

Federal government abandons plans to use Fairview for Diamond Princess COVID-19 positive passengers

COSTA MESA, CA – In a stunning late development, the federal government has filed a notice with the court that it no longer plans to place COVID-19 infected Diamond Princess passengers at Fairview.

“This is a victory for the citizens of Costa Mesa and Orange County,” Mayor Katrina Foley said. “But the government has not promised not to place future infected persons there, so the battle is not over. We will continue to ask the court to prohibit the government from using this completely inappropriate facility for housing people infected with a highly communicable and potentially fatal disease.”

At the direction of United States District Judge Josephine Staton, the City of Costa Mesa met Thursday Feb. 27 with state and federal agencies to attempt to obtain answers to key questions about how the Fairview Developmental Center can safely serve as an isolation site center for asymptomatic COVID-19 positive individuals.

Numerous questions remained after the three-hour meeting, resulting in the city seeking answers to additional questions regarding the scientific and medical basis for the selection of this site. The City and the state and federal agencies’ report on the outcomes of the meeting will be available on the City’s website at costamesaca.gov.

“After the three-hour meeting, we didn’t feel any closer to understanding the safety, security or patient plans for FDC and local hospitals in Orange County,” said Costa Mesa Mayor

Katrina Foley. "The majority of our 120 written questions, plus verbal follow up, were not answered with any specificity of the criteria used to select this non-military base site," she added. "We continue to question medical treatment plans, public health, public safety, the adequate infrastructure of the Fairview Development Center, from seismic safety to mechanical systems, as well as the cost to the taxpayers of Costa Mesa to protect our first responders and our community. Unlike all other 5 existing sites, this center is located in a densely populated neighborhood within walking distance to soccer fields, shopping, the fairgrounds and other major tourist destinations. We also question why the CDC is refusing to follow its own established effective scientifically based protocols requiring home isolation. This protocol protects everyone."

Judge Staton scheduled a hearing for Monday March 2 at 2 p.m. to hear from the parties, and to decide whether to leave her temporary restraining order in place.

The City filed legal action last week against the State of California after it learned federal and state officials were planning to use the Fairview Development Center to house and isolate individuals who have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus but do not require hospitalization according to CDC protocols.

"Throughout this ordeal, our top priority is the safety and security of this community and those who live in this region," said the mayor. "We continue to be troubled by the lack of information from the agencies we all need to trust to keep us safe. While the risk of infection is low, this is an international public health emergency and we need answers."

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Additional information about the City's legal filings are

available at www.costamesaca.gov as well as the City's social media channels: Facebook @CostaMesaCityHall, Twitter @CityofCostaMesa.