

'Village Square' plan for downtown OK'd

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A \$211 million project planned for Cape Coral's emerging downtown of the future got a boost Tuesday night.

Members of the Cape Coral Community Redevelopment Agency voted 6-0 to accept a proposal from developer Robbie Lee for a 3.9-acre multi-building community development.

The Village Square concept looked "awesome," said board member Gary Aubuchon.

The plans call for 156 condominiums and 330,000 square feet of retail stores, offices and restaurants in buildings ranging from four to 16 stories high. The height limits in that area of the redevelopment area are set at 12 stories.

Because the development is at the concept stage, negotiations between officials and the developer about heights and other possible issues such as parking will continue.

The developer, engineers architects and redevelopment agency staff now plan to get together and design a workable plan for agency and ultimately Cape Coral City Council approval.

A major hurdle has already been overcome, a redevelopment official said.

The land necessary for the project along Cape Coral Parkway between Southeast Eighth Court to the west and Southeast Ninth Place to the east, including the Paradise Car Spa Inc., has been purchased or is scheduled for settlement in June.

"Remember this is only a concept," said Suzanne Kuehn, redevelopment agency executive director.

The concept calls for 230,000 square feet of the project to house offices. In a city strapped for office space, that is considered a big contribution.

Many of the planned projects in the 432-acre redevelopment area, which stretches along Cape Coral Parkway from Tudor Drive in the west to Cape Coral Bridge to the east, have more residential condominiums in their mix of offices and retail.

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