

Signs of progress and compromise on Temple Terrace redevelopment plan

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by [Michael Hinman](#)

Staff Writer



Kathleen Cabbie

Terrace Plaza has a number of empty or soon-to-be empty storefronts.

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TEMPLE TERRACE -- The team of Ram Development Co. and Pinnacle Realty Advisors will stay on Temple Terrace's downtown redevelopment project -- for now.

City Council members decided to pursue two of three options Ram/Pinnacle presented to them Tuesday that could possibly get the six-year commercial/residential project on the corner of North 56th Street and Bullard Parkway under way. But not everyone is happy with Ram/Pinnacle's plans to construct new buildings on the property's northern side and renovating retail structures on the southern side.

"I don't see by any stretch of the imagination that we are going to have a new urban town center, which was the project that we were going to do four years ago," said Councilman Ken Halloway. "The [building] re-skinning, the painting, that is far from what I had in mind."

Further along than ever before

Elected officials seemed focused on plans that would put only part of the overall redevelopment area under Ram/Pinnacle's control, which leaves a Sweetbay supermarket with a long-term lease right where it is instead of paying at least \$3.1 million for the option of moving it. Ram/Pinnacle would invest up to \$60 million to redevelop between 23 and 27 acres that include construction of a 225-space parking garage funded by a Housing and Urban Development loan.

The plan would create a new main street on the property's eastern side beginning at Bullard Parkway and weaving through the collection of 30-foot office buildings on the northern parcel. Buildings would be no more than a few stories tall but would have facades making them appear larger, according to initial plans.

While that does differ from plans first put together by master planner Torti Gallas Partners in 2004, Councilman Frank Chillura said the city should recognize that it is simply getting what it paid for.

"I know that we all want the most ideal plan, and if money wasn't an issue and the city had an extra \$100 million on the table, I'm sure this developer would build whatever you want out there," Chillura

said. "Whoever the developer is going to be is going to want to build something that is going to work there."

Construction on the project could begin before the end of the year if the approval process goes smoothly, said Mike Hamman, a managing partner for Palm Beach Gardens-based Ram Development.

"I think at some point, we just need to move forward," Chillura said. "We are further now than we have ever been before."