



Des parents prennent l'initiative



Constellations asbl

Sterrenbeelden vzw



Project to set up a day center and an accommodation center in the Brussels region for handicapped adults with severe dependency needs

Project

Introduction

Since it was set up in 2001, Constellations has been fighting to get support centres built for mentally handicapped adults.

Constellations has already been successful with one project: opening of the first accommodation house since 10 years in the Brussels region. The new house is located Chaussée de la Hulpe in Watermael-Boitsfort and since last autumn it welcomes ten adults with a moderate to severe mental disability.

However, to deal with even the most urgent cases, 20 times more places are needed.

For 2 years we have been working on a second project aiming at setting up a day center and an accommodation center located in Etterbeek in the center of Brussels, each with a support capacity for 20 persons. This project is developing very successfully and very quickly:

- The College of Ministers of the Cocom has granted its agreement meaning subsidizing various stages of the project (we already have received a subsidy of 50.000€ to pay for part of the architect's fees).
- An option for a long-lease contract convention (sixty years) for the ground-plot has been signed. This will become a contract as soon as we obtain the urban planning permit.
- After receiving the agreement of the firemen authorities, the formal procedure for the planning permit has been effectively started on February 5. The official meeting with the City officials and the neighbours took place on March 10 and gave the green light to our project without any change.
- A press conference was given early March in the presence of Cocom Ministers Huytebroeck and Grouwels and of the Mayor of Etterbeek, Mr. De Wolf. This event met with great success.
- We have met and reached agreement with a team of professionals in order to elaborate the pedagogic project and the future management of the centers.
- We have just reinforced our team with the arrival of a construction expert who will manage for us the relation with the selected construction companies and particularly the cost issues

Our estimated contribution amounts to 900.000€ for construction and 300.000€ for equipment. After spending 90.000€, we have 480.000€ in cash and firm agreements for 130.000€. Our challenge is now to find 500.000€, of which 200.000€ will go for construction.

Our theatrical evening, organized on March 23, 2010 has benefited for the third time in a row from the high support of Her Majesty Queen Paola.

The second project

This new project will permit accommodation of 20 highly dependent mentally handicapped persons¹ and 20 persons in the day, thus 40 places actually created.

Our idea for the accommodation is to offer a real living environment, a house where mentally handicapped people live, yet are supervised by a team of educators, suitable for the level of independence. Suitable care will be offered to mentally handicapped, young adults who have left their parents but who are unable to live without supervision. In the best case scenario, the centre will be seen as a second family.

The addition of new Dutch-speaking members to the Board has enabled Constellations to broaden its approach, thus being representative of the whole Brussels population: the project will be open to persons of both linguistic communities.

Quality criteria for the accommodation:

- Human dimension: 3 or 4 accommodation units each with +/- 5 people ;
- 2 or 3 French-speaking units and 1 or 2 Dutch-speaking units according to needs at the time the house is opened ;
- Family-type accommodation with a shared management approach and participation in community life ;
- Organisation of space such that everyone feels "at home" ;
- Individual bedrooms or double, according to what the person wishes.
- Individual life project, outside activities (day center or other adapted welcoming places)
- Individual living project, outside activity (day centre or other adapted sites)
- Insertion in a dense social tissue allowing integration in the neighboring life.

Quality criteria for the day centre:

- Provide support to people living in the accommodation and people coming from outside
- Well aimed and personalized pedagogic project, respecting individual persons.

Infrastructure viewpoint

After several months of research and contacts with the public as well as private sectors in order a property available for a very long time, we have chosen a building site located in a block between rue Général Fivé and rue des Champs in Etterbeek.

Located in a quiet area near a sports facility with a swimming pool, shops and public transport, the site offers interesting possibilities for integration.

Two quite distinct buildings will be built on the land, +- 1000 m² are reserved for us. This area will be divided into three spaces, namely the housing (on the roadside), the day centre and a private garden. The total of the built surface area will be about 1500 m².

The plot would be assigned to us by a long lease 60 years contract convention. The ground rent will amount to 1450€ per month.

After receiving the agreement of the firemen authorities, the formal procedure for the planning permit has been effectively started on February 5. The official meeting with the City officials and the neighbours took place on March 10 and gave the green light to our project without any change.

¹ Any person who needs another person to carry out everyday tasks for survival and/or who needs another person to help with a life project is considered to be highly dependent. Bernard Ennuyer : "Les malentendus de la grande dépendance; de l'incapacité au lien social" Paris, Dunod, 2002

Work meetings are now being organised with engineers specialised in stability and special techniques in construction. We are working with the prospect of starting building in early 2011 with completion in September 2012.

Functional viewpoint

For this project our approach has evolved as regards the management of both houses. For strategic and efficacy reasons, we have decided the centers would be managed by Constellations. Daily management and attending to the handicapped persons will be taken up by a very experienced team of professionals. We have had the opportunity to meet a person disposing of all the necessary competences in the field of mental handicap and who will become the future general manager of our centers. This person and her team had the initial objective to manage their own project; they now join us to collaborate in ours.

We have just reinforced our team with the arrival of a construction expert who will manage for us the relation with the selected construction companies and particularly the cost issues.

Financial viewpoint

In February 2009 Constellations obtained agreement to its project together with a financial time-table from the College of Ministers of the Cocom as well as a subsidy granted to ensure the start-up of the project.

This agreement binds the College designated by the June elections, to start with a financial contribution, (we have already received 50.000€ for the pre building expenses), to pay 2.000.000€ for the construction, and afterwards to take care of functioning expenses.

As explained above Constellations has developed expertise in fund raising and has been able to set up a net of private sponsors (companies and private persons). Many sponsors have pledged to help us for that second project.

After successfully finishing the financing of the new house in 331 Chaussée de La Hulpe, and thanks to our yearly theatrical event, we have been able to start collecting funds for this second project.

Our financial participation amounts to 900.000€ for the infrastructure. To this date, we have spent 90.000€ for the lease of the ground, the architect's fee's and ground stability studies. We have 480.000€ in cash, 130.000€ which will be given to us when we have invoices to pay. Thus, in total we own 700.000€.

To note that the above include a new loan from the Delacroix Foundation for 50.000€. We need to start paying back this loan in 2013. This loan carries no interest and we pay back 20% each year from 2013 to 2017.

The equipment cost for the two centers is estimated at 300.000€. Thus we need to find in total the grand amount of 500.000€. We are confident we will find this amount with the proven generosity of our sponsors and the hard work we put to find new sources of money.

Apart from the strictly monetary aspect, some of our contacts are expected to continue providing Constellations with their technical, financial and legal expertise.

Our operating costs (a little under 5%) have been limited to the absolute minimum, such that virtually all the funds collected can be used for the project.

Constellations, a non-profit organisation holds a *Fondation Roi Baudouin* project account, enabling it to benefit from tax deductions for donations made to the Foundation in its name. We also have deductibility in France in the UK.

Conclusion

The key features of Constellations' project to build a day centre and accommodation centre are:

- it is based on a public-private partnership
- it is open to both linguistic communities
- Management will be secured by a competent professional team ;
- By creating 40 places (accommodation and day centre), Constellations will reduce by more than 20% the number of missing places in Brussels for mentally handicapped persons.

These points define our new project and give it its dynamics.

By demonstrating our ability to combine energies, design and develop action plans, and successfully carrying out concrete projects, we believe that Constellations deserves your support so that our project opens as soon as possible.

Exhibit 1

Tentative time table

February 2009	The College of Ministers of the Cocom grants its agreement meaning subsidizing various stages of the project
April 2009	Ground survey Start building planning by the architect.
May 2009	Building pre-planning approved by Cocom
June 2009	Building planning approved by Cocom
September 2009	First draft urban planning permit application registered with the city of Etterbeek/Brussels An option for a long-lease contract convention (sixty years) for the ground-plot has been signed
October 2009	An option for a long-lease contract convention (sixty years) for the ground-plot is signed on October 12 Start drawing up specifications sheets
November 2009	Meeting with the Etterbeek Mayor and our future neighbours on November 17. We receive the green light to proceed with our plans Approval of the firemen authorities Final urban planning permit application registered with the city of Etterbeek/Brussels
December 2009	Approval of the firemen authorities
February 2010	Final urban planning permit application registered with the city of Etterbeek/Brussels.
March 2010	Official meeting with the City officials and the neighbors. Green light received Discussion of pre-specification sheets with Cocom
May 2010	The Cocom receives the official specifications sheets
June 2010	Urban planning application received Agreement of the Cocom
August 2010	issue public tender
End September	Return of public tender and selection of builders
October 2010	Total file back at Cocom
End November 2010	Final approval by the College of Ministers of the Cocom
January 2011	Demolition: 2 months
March 2011	Start of construction (estimated to last 18 months)
August 2012	End of construction
December 2012	Opening

Avenue des Champs/Veldenlaan, Etterbeek (Brussels)

