

# Nokomis Hotel



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## Community Gives Nokomis Hilton Its Approval

By Patrick Whittle

Finergy Development's plan for a 100-room, 35-residence hotel and condo complex near Casey Key has survived its latest test from the neighborhood.

When Finergy announced the hotel plan in May, the developer's plans called for a slightly smaller, Mediterranean-style complex.

Neighbors said they wanted something a little more Key West, and Finergy went back to the drawing board.

The developer recently offered to the public its new plans for the Conch Republic-themed Hilton Garden Inn Nokomis and got a warmer reception.

Some residents, including Nokomis Area Civic Association president John Ask, said the revised hotel is a major step toward providing more bed space and economic growth in nearby Nokomis.

There were still some naysayers, such as residents who questioned how the hotel would impact their water and sewer service, whether it would obscure their views of the Gulf and whether it would worsen traffic.

"That's going to cause some pretty bad traffic issues in an already bad area. Although, if Paris wants to shoot a film here, I'm sure she will find one of our seaside shacks exceptionally tropical," said resident Matthew DeWitt.

The \$20 million Hilton Garden Inn, slated to rise on a derelict gas station site on Albee Road and Tamiami Trail, could be complete by 2009, Finergy representatives said.

The hotel needs Planning Commission and County Commission approval.