

***Bellerose-Hillside, Bellerose-Commonwealth, Creedmoor, North Bellerose,
Queens Colony, & Rocky Hill Civic Associations***

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Bellerose Community Commentary on Assertions by ICCC & ICCC proponents

The civic associations of Bellerose, members of the Queens Civic Congress, announce the first Truth in a "Truth About...." series to correct any misinformation and false assertion perpetrated by the folks behind the Indian Community Cultural Center ("ICCC") proposal to build two nine-story towers on the part of the campus grounds of Creedmoor Psychiatric Center adjoining our community. The Bellerose-Hillside, Bellerose-Commonwealth, Creedmoor, North Bellerose, Queens Colony, and Rocky Hill Civic Associations join in this statement to correct misnomers and false claims by those who put personal agendas over a common goal shared in common by the overwhelming majority of Bellerose residents and neighbors in Floral Park, Glen Oaks, New Hyde Park and Queens Village. The first truth concerns the false claims that ICCC actually seeks to build affordable senior housing and had been working in the open on its project for almost a decade.

Since last Spring when ICCC representatives intentionally met with community leaders in small groups, they misled from the outset. They falsely claimed that South Asian seniors and the community at large were inadequately served by local senior services. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The larger community, including Bellerose became designated as a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) in early 2003. The NORC-WOW ("WithOut Walls"), a consortium of the Samuel Field Y and SNAP (Services Now for Adult Persons), developed in concert with the community and its elected officials, assists seniors to stay in their homes in the community. Most of the seniors in the community remain longer term residents.

The failure to engage the community at the outset concerning the construction of nine story towers makes the motives of those associated with the ICCC most questionable. The NORC-WOW project before it moved forward reached out to EVERY community and demographic in the community. SNAP and the Samuel Field Y serve seniors in CB13Q north. Further when ICCC did reach out to the community it apparently failed to disclose its plans and instead played up a project – one-story community center, etc. – that it never intended to implement.

The ICCC never disclosed an interest in anything other than a community center when it first sought the site. Neither the legislation or the legislative Memorandum in Support discussed plans beyond a community center. ICCC's development proposal came later after the authorizing legislation. From the outset the developers/ ICCC failed to disclose actual plans, lied to community reps about the scope of the proposal, its magnitude, and how developed the plans were, including Department of Buildings and Board of Standards and Appeals applications, and misrepresented the proposal in door-to-door outreach to the surrounding blocks. The so-called senior housing is anything but that as it is neither rental nor senior exclusive but would be some form of co-op or condo and allows children. The Zoning Resolution and Building Code still must be followed. In presentations at Community Board 13, ICCC's counsel represented, and certain communications of the organization assert, that housing has always been the goal. The failure to disclose that intent to develop over the 30 months since ICCC made its building applications makes clear an intent to misrepresent if not outright deceive.