

Unicorp's Next Deadline Is Crucial, Bosek Says

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TEMPLE TERRACE - With a major deadline looming in its effort to reshape Temple Terrace's downtown, an Orlando developer says things are on track - sort of.

In June, the Temple Terrace City Council gave Unicorp National Developments a dozen conditions that must be met in order to stay on the project. The city hopes to revitalize an area from Bullard Parkway and 56th Street south to the Hillsborough River by replacing an aging shopping plaza and an abandoned gas station and adding streets and a park.

The city's conditions include a series of deadlines. The first was July 1 and required the company to sign a contract with architect David Kitchens. He is expected to bring to life a conceptual site plan by Sept. 1.

"The contract was signed June 29," said Ralph Bosek, the city's redevelopment director. "I have a copy, and it appears everything is in order."

The next deadline is Aug. 6 and may be the most crucial, Bosek said. That is the date by which Unicorp must have secured a contract with Kash n' Karry/Sweetbay Supermarkets to build a store in the redevelopment area.

The agreement is contingent on the grocery store giving up a long-term lease, which has renewal options through 2044, for its store in the shopping plaza that the city paid \$5.5 million to acquire in 2003.

On May 31, the grocery store chain presented a New Urbanist-style store model as part of a tentative site plan after months of stalled negotiations with Unicorp and the city. The plan was applauded by council members.

The site plan for first phase of the 34-acre project is being reworked using that store model.

The talks are ongoing, said Lee Maher, principal partner with Unicorp, but the company should be able to make the deadline - give or take a few days.

"The site plan is the only thing holding things up," he said Wednesday. "I don't think we will lose sight of the entire schedule. If anything, we will have a delay in the drawing phase."

"Unfortunately, until you get the drawings right, you can't go forward. We are getting input from the city and what they want and what Sweetbay wants, and our engineer is making sure it fits on that acreage."

Whether the city council will budge on the deadline remains to be determined. Bosek said Wednesday he's treating it as a firm date.

"That's the way I have to treat it," he said. "They know what they have to do, and now they just have to do it."

Maher said he's confident with the progress being made.

"It's going as planned and as usual in most developments," he said. "I think everybody is onboard."

Whether the site plan is completed soon also could affect an Aug. 15 deadline. The city wants Unicorp to be moving toward contractual agreements with other tenants in the shopping center by that date.

The city expects to complete its negotiations with Unicorp by Oct. 15 or find another developer.