



**City Council**

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Dear Resident:

I am writing to clarify some areas of ongoing confusion and to answer some questions residents have raised about the proposed housing project on the VA Medical Center property.

The Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA) has posted a list of questions and answers from the neighborhood meeting they hosted on November 19<sup>th</sup> on their website ([www.nokomiseast.org](http://www.nokomiseast.org)). **NENA has also scheduled a follow-up meeting at 7 p.m. on December 16<sup>th</sup> at Morris Park.** I would like to answer a couple of the questions ahead of time so residents can go to the meeting with more information.

*Is the project a done deal? Are there any additional approvals needed for the project to advance?*

The project concept was approved by the Secretary of the Department of Veteran's Affairs. That approval allowed the developers to move forward with planning and seek community input. The housing proposal **has not received Congressional Approval.** In fact, the Enhanced-Use Lease proposal has not been reviewed by the Department of Veteran Affairs, which is the step that precedes submission to Congress. I have attached a flow chart of the enhanced use lease process to this letter to clarify the steps the housing proposal will go through before it can be built.

The 60-day Congressional comment period has been confused with a 60 day public comment period. Residents can continue to comment up to the point of a Congressional decision. **This means that the December 16<sup>th</sup> meeting will not be after public comment has closed.** Residents who want to make their opinions known should write a letter to Secretary Anthony Principi with copies to your federal representatives. The attachment also has contact information.

*Can there be an annual citizen review of the project? If so, how should it be set up?*

In a preliminary discussion, city staff indicated that the requirements can be put into legal documents signed by the city and the developer. This will provide a guarantee that the review will continue into the future. My proposal requires the developer to hold an annual meeting with neighboring residents, neighborhood association, City Council Member, County Commissioner, and VAMC staff to talk about problems related to the building and/or its tenants. Solutions to those problems will be put into writing and reported back to the elected officials who can then communicate with residents. If you have any specific suggestions for conditions or requirements that might improve the usefulness of an annual review, I would appreciate hearing them. Please contact me if you have any comments or suggestions.

Sincerely,

Sandy Colvin Roy  
Council Member, Ward 12