The Minneapolis Civilian Police Review Authority (CRA) is about to be restructured again. Over the years, there have been several CRA restructurings or redesigns. This one is different.

This proposal, developed under the euphemistic bureaucratese of "business process improvement (BPI)," has been entirely top down -- no community involvement at all, not even from the current CRA board. Last fall, meetings between CRA Manager Lee Reid and Lt. Travis Glampe, head of MPD's Internal Affairs Unit, were begun under this BPI process. The CRA board at that time was kept completely in the dark. They didn't even know this process was underway. They only found out about it when a citizen informed them that a member of the City Council had asked a question about it at a November 2011 Public Safety, Civil Rights & Health Committee meeting.

Then, in February, at a legislative committee hearing about a bill that would limit CRA hearing panels to "recommendations" rather than "determinations" and eliminate any "findings of fact," a copy of the proposal was leaked from attorneys representing the Police Officers Federation of Minneapolis. The proposal would merge the CRA with Internal Affairs, have police officers sit on hearing panels as well as citizens, provide no guarantee to a complainant that his or her complaint was being investigated by a non-MPD investigator, eliminate the physical office of the CRA, and in effect do away with any serious civilian oversight of the police department.

With the Council Member's question in November and the leaked proposal in February, the cat was out of the bag on this secret process.

Read this article in its entirety at http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/news/2012/07/20/free-speech-zone-bye-bye-minneapolis-civilian-review-authority