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Cape CRA set to detail its plans

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An open house is scheduled for Wednesday to explain the Cape Coral Community Redevelopment Agency's plans to revitalize the downtown area.

Members of the agency's board of directors will give their views of the proposed redevelopment and answer any questions.

The open house is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. at La Venezia, formerly Waterford Ballroom, on Club Square, right in the heart of the area the agency hopes to transform into Cape Coral's downtown.

"There is a lot of apprehension and anxiety about what will happen in the CRA as there often is with anything that is new," City Councilman Jim Jeffers said. "This open house should answer a lot of questions."

There will be a short presentation by Suzanne Kuehn, the agency's executive director, and a 3-D computer-generated look at the area.

Vistec, a Fort Myers company, prepared the computer-generated presentation. It will show what could happen to the area if building codes currently before the Planning and Zoning Commission are adopted, said John Bell, company president.

"It will allow a person to view the mass and scale of the buildings from the street level," Bell said. "They'll be able to see cars on the streets. It is more a what could be rather than what will be presentation."

The computer-graphic depiction will show what it would look like to have two- to six-story buildings along Cape Coral Parkway.

The regulations propose to have new zones in the city with buildings as high as six stories in the core district, extending along the parkway from Southeast 15th Avenue to Southeast 9th Place.

Two gateway zones at the east and west edge of the redevelopment area would be allowed to go up to 12 stories.

Proposed projects for the Community Redevelopment Area include:

IF YOU GO

- What: Community Redevelopment Agency Open House
- When: 5:30 p.m. Wednesday
- Where: La Venezia formerly the Waterford Ballroom, S.E. 4646 10th Place (Club Square), Cape Coral

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- Villagio, two 12-story high rise condominium buildings surrounded with six-story parking structures, retail, offices and a park. The \$380 million project would be in the area of Southeast 47th Street, 46th Lane and 17th Place. Start date could be March 2007.
- VK Development plans at least one 12-story high-rise condominium building and at least one six-story building for parking office and retail in the Bimini Basin area off Cape Coral Parkway. The developer's last estimated cost is \$200 million.

The proposed start date could be fall 2007.

- Terraces at Rosa Vista is a planned office and retail five-story, \$3.3 million building at Southeast 47th Terrace and Southeast 5th Place. The project remains in city permitting and could begin construction later in the year.
- Piazza di Venezia is a massive 1,874,796-square-foot project planned to go east of Cape Coral Parkway on 20 acres in the Atlantic Court and Coronado Boulevard area.

The developer, RTS Inc., estimates the costs to go to \$300 million. It will include condominiums, a movie theater, hotel, offices, retail shops and a convention center. Construction could start in March 2007.

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