



May 2, 2025

To Whom it May Concern,

On behalf of Central Florida Behavioral Health Network (CFBHN), we are proud to share our involvement in the Jersey Commons project and the opportunity to highlight this important work during the recent Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) conference in Chicago. I, Jason Saffels, had the opportunity to share the development of Jersey Commons during the Improving Housing Outcomes for High-Acuity Individuals session. While I was not a presenter, I was able to speak during the question-and-answer portion of the session to emphasize the project's progress and intended impact.

The session featured a panel of experts, including Rebecca Zangen, Chief Policy Officer at The Supportive Housing Network; Tess Sommer, Director of Strategy and Engagement at The Health and Housing Consortium; and Lauren Velez, Director of the Metro Team at CSH. The discussion focused on strategies to improve housing outcomes for individuals with high acuity needs. During the session, Rebecca Zangen shared that her organization is developing a Request for Applications (RFA) to expand supportive housing in the New York City area for this population. In response, I was proud to share that Florida has already launched a similar initiative through Florida Housing Finance Corporation's RFA 2022-210, titled Permanent Supportive Housing Focusing on Best Practices and Funding for Tenancy Supports and Resident Services Coordination for High Utilizers of Public Behavioral Health Systems. Through this opportunity, the Jersey Commons project received funding to develop a 65-unit apartment complex, with 15 units designated for individuals who are high utilizers of public behavioral health services.

Jersey Commons is distinctive in its approach to supportive housing as a community-driven solution. The project results from a strong partnership among Community Assisted Supported Living (CASL), Tri-County Human Services, Blue Sky Communities, the Polk County Homeless Coalition, and CFBHN. It integrates supportive housing services, behavioral health treatment, care coordination, and the involvement of a for-profit developer and the local homeless coalition. This coordinated model addresses complex needs through collaboration and sustained support.

In my opinion, no other presentation at the conference came close to showcasing a project with the same level of implementation or collaboration as Jersey Commons. The panelists were impressed to learn that this model is already in place and moving forward. Rebecca Zangen was interested in the details and plans to follow up with us regarding funding, planning, and executing the RFA and the Jersey Commons project.

CFBHN remains dedicated to advancing effective housing solutions for individuals with behavioral health needs. We are honored to participate in this meaningful initiative and look forward to sharing insights that may support similar efforts nationwide.

Sincerely,

Jason L. Saffels

Jason L. Saffels, MBA
Housing and Community Engagement Program Manager
jsaffels@cfbhn.org
Mobile: 813-614-1569

Alan Davidson, MA, LMHC
President and CEO
adavidson@cfbhn.org
Mobile: 813-924-8040



719 South US Highway 301, Tampa, FL 33619 • phone: 813-740-4811 fax: 813-740-4821 • www.cfbhn.org

Central Florida Behavioral Health Network is a Managing Entity contracted with the
Department of Children and Families