

# 12<sup>TH</sup> WARD UPDATE

Council Member Sandy Colvin Roy

December 2003

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## VAMC/ Veterans Housing Proposal Controversial

An affordable housing project just south of Minneapolis has raised concerns with neighbors near the VA Medical Center. The proposal for two new buildings south of 46<sup>th</sup> St. and east of Minnehaha Ave. received state bond money and additional funds from the Minneapolis Affordable Housing Trust Fund to be used for site improvements and/or renovation of historic buildings on Minnehaha Ave. The housing will be operated by Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) and Community Housing Development Corporation (CHDC) to help near-homeless, working adults.

The project provides permanent/long-term housing in 132 single occupancy units that will be available to low income (50% of metro median income or less) adults. At least 51% of the residents must be veterans. There is no limit on the number of veterans who can live in the facilities, but it must be open to other citizens who meet certain criteria. Any veterans with a history of alcohol or chemical dependency will have completed treatment and been sober for 90 days. All residents must have a verifiable, positive rental history, pass a criminal background check, have no history of violent behavior. Stable housing, afforded with a minimum wage job, is essential to keeping veterans out of emergency shelters.

A neighborhood meeting on November 19<sup>th</sup> gave residents the opportunity to ask the developers questions that were not answered at the October 15<sup>th</sup> public hearing. Concerns about safety for neighbors, building management, and community notification were expressed more than once by neighbors. The developers committed to looking at a larger percentage of veterans in the buildings. I proposed that the city contract require an annual meeting between residents and facility management about problems related to the development or its residents, with solutions reported to elected officials and the neighborhood group. By having this language in the formal agreement between the developers and the city, I feel the neighbors will have a long-term guarantee that the developers will have to listen and react to neighborhood concerns.

**Breaking News . . .** Congressman Martin Sabo called me on December 1<sup>st</sup> to say he secured \$750,000 in the HUD Appropriations bill to help the city pay for our current CSO efforts designed to keep raw sewage from getting into the Mississippi River. Thanks once again to our Congressman, Martin Sabo.

## Parking Solution for VA Medical Center Neighbors

Neighbors adjacent to the VA Medical Center have a long history of frustration over workers, patients, and visitors taking all of the parking on 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue. I have approached VA management as well as the residents on multiple occasions looking for a solution that would work for everyone. Two meetings in November finally got the result we were looking for when the VAMC Director Steven Kleinglass agreed to start a trial period for two weeks where they made repeated efforts to ask their employees not to park on the street. If the problem does not significantly improve, the VA will close the gate onto 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue, thereby removing easy access to the building and motivation to park outside their large parking lot. A pedestrian gate will be installed with controlled access to allow residents who live in the neighborhood to continue to walk to work. I am happy with the solution and want to thank the many neighbors who attended meetings and voiced their suggestions, as well as the VA Director for presenting a solution that works for all parties.

## Budget Moves Forward

The 2004 budget is awaiting City Council approval as it moved out of the Ways and Means Committee at the end of November. My position on the committee gave me an opportunity to focus on some issues important to the 12<sup>th</sup> Ward. I had three priorities entering the committee's budget mark-up sessions – to restore capital funding to neighborhood libraries in 2006-08, to reduce property taxes, and to restore at least some cuts made in street maintenance. The good news is I was able to restore capital funding for neighborhood libraries by moving money from other capital projects, including a new planning fund recommended by the Mayor. Community libraries are loved and used by citizens. I am very happy the funding for promised building improvements is back in place. I was not as successful on my second goal. Unfortunately, Council Member Johnson and I were in the minority on a vote to reduce the property tax levy by \$1,000,000. Residents repeatedly tell me how hard it is to keep up with their property tax and I am disappointed the committee did not support my position. I invite residents who are concerned about their property taxes to Truth in Taxation hearing in City Council Chambers on December 8<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m. Finally, work is still in process to restore funds needed for basic public works services. *one: 612-673-2212 – [Sandra.Colvin.Roy@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Sandra.Colvin.Roy@ci.minneapolis.mn.us)*

## EVENTS

### Truth in Taxation Public Hearing

City Hall, Room 317

Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.

### Lake Hiawatha Park Holiday Celebration

Lake Hiawatha Park, 27<sup>th</sup> Ave. S and East 44<sup>th</sup> Street

Tuesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

### Rotunda Restoration Holiday Celebration

City Hall Rotunda (4<sup>th</sup> Street Side)

Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 3 – 5:30 p.m. (program at 4:30)

### Night Before New Years Eve Party

Nokomis Community Center, 2401 E. Minnehaha Pkwy

Tuesday, December 30<sup>th</sup>, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

## MONTHLY NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS

### SENA Board Meeting

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 4000 28<sup>th</sup> Ave. S  
December 8<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.

For more information, visit [www.standish-ericsson.org](http://www.standish-ericsson.org)

### Longfellow Business Association

Oddfellows Building – 27<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Lake Street  
Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 p.m.

### NENA Board Meeting

3000 East 50<sup>th</sup> Street  
December 18<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.

For more information, visit [www.nokomiseast.org](http://www.nokomiseast.org)

### LCC Board Meeting

Longfellow Park  
December 18<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.

For more information, visit [www.longfellow.org](http://www.longfellow.org)

## Traffic Barrels Out, Planters In

Even though the area is outside our ward, I occasionally get questions about the orange traffic barrels in front of the Post Office at 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 31<sup>st</sup> Street. Public Works plans to replace the “temporary” barrels now in place with concrete planters. Although the planters will be supplied by Public Works, the neighborhood or local businesses will be responsible for planting and maintenance (the Longfellow Business Association is talking about providing some help). The projected timeline for planter installation is the end of January.

This is a short-term solution that will be replaced by future reconstruction of 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The current schedule has that work beginning in 2006, so planters will be a welcome change from the ugly orange barrels.

## Congressman Sabo Earmarks \$750,000 for Whitewater Park

The idea of a whitewater park just downstream from St. Anthony Falls came closer to reality with an additional \$750,000 coming to the project because of Congressman Sabo’s work in Washington D.C. The plans include new trails and parks along with a recreation of the natural whitewater rapids that existed long ago.

## File Police Reports Online

Minneapolis residents can now file police reports online (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/police/e-report/>). The Police Department developed the online reporting as a way to make it easier and faster for people to file police reports with the hope that fewer crimes will go unreported. An accurate picture of criminal activity helps the department work more effectively.

**The two most important criteria for online reporting are: you have no suspect information and you do not need an officer sent to your location for activity in progress. If there is an emergency or activity in progress, always call 911.**

The new online reporting service will take the following reports:

- Graffiti
- Damage to Property (Automobile).
- **Accidents should be reported to 911**
- Damage to Property (Other)
- Property Lost (No Crime)
- Theft from Motor Vehicle
- Theft (other). This does not include theft when unauthorized entry/burglary was involved.

## SNOW EMERGENCY

### EASY RULES FOR WINTER 2003-04

#### **9 p.m. to 8 a.m. (OVERNIGHT)**

- **Snow Emergency parking rules always begin at 9 p.m. on the day they are called**
- **DO NOT PARK** on either side of Snow Emergency Routes until the lanes are fully plowed to the curb

#### **Day 2 (8 a.m. to 8 p.m.)**

- **DO PARK ON THE EVEN SIDE** of regular streets or **EITHER SIDE OF SNOW EMERGENCY ROUTES.**
- **DO NOT PARK ON EITHER SIDE OF PARKWAYS** until they are fully plowed to the curb.

#### **Day 3 (8 a.m. to 8 p.m.)**

- **DO PARK ON ODD SIDE** of regular streets or **EITHER SIDE OF PARKWAYS SNOW EMERGENCY ROUTES.**
- **Snow Emergency ends at 8 p.m.**