

Developer Given Time To Polish Latest Proposals

COUNCIL HAS 2 WEEKS TO STUDY PLANS

By JOYCE MCKENZIE

jmckenzie@mediageneral.com

The city's six-year endeavor to breathe new life into Temple Terrace's downtown continues on its trajectory, albeit at a slow, grinding pace.

On Feb. 20, the Community Redevelopment Agency met to review three new site plans presented by developer Pinnacle Realty Advisors/Ram Development to revitalize the southeast quadrant of Bullard Parkway and 56th Street. The presentation came at the request of the agency — composed of the city manager and council members — that voted down the developer's offer of \$11.7 million to purchase the city-owned parcel targeted for retail, restaurant, residential and civic/cultural components. City records indicate a debt of \$21.2 million on the property.

Of the new proposals, Plan A included an offer by Pinnacle/Ram to purchase and develop 26.8 acres at \$19.2 million, an amount that would require a net investment of \$3.3 million by the city after federal grants, tax increment funding and loans. Its site plan, which goes all the way to the Hillsborough River, shows

Regions Bank and the post office, currently in the center of the complex, moved to the northern end. In addition, a restaurant bordering Bullard Parkway and retail spaces along 56th Street, toward the center of the northern section and adjacent to its eastern border are part of the plan.

In addition, a parking garage with 220 parking spaces, funded by proceeds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, would be built in the second block. That proposal also calls for \$3 million worth of improvements to the Masque Theatre just north of Chicago Avenue.

In Plan B, Pinnacle/Ram would purchase 27.3 acres — from Bullard Parkway to Riverhills Drive at a cost of \$21.2 million, where a new arts and community center, along with retail structures would be built. All other aspects of the proposal are similar to Plan A, minus the improvement to Masque Theatre.

The proposal most council members favor is Plan C. It involves Pinnacle/Ram purchasing 23 acres, from Bullard Parkway to Chicago Avenue, for \$16.9 million with an ultimate net investment by the city of \$1.4 million. It includes the same features as Plan A, but south of Chicago Avenue the city would retain



Affronti

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"Is it the ideal plan (Plan C)?" asked Councilman Frank Chillura. "No, it's not the ideal plan. But it's a plan that will work."

Councilman Ron Govin, who serves as the council's representative in meetings with city staff and Pinnacle/Ram, agreed.

"It looks like a good value," he said. "We have money set aside for a community center and it might also become council chambers."

However, Councilman Ken Halloway vehemently voiced his opposition to all three proposals.

"The financial portion is outstanding — it exceeded my expectations," he said. "But I don't see a plan for an urban

4.3 acres for future development, adjacent to 2.8-acre site for a riverfront park.

In all three plans, the existing Sweetbay Supermarket would remain in place and the other buildings would receive facelifts.

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town center. It looks just like a DeBartolo plan we rejected. I'm saying I just can't support that plan."

Govin's motion to allow two weeks for the developer to fine tune its proposals and for council members to meet and discuss their individual concerns received a 4-1 vote of approval, including an amendment presented by Councilman Mark Knapp to also consider Plan B in their discussions. Halloway cast the lone "nay" vote.

Although prohibited from taking part in the voting process, Mayor Joe Affronti also stated his disappointment with the plans.

"What this looks like to me is a modified shopping strip," he said. "I really feel we'd be letting our citizens down."

Temple Terrace resident Grant Rimbey also spoke out in opposition. **See Rimbey's letter to the editor on Page 7.**

"It's ludicrous to know that we hired Torti Gallas (a community planning firm) and we end up with a strip mall — the whole plan was to raise the bar and rejuvenate the city," he said. "I think you guys have lost sight of that."

Pinnacle/Ram and council will come together again March 6 during the next scheduled city council meeting.