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12-story downtown hotel proposed

By Pete Skiba

pskiba@news-press.com

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The nearly completed Hampton Inn, which owners plan to open in a couple of weeks, may have started a downtown hotel-building boom in Cape Coral.

Developers propose a 224-room hotel that would reach for the sky in another part of the downtown area, but within walking distance of the Hampton Inn at 619 S.E. 47th St.

The new hotel would be part of the Piazza di Venezia multimillion-dollar project and would need rezoning to allow it to go to 12 stories. The Piazza di Venezia

project is planned to go between Tarpon Court on the west and Coronado Parkway to the south of Cape Coral Parkway in a zone that currently would permit buildings to only six stories.

The owner of a proposed smaller, or boutique, hotel with 73 rooms needs financial help to buy land for parking. That hotel would add another style to the emerging downtown.

Both projects are expected to come up for discussion during the Cape Coral Community Redevelopment Agency's regular board meeting at 5:30 p.m. today.

Redevelopment board members hope hotels in the downtown would bring business and tourists to the city. Other attractive businesses such as bookstores, art galleries and perhaps a live theater might find it worthwhile to locate in the redevelopment area.

The redevelopment area covers Cape Coral's downtown business district. It runs from near Bimini Basin east to the Caloosahatchee River and several blocks on either side of Cape Coral Parkway. It also extends north on Del Prado Boulevard to about Southwest 44th Street.

The hotels would become part of a developing downtown that promises high-rise condominiums, retail offices and parks. The \$400 million Piazza di Venezia would occupy 20 acres with almost 2 million square feet of offices, residences, movies, restaurants and possibly a Publix supermarket in addition to the hotel and convention center.

"We have to go to 12 stories at least for this one building," said Jerry

IF YOU GO

- What: Regular twice monthly Community Redevelopment Agency meeting
- Where: 447 E. Cape Coral Parkway, Suite 108
- When: 5:30 p.m. today

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D'Angelo, the project architect.

The entire 432-acre redevelopment area could be rezoned under a plan by the the board. Under the plan, the area would be divided into three zones: Core, Gateway and Edge.

The Core and Edge districts would be allowed maximum heights of six stories while the Gateway district would allow 12 stories.

The Piazza di Venezia developers want their project included in the Gateway zone to the west of their project that extends from Lucaya Drive along Cape Coral Parkway to Tarpon Court. The massive project would be in an Edge zone if the zoning were adopted today as written.

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