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## Stormwater runoff factor in downtown redevelopment

### CRA board to take up issue in meeting tonight at City Hall

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It does rain in the Sunshine State and dealing with storm-water runoff from major developments can be a problem.

Cape Coral's Community Redevelopment Area's board plans to discuss the issue at its regular 5:30 p.m. meeting tonight in City Hall.

With a billion dollars' worth of shops, other businesses, restaurants and homes planned for the downtown, along with the people they'll bring, stormwater runoff will be a critical issue.

The board also intends to discuss moving a zoning line so that a planned hotel in the Piazza di Venezia project can go up to 12 stories.

Probably the first multi-million dollar project that will begin construction is Cape Villagio. The developers plan to handle the runoff with underground storage vaults, said Suzanne Kuehn, the redevelopment agency's executive director.

The South Florida Water Management District requires a formal agreement between the developer and the redevelopment area to ensure that the vaults will be maintained, either by the developer or the city, Kuehn said. The contract would cover that if the board approves it, she said.

"We've got all our engineering together," said Bob Peterson, a partner in the project. "There are no utility lines under our project and we have found an efficient way to route through the existing pipe system."

The redevelopment area extends along both sides of Cape Coral Parkway from Tudor Drive at the west to the Cape Coral Bridge at the east. A segment extends north on Del Prado Boulevard to southeast 44th Street.

The redevelopment area is divided into Core, Edge and Gateway districts. In the Core and Edge districts building heights are restricted to six stories.

Developers plan to ask the board to consider moving the Gateway District zoning over to encompass the adjacent 80 acres from Tarpon Court to

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Coronado Parkway to the south of Cape Coral Parkway.

The change would allow the Piazza di Venezia project to build a 12-story hotel along with the planned movie theater, convention center, retail shops, restaurants and residential condominiums.

"We have a conceptual drawing for a 19-story hotel," said Jerry D-Angelo the architect on the project. "That doesn't mean it will go that high. We'll see how it goes."

One of the reasons developers find the redevelopment area attractive for multi-million dollar projects are the real estate tax deals they can get.

As the value of the real estate increases, the amount of tax the owner has to pay on the increased value is cut in half until they are repaid.

The redevelopment agency plans to make it easier for smaller projects to join in the funding source.

"Right now we have a facade program that helps with \$10,000 for smaller projects," Kuehn said. "The big projects can take advantage of the tax increment funding but we have nothing for those in between."

A proposal Kuehn plans to bring to the board will explain how smaller projects can get 15 percent of the money they invest in the redevelopment area back.

"We want the smaller businesses to know this program is available to them," Kuehn said.

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[Back](#)