



**Media Advisory – NAHC Addresses Council on Acceptable Water Street Development**

Contact: NAHC Vice President Bob Fischer ([rafischer1@aol.com](mailto:rafischer1@aol.com), 312-342-5959)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

(Naperville, Illinois, December 4, 2012) On behalf of the Officers and Board of Directors of the Naperville Area Homeowners Confederation, Thom Higgins, Associate Director of the Confederation, will address the Naperville City Council at its scheduled meeting tonight regarding the proposed redevelopment of Water Street.

In Thom's comments (see attached and below), the Confederation Board will call on Marquette to live up to the letter and spirit of the Water Street Vision Statement and revise their plan to reflect the height limitations stated within this guideline.

"From its inception five years ago, Marquette's proposals have always been controversial due to the many concerns that flow from the excessive height and density and its proximity to the Riverwalk," said Confederation President Dr. Bob Buckman. "It is time to recognize that major revisions to the plan must be made if this development is to live up to the promise this location holds."

Buckman continued, "Lastly, while we are in favor of redevelopment in the Water Street area, we are adamant that any financial considerations in exchange for the desired 125 additional parking spaces not occur unless it is absolutely guaranteed they will actually exist. Additionally, we are not in favor of extending any other forms of incentive linked to sales tax or hotel receipts as has been reportedly suggested by the developer."

**About the NAHC**

The Naperville Area Homeowners Confederation serves our community by providing a means to foster communication between member associations, homeowners, and government officials. Through communication, networking, and neighbors-helping-neighbors, the Confederation is the vehicle through which we, as homeowners and residents, can stay abreast of community affairs and generate a positive influence on our community's future. For more information, visit the NAHC website at [www.napervillehomeowners.com](http://www.napervillehomeowners.com).

Attachment: Higgins Comments to City Council

## **Thom Higgins Proposed 12/4/2012 Comments to Naperville City Council on Behalf of the NAHC Officers and Board**

We are here tonight to, yet again, discuss another revision to a proposal that itself has gone through three major concepts. While our hope was that Marquette would present something that all of Naperville can embrace, and while we applaud their continued work, the facts remain that the hotel building is still taller than the 2007 plan, the traffic problem is unabated, and the Riverwalk remains overtly commercialized. This does not represent the major re-thinking that is required.

So, tonight, the Confederation is challenging Marquette to live up to the spirit and the letter of the Water Street Vision Statement. Further, we are asking staff and city council members to hold them to this document - which was created in November 2006, at some expense to us all, as a guide for development in this area.

We refer specifically to Consideration 8: *Consideration shall be given for predominately 2 story or taller buildings where appropriate. Taller structures of 3 to 5 stories may be suitable if a minimal impact is imposed upon the surrounding area.* Our balloon experiment and the fire truck ladder that Councilman Wehrli arranged, amply illustrated the significant impact these very tall structures would have if constructed. No one can credibly claim that these proposed structures would have a minimal impact.

Therefore, tonight we are recommending Marquette return at a future date with a plan that features no more than three stories along the Riverwalk and no more than five stories on the south side of Water Street. This plan has a number of attributes:

- It lives up to the spirit and letter of the Water Street Vision Statement.
- The lower height along the Riverwalk will reduce the development's impact on the Riverwalk as well as the adjacent downtown area: a key concern of an overwhelming number of residents.
- Lower heights translate into fewer cars, and thus, less traffic and congestion.
- We hope that it will also allow there to truly be 125 additional parking spaces provided, instead of the current plan that needs to receive variances and low-ball estimates to achieve that number. Presently, we have serious concerns that there will actually be 125 additional spaces. We do not believe that any financial considerations such as vacating the 9' ROW and the benefits from the TIF should be available until it is certain that these additional spaces will actually exist.

We suspect the response will be our plan is not economically feasible. To that we remind everyone that the remaining parcel owned by Steve Rubin on the Riverwalk at Water and Main has a concept that is 3 floors. Also, Moser built the Northern Trust Building (we assume at a profit) at 3 floors as well. It can be done - if there is a will.

In closing, we want to see the area developed; we want to be here speaking in favor of approval. Historically, the City of Naperville has done a good job balancing competing interests in the downtown. It's time for that care and concern be applied to this project by listening to our own planning documents and the vast majority of our residents.

Yes, please approve redevelopment of this area, but please make sure it is a development that all of Naperville can be proud of.