional children.
- Unanimous approvals by Plan Commission, Planning & Development Committee, and City Council.
- New Certificate of Occupancy issued (2017).

2017

- Establishment of Special Service Area #190 to fund ongoing stormwater and infrastructure maintenance.

2021

- Council rescinded prior conditional use (after Sequel Youth ceased operations).
- Ordinance explicitly stated the property could be petitioned again for residential mental health uses.

Investment

- Nearly \$7 million invested in construction, renovation, and expansion over the past 13 years.
- Facility designed with classrooms, residential wings, gymnasium, kitchen, offices, and outdoor recreation.

Summary

- The site has a long history of unanimous approvals for residential mental health care.
- It was purpose-built and repeatedly invested in for the care of children with special needs and trauma.
- Lydia Home seeks to carry forward that mission with a proven program and stable operations.