



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

Michigan Chapter

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MPVA SETTLES LAWSUIT AGAINST OAKLAND TOWNSHIP

NOVI, MI, FEBRUARY 11, 2016— Nearly five years of contention around a state-of-the-art housing project for disabled veterans in Oakland Township is coming to an end with a settlement agreement that provides for an expansion and a long list of community amenities. The settlement agreement, reached between the Michigan Paralyzed Veterans of America (MPVA), Mocerri/DM Investments, LLC, former Oakland Township Supervisor Joan M. Buser and Oakland Township, allows for a housing development to move forward serving both veterans and individuals with disabilities in metropolitan Detroit.

The MPVA, who filed a lawsuit against Oakland Township in Federal Court in December 2014, contended that the Township had violated the Federal Fair Housing Law, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The complaint charged that the Township discriminated by means of a highly restrictive and exclusionary zoning regime by refusing to grant a reasonable accommodation to paralyzed veterans, other disabled persons, and the elderly.

The agreement enabled the development to move forward with a 189-unit, age-in-place facility that will be called “Blossom Ridge.” The facility was proposed by Mocerri on 42 acres of land it owns at the northwest corner of Dutton and Adams Roads, will include 100 congregate care residences; 21 two-to-three bedroom cottages; 20 duet residences and 48 four-plex ranch style residences.

Carillon Creek, a 140 residential development located quarter mile north of Blossom Ridge, will also be built. This facility will include 56 health and wellness suites to accommodate assisted living as well as other services to the disabled and elderly; a family style bistro with outdoor seating and 84 custom townhomes for lease.

Mocerri has dedicated 30 acres of parkland for public enjoyment throughout both properties. In addition, the settlement also stipulated that Oakland Township's insurance carrier match \$400,000 to enable rental assistance for those veterans who wish to live in Blossom Ridge/Carillon Creek.

“These funds will ensure that veterans below the statistical median income in Oakland County will be able to live in these units—which is fantastic as we wanted to see the housing units

built properly but were worried about their affordability,” stated Michael Harris, MPVA Government Relations Director.

"This is a landmark agreement for disabled veterans and seniors who are seeking the simple dignity of living in the community of their choice," said George Googasian, attorney for the Michigan Paralyzed Veterans of America.

Oakland Township also will raise contributions of \$125,000 to match funds an equal sum provided by Mocerri to erect a military veterans' memorial on land donated by Mocerri. In all, more than \$1 million will go towards aiding and honoring Michigan veterans.

“We are at our strongest when communities are more diverse and inclusive. This settlement agreement will ensure that the equal housing opportunities required by law are available to all citizens of Oakland Township. It sends a powerful message to other municipalities that we will have no tolerance for discrimination against disabled veterans and/or persons with any type of disability” furthered Harris, who is also a paralyzed veteran.

Michigan Paralyzed Veterans of America (MPVA) has served Michigan for 55 years, "making a difference" in the lives of veterans, their families, and the public. We are a leadership organization reaching out on behalf of our members (veterans with spinal cord injury or disorders), associate members, and all people with disabilities to provide the highest possible quality of life in Michigan.

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