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3 **REGULAR MEETING**
4 **OF THE**
5 **VADNAIS HEIGHTS PLANNING COMMISSION**
6 **APRIL 15, 2020**

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11 **OPEN MEETING AND WELCOME**

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13 Chairperson Evan Cordes called the Regular Meeting of the Vadnais Heights Planning
14 Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. on April 15, 2020.

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22 **ROLL CALL**

23 Evan Cordes, Chairperson	Present
24 Linda Bigelbach	Present
25 Edward Caillier	Present
26 Brian Carnes	Absent
27 Curt Cooper	Present
28 Martin Jokinen	Present
29 Joseph Stumph	Absent
30 Jerry Moynagh, First Alternate	Absent
31 Terri Dresen, Second Alternate	Absent

32
33 Also present: Kevin Watson, City Administrator; Nolan Wall, Planning/Community
34 Development Director; Jeff Melcoch, Cable Producer.

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48 **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

49 Upon motion by Commissioner Cooper, seconded by Commissioner Jokinen, it was

50 “RESOLVED, to approve the April 15, 2020, Regular Meeting Agenda as presented.”

51 Ayes – 5 Nays – 0

52 The motion carried.

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72 **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

73 Chairperson Cordes opened the floor to the public at 7:02 p.m. for questions and comments on
74 items not on the agenda.

75 As no one wished to address the Commission, Chairperson Cordes closed the meeting to the
76 public at 7:02 p.m.

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100 **CONTINUE PUBLIC HEARING**

101 A. Case 20-003: At Home Apartments, LLC – Rezoning, Final Planned Unit Development
102 Plan, Site Plan Review at Unaddressed Parcel at County Highway 96/McMenemy Street

53 Chairperson Cordes reconvened the public hearing from March 24 at 7:03 p.m. and stated emails
54 had been received and that the Commission had reviewed all public comments received.
55

56 Planning/Community Development Director Wall stated copies of formal email comments
57 received by staff as of April 9 concerning the proposed development and were forwarded and
58 additional emails submitted today were printed for each member.
59

60 Chris Messerly, 317 Timberline Trail, said he and his family have been long-time residents of
61 Vadnais Heights and feel the project is a threat to public safety with regard to traffic safety,
62 adding traffic accidents were the number one cause of death per the CDC. He shared concerns
63 about taking a left onto McMenemy with current traffic and said this project would add much
64 more traffic with the a projected additional 1,000 vehicles per day and create further congestion.
65 He said that he feels that the City is ignoring the volume increase and spoke about the need to
66 identify the risks and asked that the City do something to address those risks. He suggested the
67 possibility of closing McMenemy as one option and while there would be a cost it would not be
68 a cost of life or serious injury.
69

70 Heather Gustafson, 99 Southwoods Drive, said this development was a hot button issue in her
71 neighborhood and she would like more information from the applicant regarding the project and
72 commented how the City should listen more to the residents as they feel they have been ignored.
73 She asked if housing would address all income levels and asked about rent and income
74 requirements and then asked about the process for the Metropolitan Council's approval.
75

76 As no one else wished to address the Commission, Chairperson Cordes closed the public hearing
77 at 7:15 p.m.
78

79 Leanna Stefaniak, At Home Apartments, addressed the questions on income requirements stating
80 that the project was designed for general occupancy with no demographic limitations such as
81 seniors, and explained applicants incomes would need to be three times the monthly rent. She
82 noted that at \$2/square foot a 700-square foot unit would be \$1,400 per month.
83

84 Commissioner Caillier referred to the Oakwood Terrace and McMenemy intersection and asked
85 for input provided by Ramsey County or staff on traffic impacts. Wall said staff received a
86 response from Ramsey County regarding Mr. Messerly's concerns about how they intend to
87 evaluate that intersection should the development be approved which included restriping and
88 signal timing improvements but that the County would first have to see what the impacts would
89 be before any changes were made. He said since these were both County roads it is not the City's
90 jurisdiction but noted that the City does collaborate with and work with the County to include
91 recommendations for improvements but they are not recommending any additional
92 improvements at this time outside of what has been included in the packet.
93

94 Commissioner Caillier asked about Oakwood Terrace and if the City would consider restrictions
95 around Oakwood Terrace such as northbound turn restrictions onto McMenemy. Wall said that
96 could occur in collaboration with the County and neighborhood, adding a left-hand turn will be
97 an issue regardless of the outcome of this project.
98

99 Chairperson Cordes asked about comments made regarding closing this intersection. City
100 Administrator Watson referred to comments regarding the potential closing of this intersection
101 that were made which laid out extremes of options to mitigate the concerns neighbors had but
102 added that any decisions with Oakwood/McMenemy would have to be collaborated with the
103 County, adding there were no proposals from the County to close the intersection at this time but
104 modifications would be good over time.

105

106 Commissioner Bigelbach asked about the Metropolitan Council's process for approval. Wall
107 explained the Council approved the land use amendment earlier this year and noted the process
108 is taking longer with the Metropolitan Council but they approved the amendment through their
109 land use committee and will be meeting as a full Council to review and make final
110 recommendations for any changes. He explained the tracts with the first concept as a PUD and
111 land use amendment with no action needed for the PUD but for the land use amendment which
112 was approved by the City Council, pending Metropolitan Council final approval. He then
113 outlined next steps that included rezoning to the PUD district, final PUD plan, and site plan
114 review of the development which was separate from the concept review process.

115

116 Upon motion by Commissioner Caillier, seconded by Commissioner Bigelbach, it was

117

118 "RESOLVED to approve the proposed rezoning, final planned unit development plan, and site
119 plan requests, based on the following findings of fact:

120 1. The City Council has already approved the required comprehensive plan amendment to
121 re-guide the subject property from Office-Business to Mixed Use and provided comments
122 on the Concept PUD Plan.

123 2. The proposed development allows for the following:

124 a. Multi-family residential development that meets the current market demands.

125 b. Additional housing units to assist in meeting the 2040 population/household
126 forecasts.

127 c. A range of housing choices in terms of style, size, location, tenure and cost.

128 d. A balanced housing supply with housing available for people at all income levels.

129 e. A variety of housing types for people in all stages of the life-cycle.

130 3. The proposed development is compatible with other surrounding uses and, through
131 thoughtful design, provides appropriate transitions/buffers and access that mitigates
132 potential impacts.

133 4. The proposed development is consistent with the applicable density ranges.

134 5. The proposed development is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Planned Unit
135 Development District by encouraging zoning flexibility that enhances the project without
136 negatively affecting surrounding land uses, natural resources, or the public.

137 6. The flexibility being requested as part of the Planned Unit Development process is
138 justified and allows for reasonable development of the subject property.

139

140 Subject to the following conditions:

141 1. The proposed comprehensive plan amendment approved by the City Council, as in
142 Resolution 20-01-016, shall be approved by the Metropolitan Council, in accordance with
143 the required procedures.

144 2. A development agreement between the applicant, and all others with interests in the
145 subject property, shall be entered into with the City, to be recorded at the applicant's cost
146 with the offices of the Ramsey County Recorder and/or Register of Titles, prior to
147 issuance of a building permit.

148 3. Building permits shall be submitted for administrative review/approval, prior to
149 commencement of any construction activities on the subject property.

150 4. Construction shall be completed and ready for occupancy according to the approved plans
151 and specifications within one (1) year following issuance of the building permit, unless
152 within that time an extension is granted by the City Council as part of the development
153 agreement.

154 5. A Fire Certificate of Occupancy shall be obtained annually from the Fire Department by
155 the responsible party, in compliance with the City Code.

- 156 6. A sign permit shall be submitted for administrative review/approval, prior to any sign(s)
157 being installed on the subject property.
- 158 7. The applicant shall work with the City to erect a city monument/gateway sign at the corner
159 of the McMenemy Street/County Highway 96 intersection.
- 160 8. If construction of the proposed development has not commenced within twelve (12)
161 months from effective date of the approval ordinance granting the proposed rezoning, the
162 City Council shall consider commencement of proceedings to rezone the subject property
163 back to the original classification, in compliance with the applicable procedures and with
164 notice to the property owner/applicant.
- 165 9. A portion of the parking near the front of the apartment building shall be marked as visitor
166 parking.
- 167 10. Ground-mounted mechanical units and building utility areas shall be adequately screened
168 by plant material and/or fencing and shall not obstruct fire department connections or
169 hydrants, to be administratively reviewed/approved as part of the building permit.
- 170 11. Existing vegetation proposed to be preserved shall be done so in compliance with the
171 applicable requirements of Chapter 38, Article IV, Section 601(11) of the City Code.
- 172 12. Trash/recycling containers housed within the building's underground parking garages are
173 only permitted to be stored outside on a temporary basis to be emptied.
- 174 13. Trash/recycling containers and dog-waste stations shall be provided around the exterior
175 of the development for use by residents and visitors.
- 176 14. The applicant shall provide an emergency cross-access easement to the adjoining property
177 to the east, to be shown on the site plan as part of the development agreement, and
178 recorded by document at the applicant's cost with the offices of the Ramsey County
179 Recorder and/or Register of Titles, prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
- 180 15. Exterior off-street parking stalls shall not be used for parking/storage of boats, trailers, or
181 recreational vehicles.
- 182 16. Compliance with the conditions included in the Consulting City Engineer's
183 memorandum, dated February 28, 2020.
- 184 17. Compliance with the conditions included in the Fire Technician's memorandum, dated
185 March 2, 2020.
- 186 18. Compliance with the conditions included in the VLAWMO memorandum, dated March
187 13, 2020.
- 188 19. Compliance with the conditions included in the Director of Public Works/City Engineer
189 memorandum, dated March 13, 2020.

190
191 Chairperson Cordes spoke about comments received on building height and how no apartment
192 buildings were higher than three stories as it would be the highest in the City.

193
194 Commissioner Bigelbach referred to the proposed landscape plan which was different than the
195 County Road E and Centerville Road project and said this site was flatter and how that building
196 appears taller because of the hill. She said the plans show an attractive development and she
197 thanked the applicant for addressing concerns from the beginning and how this project would add
198 value to the surrounding area.

199
200 Commissioner Cooper said the townhomes were supposed to match roof elevations to give it the
201 same look throughout. Pete Keely, Collage Architects, explained the roof height is 28 feet at the
202 front and because apartments are so far back the line of sight blocks the view from McMenemy.

203
204 Commissioner Cooper asked for comparisons to the IC Systems building nearby. Ms. Stefaniak
205 said that she believes that building was 54-57 feet and their project is 54 feet to the mid-point of
206 the gable, so approximately the same.

208 Commissioner Caillier said the height issue was site specific and with this property having an
209 apartment adjacent to a commercial area he did not have concerns about height as the project was
210 far enough away from the current single-family homes.

211
212 Chairperson Cordes referred to traffic and safety concerns and reiterated we cannot do anything
213 outside changes to Oakwood Terrace. Wall said that was not entirely true as some changes were
214 included to the roadways and if the Commission felt differently he would return and ask for
215 reconsideration but staff feel comfortable with the recommendations being made today and would
216 rely on the County to come back with recommendations to implement.

217
218 Commissioner Caillier encouraged the City to enter into whatever collaboration would be needed
219 to make changes on Oakwood Terrace.

220
221 Chairperson Cordes agreed and said we need to push the County to restripe and redo signal
222 timings based on resident input as it will be necessary as this project is completed.

223
224 Commissioner Cooper suggested another signal on McMenemy be considered to allow for two
225 paths of traffic, left and right out of the complex, for an additional safety control measure. Wall
226 said that staff has had those discussions with the County before this project but noted that
227 Highway 96 is for moving traffic and adding more access points has a domino effect across the
228 entire regional roadway system.

229
230 Chairperson Cordes commented about the recommendation for 163 trees and how the applicant
231 had only 112 trees and that additional trees were not included in the conditions to increase
232 screening coverage. Wall explained that City Code requires four standards for minimal planting
233 and would always be the greater amount and stated based on square footage At Home would be
234 required to plant 302 trees but based on the number of units they would be required to plant 163
235 trees and how staff recommended the landscape plan be accepted at 112 trees because the existing
236 drainage and utility easement has many trees that were not inventoried but would count towards
237 the 163. He said that since they trees are being preserved staff felt additional trees were not
238 necessary as this was not a dense site and too many trees could be a concern and that this number
239 offered the appropriate amount of screening.

240
241 The motion carried.

242
243 Wall noted the process included an additional public hearing to be held by the City Council on
244 May 5 and that staff would adjust the process as necessary to comply with any Stay at Home
245 order.

246
247 **NEXT MEETING**

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249 Planning/Community Development Director Wall said the next Planning Commission meeting
250 would be held on April 28, 2020.

251
252 **ADJOURN MEETING**

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254 Chairperson Cordes adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

255
256 Respectfully submitted,

257
258 Cathy Sorensen, *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*

259

From: [Chris Messerly](#)
To: [VHPlanningCommission](#)
Subject: Fwd: Emailing: safety problem (1).pdf
Date: Monday, March 30, 2020 11:04:55 AM
Attachments: [safety problem \(1\).pdf](#)

Caution: This email originated outside our organization; please use caution.

Re: At-Home High Density Rental

Complex Dear Planning Commission

Members:

I attach a letter sent to the City Council in February. To the best of my knowledge, the Council has chosen to do nothing to assess the traffic safety harm that will be caused by At-Home's high density rental complex.

If this complex is to be built, one suggestion to lessen the harm to public safety is to require all vehicles going to and from the rental complex to use Oak Grove Parkway to access Highway 96. In other words, cars and trucks going to and from the complex would be prohibited from using McMenemy. Vehicles leaving the complex would be required to turn left on Oak Grove Parkway (right turn prohibited) to Highway 96 and vehicles going to the complex would be required to do so on Oak Grove Parkway via Highway 96 (i.e., no left turn from McMenemy to Oak Grove Parkway).

While this plan will do nothing to lessen the present traffic burden and safety risks on McMenemy between Highway 96 and Oak Grove Parkway, it would hopefully reduce the threat of injury and death, particularly to those attempting to enter McMenemy from Oakwood Terrace.

Chris Messerly

February 24, 2020

Re: High Density Rental Complex is a Safety Risk to the Public

Dear Mayor Gunderson and City Council Members:

Your approval of At-Home's high density rental complex at the southeast corner of Highway 96 and McMenemy Street presents an unreasonable risk of injury and death to the public; most notably, people attempting to enter McMenemy Street from Oakwood Terrace. (This is important to a significant number of residents because it is our only direct access to and from our so-called "Oaks of Vadnais" neighborhood.)

This area is presently unsafe to motorists for three reasons: the proximity of McMenemy Street's intersections with Oakwood Terrace and Highway 96, the hill on McMenemy south of Oakwood Terrace, and confusing and inadequate lane configurations.

The distance between Oakwood Terrace and Highway 96 is presently unsafe and in violation of Minnesota's Traffic Safety Fundamental standards. Our state sets safety standards for minimum sight distances at intersections. See *Traffic Safety Fundamentals Handbook*, Minnesota Department of Transportation, Office of Traffic, Safety and Technology (Rev., June 2015). Minimum sight distances are required to allow motorists the time to safely enter an intersection. Failure to have adequate sight distances deprives motorists of the time to safely enter an intersection, thus increasing the likelihood of injuries and death from crashes.

"The actual length of the recommended distance is a function of the major street operating speed." *Id.* at C-29. Here, the "major street" is McMenemy. The speed limit on McMenemy is 40 miles per hour. According to *Traffic Safety Fundamentals*, a **minimum sight distance is 475 feet** (providing a motorist eight seconds to see oncoming traffic).

Id. (It is important to note that even this minimum distance is *inadequate and unsafe* given the complex nature of McMenemy's lane configurations and its hill to the south of Oakwood Terrace. See below.)

However, the distance between McMenemy and Highway 96 is only **255 feet**¹ (measured from curb apexes). Thus, motorists attempting to enter McMenemy from Oakwood Terrace do not have a safe time interval to enter the intersection.

¹ Motorists attempting to enter McMenemy from Oakwood Terrace cannot see vehicles turning south on McMenemy from eastbound Highway 96 until they are about 255 feet away. Those vehicles turning south on McMenemy from westbound 96 (at a higher rate of speed due to the larger turning radius) likewise cannot be seen due to northbound traffic stopped on McMenemy to turn east or west on Highway 96.

90382956.1

The inherent lack of safety to motorists is further aggravated by the limited sight distance looking *south* on McMenemy from Oakwood Terrace. This is because vehicles traveling north on McMenemy travel *uphill* as they approach Oak Grove Parkway. In fact, those vehicles do not crest the hill until *after* they pass Oak Grove Parkway about 250 feet from Oakwood Terrace. Viewing northbound vehicles on McMenemy is further obstructed by traffic going south on McMenemy.

The unsafe nature of the proximity of McMenemy's intersections with Highway 96 and Oakwood Terrace is made worse by the lane configurations. In the 255 feet on McMenemy between Highway 96 and Oakwood Terrace, there are four lanes (northbound left turn, northbound right turn, and two lanes southbound). On McMenemy south of Oakwood Terrace, there are abruptly only two lanes.

Vehicles turning south on McMenemy from eastbound Highway 96 turn into that most westerly southbound lane. Also, drivers turning south on McMenemy from westbound Highway 96 know that they are legally entitled to turn into the far (most westerly) lane on McMenemy. See *Appeals court: Minnetonka driver not wrong to go wide right while making left turn*. Minneapolis Star Tribune, 2/20/20. (Even before this was publicized, vehicles regularly turned into that lane.)

The problem is that the McMenemy's most westerly southbound lane between Highway 96 and Oakwood Terrace is *only 151 feet long*. It then abruptly ends in what traffic engineers refer to as a "lane drop." Once that lane disappears, it becomes a right turn only lane to Oakwood Terrace. That right turn lane is only 104 feet long. Drivers do not have the time to recognize the lane drop. As a result, vehicles continuing south on McMenemy from Highway 96 travel *through* some or all of the short right turn lane at Oakwood Terrace despite the fact that they are continuing south on McMenemy.

Present congestion aggravates an already unsafe situation. Ramsey County, in a November 18, 2019 letter to Mr. Wall, told the City that northbound traffic on McMenemy already regularly backs up *south* of Oakwood Terrace and that the "potential for rear-end crashes at this location exists."²

Traffic engineers refer to "decision sight distances," which relate to drivers needing time to "make complex decisions, when information is difficult to perceive or when unexpected or unusual maneuvers are required." See MnDOT Road Design Manual, 2-5.08.03 (2012). It is well known that sight distances must be even greater in complex situations "such as lane drops." *Id.*

For vehicles wishing to turn in either direction from Oakwood Terrace onto McMenemy, this makes it nearly impossible to predict if the southbound vehicles on

McMenemy plan to turn right on Oakwood Terrace or continue south on McMenemy.

²Crash data dramatically underestimates the number of crashes in this area. I have driven through this intersection more than 25,000 times in the past 34 years and I have seen countless accidents and close calls that were not likely reported to authorities.

90382956.1

Combining this confusion with the limited sight distances to both the north and south makes it hazardous for vehicles to enter McMenemy from Oakwood Terrace. Motorists have too little time to safely judge gaps between northbound, southbound and turning (?) traffic on McMenemy. Under these circumstances, there is no amount of traffic re-engineering that can make this intersection safe for motorists.

By approving this traffic configuration many years ago, the City created this unsafe condition for its residents. Now, despite being warned of safety hazards during your January 7, 2019 public meeting, you have approved a zoning change to pave the way for a high density rental complex of 16-18 building and 180 units which will increase daily traffic by more than 1000 vehicles.

Every one of those vehicles will be *required* to use northbound McMenemy to gain access to westbound Highway 96 (because the other end of Oak Grove prohibits access to westbound Highway 96). Also, all vehicles westbound on Highway 96 will be *required* to use southbound McMenemy to access the complex (because no left turn is permitted from Highway 96 onto Oak Grove).

The January 29, 2020 *Vadnais Heights Press* reported on page one that the City Administrator “cautioned the council against considering existing and potential traffic issues near the site as reasons to deny the application. Regardless of the development scenario on the subject property, traffic in the area will increase . . .” Such advice is dangerous and ill advised. That is like saying: “You should ignore the consequence of At-Home’s proposed development because it will not injure or kill any more people than other developments will.”

The City Code mandates that the “planned unit development zoning district (PUD) procedures are here set forth in order that the public . . . safety . . . be furthered . . .” Ch. 38, Div. 15, Sec. 38-483. However, by approving this high density rental complex and the increased congestion that necessarily comes with it, you have chosen to further aggravate this unsafe condition and place the public at an increased risk of injury and death. Your decision, without any safety study, amounts to a deliberate disregard for the safety of Vadnais Heights’ citizens and those who work and visit here. There are significant limitations to governmental immunity when the City is aware of a threat to public safety and chooses to ignore it. Your refusal to take reasonable steps to assess the safety hazards to the public places the City at risk for liability, the cost of which will be borne by the residents.

90382956.1

I understand that my opinion may receive no more respect that you gave to the unanimous vocal position of your constituents or the near unanimous conclusion of our Planning Commission, but I just want to make this part of the public record for future reference.

Sincerely,

Chris Messerly

Chris Messerly
317 Timberline Trail Vadnais
Heights, MN 55127

90382956.1

From: noreply@civicplus.com

To: [Nolan Wall](#)

Subject: Online Form Submittal: Public Input: At Home Apartments/Townhomes Project

Date: Sunday, March 29, 2020 11:17:01 AM

Caution: This email originated outside our organization; please use caution.

Public Input: At Home Apartments/Townhomes Project

Caution: This email originated outside our organization; please use caution.

Please submit your public comments regarding the At Home Apartments/Townhomes Project. All comments will be read in to the record at the Planning Commission Meeting on Thursday, April 2.

First Name Janice and Mike

Last Name Weum

Address 4488 Foothill Trail

City Vadnais Heights

State Minnesota

Zip Code 55127

Public Comment We are submitting this comment in favor of the proposed rezoning and PUD plan to allow for the residential development proposed by At Home Apartments. The Staff Presentation on March 24th shows a strong case for the changes and it appears neighborhood concerns have been addressed. The units are attractive, and the buffer landscaping and trail connections will be a positive addition to the neighborhood. We appreciate the developer's commitment to bringing a residential alternative to the site.

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Craig and Claire Moritz
244 Meadowood Lane

*Vadnais Heights, MN 55127
651-490-3019*

April 12, 2020

Mr. Nolan Wall,
Planning Commission Members,
Mayor Gunderson,
City Council Members
800 East County Road E
Vadnais Heights, MN 55127

Re: Rezoning, Final Planned Unit Development (PUD) Plan, and Site Plan Review SE
Quadrant - Highway 96 and McMenemy Street by At Home Apartments, LLC
Planning Case 20-003

Dear Mr Wall, Mayor Gunderson and City Council Members,

This letter is intended for the meeting on April 15th. In the current environment, attending “public” meetings is not practical for us older folks and our comments are restricted to letters and email that we hope you will properly consider.

We are in general agreement with the updated project plans and At-Home is doing a good job of addressing concerns. However, we are still very concerned about the proposed 4-story height of the apartment building and continue to object to that part of At Home’s proposed development as we have stated in previous correspondence.

As stated previously, there is no apartment construction in Vadnais Heights greater than 3 stories that we know of and minimal apartment construction of greater heights in neighboring communities. On a drive down Highway 96 from White Bear Lake to I-35W, we did not find any buildings taller than 3 stories. A drive up I-35E from County Road E to Highway 96 now shows the Aster Meadows project towering over the western sound walls since the building topped out and a similar visual is apparent when driving north on Centerville Road or east on County Road F due to site elevation changes and the appearance of the building.

Approval of a 4-story apartment building will set a precedent for this type of construction anywhere within the City without proper consideration or public policy debate other than the Aster Meadows objections that apparently were short lived and now visually obvious from the 3-story construction being completed.

Now that the plans are more complete (although still visually misleading in our opinion), we determined the following:

*Rezoning, (PUD) Plan, and Site Plan Review
At Home Apts - Highway 96/ McMenemy
April 12, 2020*

- The existing elevations at the SW, NW, NE, and SE corners of the property are EL. 917, 921, 920, and 930 respectively.

- The proposed apartment garage floor elevation is EL. 922 and the proposed first floor (ground floor) elevation is E1 933.
- **The apartment building first/ground floor is approximately 10'-11' higher than the town house first floor elevations on the west and south west side and as much as 16' higher than the roads in the southwest corner and 12'-13' higher than Highway 96.**

In our opinion, the proposed 4-story building will visually present itself as a 5+ story building height from the southwest, west, and north sides given the proposed grading of the property and will only look like a 4-story building from the office park to the east and southeast where it least matters. While a 3-story building would look taller as well, the precedent for 3-story buildings is at least clear and allows for more flexibility in grading that can still result in a tall appearance.

In any case, the proposed height is without precedent in Vadnais Heights and will appear to be much taller when constructed, something the renderings do not accurately depict and are misleading to the casual reader of such documents. We had hoped that Aster Meadows had set a precedent for such projects but that does not seem to be the case and every project is subject to the whims of the City Council as opposed to a zoning plan or other such building constraints determined on a consensus basis over time.

Thank you for your consideration of our request to limit the proposed apartment building construction to 3-stories for the reasons stated. Please feel to contact us at any time.

Sincerely yours,

Craig Moritz, PE (retired)
Claire Moritz

From: noreply@civicplus.com

To: [Nolan Wall](#)

Subject: Online Form Submittal: Public Input: At Home Apartments/Townhomes Project

Date: Tuesday, April 14, 2020 5:55:35 PM

Caution: This email originated outside our organization; please use caution.

Public Input: At Home Apartments/Townhomes Project

Caution: This email originated outside our organization; please use caution.

Please submit your public comments regarding the At Home Apartments/Townhomes Project. All comments will be read in to the record at the Planning Commission Meeting on Wednesday, April 15.

First Name Regan

Last Name Carlson

Address 3935 Elmwood St.

City Vadnais Heights

State MN

Zip Code 55127

Public Comment Originally, my preference for the land use at this site was to keep it slated for business park development, hopefully higher job-creating office space. At this stage of the process I do support the At-Home project going forward, as I believe it will be of high quality, will serve a market demand for housing choice in the area, and will be a welcome addition to the city's tax base. I think the developer has been responsive in addressing traffic concerns. Other potential uses definitely could have created more local impacts, including traffic impacts, than this project. In the future, other traffic adjustments such as lowering the speed limit on Mcmenemy should be considered as needed.

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