

Wednesday, July 16, 2008

## **Fundraising for \$9.3M Temple Terrace arts center begins**

Tampa Bay Business Journal

An arts education center is considered to be the key civic anchor of a new downtown for Temple Terrace, but it will need a fund raising drive approved Tuesday night by the city government to determine if such a facility is feasible.

The yearlong fundraising effort has seemingly already begun for the \$9.3 million facility that starts with \$2.5 million in community investment tax funds and a \$500,000 in-kind contribution from Ram Development Co. and Pinnacle Realty Advisors, who donated land from its overall redevelopment project on the corner of North 56th Street and Busch Boulevard in Temple Terrace.

That leaves about \$6.3 million still needs to be raised for the 22,000-square-foot facility, which would be designed for the performing arts, banquets, meetings, weddings and other activities.

Residents had banded together in the late 1990s to build a community performing arts center on the northern bank of the Hillsborough Rivers just blocks from the current site, and had raised hundreds of thousands of dollars toward the project before the city council rejected its location. Ron Govin, now a city councilman, was a leader in that initial fundraising drive meant to give the theater group Masque of Temple Terrace a permanent home in a multi-purpose facility that would've included offices for the Greater Temple Terrace Chamber of Commerce.

The group abandoned its fundraising efforts after the city council proposed making a theater part of its downtown project in 2002, and a few years later, donated space in the existing strip mall on the property for the theater to use instead of being forced to rent space at a local civic center.

The proposed arts education center also will house classrooms for dance, music, theater and ceramics, and will incorporate an art gallery, dressing rooms, and space for the chamber of commerce.

City officials expect to close on the sale of more than 20 acres of land in the redevelopment area to the Ram/Pinnacle team by mid-September. The first phase of development include \$45 million in retail, residential, office and restaurant development.