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698 housing units planned at bend of Miami River

Written by [John Charles Robbins](#) on November 21, 2017

A developer plans nearly 700 residential units in two buildings on a large vacant lot at a bend in the Miami River.

The project is to include 1,000 feet of public riverwalk and a small public waterfront park with a playground.

The Miami River Commission is expected to review the project, called Miami River Walk, on Dec. 4. The developer made a presentation to a subcommittee of the commission Nov. 15.

Spring Garden residents may remember that Miami city commissioners approved two 27-story residential towers for the site nearly 15 years ago. The 6.3-acre site at 1001 NW Seventh St. is on the south bank of the river, just east of the Northwest 12th Avenue Bridge,

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and Spring Garden is across the river on the north.

A company called Royal Atlantic got a special use permit to build the sprawling project and marketed it as Rio Miami, but it was never built.

For a time, the site was used as a staging area during construction of the Marlins ballpark, which is about three

blocks to the west in East Little Havana.

Today, Mast Capital is proposing to build two eight-story mixed-use buildings with about 2,795 square feet of ground floor retail. The building on the west is planned at 348 dwellings and the building on the east 350 units.

A site plan by Corwil Architects shows the project coming in two phases, with the west building rising first.

Each building is to have an internal seven-story, 400-vehicle garage. The zoning code requires 1,125 parking spaces, and the developer is seeking a waiver of up to 30%, allowed for projects near public transit.

The project is to have more than 20,000 square feet of amenities, including two swimming pools and courtyards, a business center, game room, fitness center, and 1,000-square-foot theater.

Carlos Lago, an attorney for the developer, told committee members of the previously approved plan from Royal Atlantic for two 27-story mixed-use buildings.

“This reduces the height and the intensity,” Mr. Lago said of the new proposal.

The developer plans a 1,000-foot-long public riverwalk, landscaped, with lighting and seating and access from the on-road greenway on the west and east side yards.

Expanding on public benefits in Miami River Walk is a 4,000-square-foot open green space park on the site’s western edge with a playground and an interactive water feature, all tied into the riverwalk, said Mr. Lago.

“This is a huge public benefit,” he said.

On the west, the site abuts Miami-Dade County land that’s leased to New York fashion designer Naeem Khan, who plans a design studio and vocational school of fashion there.

Asked if there were approved boat slips at the 1001 NW Seventh St. property, Mr. Lago said no but owners are researching the site’s history.

The committee recommended approval to the river commission, with these conditions: return to the commission if boat slips are later added, make the riverwalk on the west a seamless connection with the proposed riverwalk on the county site, and make the public access on the east 8 feet of open walkway and 2 feet of landscaping.

The developer promised to meet with committee co-chair Ernie Martin, who wants a wider access.