

County moves forward on pair of land deals

By Hector Flores

At its Sept 14 meeting the Charlotte County Commission moved forward on the sale of two county-owned parcels to two developers. In the Charlotte Harbor Community Redevelopment Area, the board approved a \$4.27 million purchase and sale agreement for a 3.6-acre parcel to Specialty Restaurants Corporation, operators of the Whiskey Joe's franchise. In the Murdock Village CRA, the board, acting as the CRA board, approved a \$13.88 million letter of interest from Kolter Land and instructed staff to negotiate a purchase and sale agreement and a developer's agreement for the 185-acre parcel.

Specialty Restaurants plans to construct a boutique hotel next to its signature restaurant franchise. The concept plan calls for a wide beach-like area along the Peace River north of the Barron Collier Bridge. The agreement requires the company to construct a 12-foot extension of the county's Riverwalk along the shoreline.

The project will be a boost to the existing Live Oak Point park adjacent to the parcel and eventually extend the Riverwalk from Melbourne Avenue, beneath the Collier and Gilchrist bridges and along the waterfront west of Sunseeker Resort to the existing walkway at Bayshore Live Oak Park on Bayshore Road.

Kolter Land proposes to build 500 single-family homes and 304 apartments or townhomes on the remaining 185 acres of Murdock Village, along with 75,000 square feet of commercial/retail space, 50,000 square feet of medical office space and a 160,000 square foot retail space intended for wholesale club retail outlet with 45,000 square feet of additional retail on outparcels. The company would also widen Flamingo Boulevard to four lanes from State Road 776 to U.S. 41 and construction a road from Centennial Park to Toledo Blade Boulevard.

Kolter is currently developing 1,477 single-family homes, 583 apartments and townhomes and six acres of commercial space on 450 acres west of the proposed project.

Fire & EMS training

Personnel from the Fire & EMS Department conducted training exercises in the former Family Services Center on Gibraltar Drive last week. Crews performed roof and second-story window entry drills and conducted simulated interior search and rescue operations. For photos, visit www.Facebook.com/CharlotteCountyFlorida.

The building will be demolished soon to make way for Phase 2 of the Family Services Center. Phase 1 of the Family Services Center will be opening soon. Phase 2 of the center is under design. It will be located on the site of the demolished building. Both facilities are funded by the 1% local option sales tax, approved by voters in 2014 and 2020.

Budget hearing

The Charlotte County Commission's final budget public hearing is scheduled for 5:01 p.m., Sept. 27 in Room 119 of the Administration Center, 18500 Murdock Circle in Port Charlotte. The hearing will be broadcast on CC-TV (Comcast channel 20 or 97, CenturyLink Prism channel 96) and streamed on the county website. Click www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click CC-TV at the top. The hearing will also be streamed on the county Facebook page www.Facebook.com/CharlotteCountyFlorida.

For information about the budget, visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click Budget in the Government menu.

Readers may reach County Administrator Hector Flores at Hector.Flores@CharlotteCountyFL.gov.