

**Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
New York Quarterly Meeting
Ministry and Counsel Committee (NYQM M&C)
15 Rutherford Place
The Little Meetingroom
New York, NY 10013**

190713-M&C/CQL Proposal for Social Work Consultation (Final DRAFT v.5)

June 28, 2019

Who we are:

There have been Quakers or Friends (Members of the Religious Society of Friends) in NYC continuously for more than 350 years. The administrative arm of the Religious Society of Friends in New York City is the Quarterly Meeting, which is composed of six worship communities, called Monthly Meetings. All told, more than 500 members and more than 1000 attenders come to regular weekly worship and activities. These Monthly Meetings are located as follows:

- 15th Street Monthly Meeting at 15th St. and Rutherford Place, Manhattan;**
- Manhattan Monthly Meeting (same address as above);**
- Brooklyn Monthly Meeting, 110 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn;**
- Flushing Monthly Meeting, 137-16 Northern Blvd.; Flushing, Queens;**
- Morningside Monthly Meeting, 490 Riverside Dr., Manhattan;**
- Staten Island Meeting (on Staten Island, with no permanent address).**

It is a diverse group, including young families, single adults, and an increasingly aging population. As our members age, we are keenly aware of wanting

to insure that people can remain with us, but many of our members find it difficult to secure affordable housing and services to age in place. As a religious community, we nurture and nourish the spirit, but also seek to support our members and deepen our community bonds through pastoral care; we have a limited capacity to provide direct services and want to find ways to best use existing community services. While we have no paid Ministers or pastoral care providers, within each meeting we do have ways to help each other. Our envisioned community can be seen as having elements of a naturally occurring retirement community (NORC) but without a specific place or boundary.

Several years ago, we set up a Committee (the former Working Group for a Concern for Quaker Living {CQL}) to consider how we can offer support and help our members remain vital and connected to our meetings as they age. In 2019, the work of this group has been taken under the authority and care of the New York Quarterly (Regional) Meeting Ministry and Counsel Committee (NYQM M&C) as a standing sub-committee; it builds on activities that are provided through New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM), which serves all of the meetings statewide. The NYYM Aging Resources Consultation and Help Program (ARCH) provides support for aging members, such as visitation and resources on essential documents, (e.g., health proxies, advance directives, et al). We wish to build on that effort, creating a program specific to NYC. We are also exploring affordable housing options for Friends who may need that to be able to remain in NYC. We have learned the importance of insuring that our work is intergenerational. Many younger Friends may be in need of service and support as well or can help others.

Mission Statement:

To support Quakers in their desire to remain affiliated with their respective Meetings, while continuing to live with dignity in NYC as they age. Provide information, and/or develop programs, which will nurture, stimulate, and engage Friends to continue to live healthy, productive lives.

Planning Study:

As a first step, we would like to learn from our community members what they might need to keep them living in NYC and active in our meetings. To do that, we would like to engage a consultant for a short-term assignment to outline a strategy and specific steps on how we can best conduct a needs assessment survey and how we can prepare a resource directory of services for the aged. The consultant, working with CQL, would develop a survey tool for our community members and a strategy and template for structured workshops or group meetings that can elicit needs information. As this is a way to communicate our mission, we would like the consultant to help us map out a communications strategy for meetings so we are promoting our work and build support simultaneously.

It is our expectation, based on conversations with social-work professionals that once this strategy is developed, a social-work school would be interested in providing supervision and student interns. We would also look to the consultant to develop a time-frame for implementation of the study, specifically providing guidance as to whether this can be achieved in one semester or two, and if one or two, how many students would be needed.

In the next phase, with this planning study to guide us, we would engage a field supervisor along with student interns to carry out the work. They would

conduct the survey, work-groups and prepare a resource guide. It is our hope that the resultant work of this team would be a report that outlines priority service needs and possible partnerships to address these needs (potential partners identified through the resource guide). We anticipate this may lead us as a Quarter to provide services by either hiring staff or by structuring relationships with existing agencies; but we can't proceed without an assessment, and some sense of our members willingness to use services which this work will provide us.

We hope to engage a consultant by mid-summer and that we can complete this initial phase by early fall.

To summarize, the consultant will prepare:

- Needs-assessment survey**
- Work-shop template and strategy to elicit interest and needs**
- Communications strategy**
- Timeline**
- Budget**

We would then seek a social-work team to implement this strategy.

Developments to date:

We have had interviews with three prospective consultants, each with years of experience in NYC social work, in developing relationships among agencies, in project/community development, and in working with student interns. We have also had numerous conversations with social-work professionals. We are very encouraged that this work, once thoughtfully planned, can be carried out by students and can lead to a workable social-service plan for our consideration. We anticipate that the cost for the planning proposal will be \$5,000. We

plan to select the consultant within the next few weeks, start the work in July, and complete the study by October, 2019. The study will be supervised by Joe Gosler, Joan Malin and Charlene Ray, members of the CQL sub-committee and seasoned management professionals; we will also work under the guidance of the committee clerk, Callie Janoff and NYQM M&C. Based on what we learn, and contingent on the study, we would hope to start the need assessments, working with a social-work school and student interns in January 2020.