

Cape to inject Mediterranean flair downtown with Rosa Vista

By PETE SKIBA, PSKIBA@NEWS-PRESS.COM, Published by news-press.com on June 12, 2005

After 16 years of talk and the appointment of a new executive director, Cape Coral's Community Redevelopment Area has awakened and found its direction — the Mediterranean.

An architect announced an August ground-breaking at S.E. 47th Terrace by S.E. 5th Place for the Terraces at Rosa Vista.

“With this board of directors and Suzanne Kuehn as director, (we) are beginning to move,” said Richard F. Kast, marketing coordinator for the group. “You are going to see a lot of new and exciting projects happening.”

With the influx of new residents the about \$4 million project proposes to fill the Cape's need for offices, restaurants and shopping.

“We are going to ink some deals at groundbreaking,” Gary Tasman, a broker with Vipcommercial of Fort Myers said. “Right now we are talking to restaurants that will be fine additions to the area. All the development in Cape Coral will need offices for lawyers, architects, engineers.”

The inspiration for the building's design came from the European roots of the owner of the project, Monika Tannenbaum, said Damon Romanello, an architect with the Fort Myers' firm Architecture Inc.

“We took what Monika Tannenbaum wanted and turned it into an Italian or Mediterranean village,” Romanello said.

Tannenbaum, a partner with her husband, Alan, a physician, wanted a little bit of the ambience she knew when she lived in Europe. She named the project for her mother, Rosa.

“I liked the little cafes and stores in Europe where I grew up as an Army brat,” Tannenbaum said. “I liked places with flowers and the outdoor cafes.”

With 11 professional offices on top floors and restaurants and retail specialty shops on the ground floor, the building's style fits right in with the Piazza di Venezia project a few streets away at Cape Coral Parkway and Atlantic Court.

The Piazza developer proposes two Towers of Pisa, a Rialto Arch from Venice and a 10-screen movie theater in a Roman-Coliseum-style building on about 15 acres.

Although smaller than an acre with about 23,000 square feet of rental space, Rosa Vista looks like a block on a street in an Italian seaside town.

CRA plans lean toward expanding a canal next to S.E. 5th Place and Rosa Vista. People could look forward to canal views from their offices and perhaps some cafe tables and chairs near the canal.

It is the kind of individual project that can be built alongside other larger projects, Kuehn said.

Working with developers, negotiating and taking a more active role seems to be Kuehn's strategy. “I didn't get this job to sit around,” she has said several times since becoming CRA executive director. “I'm here to make it happen.”

An artist's rendering of the Terraces at Rosa Vista slated to be built in downtown Cape Coral. Special to news-press.com

