

Alton Mayor Walker gives reasons why he doesn't support Community of Sunnybrook at this time

by Brant Walker
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ALTON - Due to some confusion created by recent media reports, Mayor Brant Walker released the following statement today clarifying his position on the proposed Community of Sunnybrook development.

Contrary to recent media reports, I do not support the proposed Community of Sunnybrook development in its current form for the following reasons.

When the project was first brought to my attention by representatives of EBJJ Inc. nearly two years ago, it did not align with my administration's policy of promoting affordable single-family home ownership, instead, the proposal included subsidized, multi-family rental housing.

Following discussion between myself, city staff and representatives of EBJJ, Inc., to address my concerns with the original proposal for the project, I signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with EBJJ, Inc., in support of the project. That MOU included a stipulation that prospective residents of the project would have the opportunity to purchase their residence after the 15-year tax compliance period, and it deleted all reference to the subsidized housing within the project. Based on this MOU, I sent a letter of support for the project to the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) on behalf of EBJJ, Inc.

Low income, as defined by IDHA regulations, are people earning \$12 and \$20 per hour.

In May of this year, it was brought to my attention that the application to IHDA for tax credits for this project included a proposal for various forms of subsidized housing within the development. A copy of that application was never provided to the City of Alton and had to be obtained by city staff from IDHA through the Freedom of Information Act.

At that time, I called the executive director of the IHDA and withdrew my support for the project because the information contained in the developers' application for low-income housing tax credits did not align with the principles that were laid out in the MOU previously agreed to.

[For a closer look at the Sunnybrook Community Development click here.](#)