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## More details unveiled for redevelopment of struggling mall as hearing looms (Renderings)

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The redevelopment plan for the Shops at Sunset Place, the struggling mall in South Miami, has been laid out in detail as the owners aim to introduce apartments, a hotel, more office space and open public plazas to the property.

Their plan will be presented Oct. 26 to the city's Planning Board. They will need to pass a City Commission vote at a later date. If approved, it could revitalize a large project that hasn't lived up to expectations since it opened in 1999.



**See the gallery for renderings of the new look for the Shops at Sunset Place.**

In 2015, the Shops at Sunset Place at 5701 S.W. 72nd Street (Sunset Drive) was acquired for \$110.2 million by the joint venture of **Federal Realty Investment Trust** (NYSE: FRT), Coconut Grove-based Grass River Property, and Miami Beach-based Comras Co. The partners first gave a glimpse of their redevelopment plan in September 2016 with the apartment and a hotel. The new filings with the city provide greater detail and highlight how the developers want to make Shops at Sunset more inviting for pedestrians, instead of the three-story concrete wall that the structure now presents from the sidewalk.

“Our team has been engaging residents and businesses in South Miami for the better part of two years, and the overwhelming consensus is that our community is ready to welcome revamped retail, market rate housing, a hotel and new public spaces as part of a revitalized Sunset Place,” said George Spillis, a principal with Grass River Property. “By creating a 24/7 residential population, integrating the center with surrounding streets, and prioritizing connectivity with Metrorail and the Underline, the new Sunset Place will become an economic engine for South Miami and a catalyst for additional investment in the city.”

The 9.7-acre property currently has 524,180 square feet of retail, 15,000 square feet of office and 40 residential units. Under the redevelopment plan, the retail space would be reduced to 440,148 square feet, the office space would be expanded to 32,840 square feet, the 40 residential units would remain, another 414 apartments in two buildings would be developed, and a 182-room hotel would be built. Two levels would be

added to the existing parking garage to create another 472 parking spaces, bringing it to 2,137 spaces in total. Plus, 216 underground parking spaces would be built near the new hotel and apartments.

The movie theater would remain.

The application mentions that many of the stores in the existing shopping center are empty and the sidewalks are empty. By attracting residents, hotel guests and office tenants, while making the project more welcoming to pedestrians, the owners aim to welcome more shoppers.

Public squares of 15,000 and 7,400 square feet would be created at Red Road and San Remo Avenue and at Red Road and South Dixie Highway, respectively. The property would be lined with native trees, such as gumbo limbos, live oaks, sabal palms and bald cypress.

Many of the retail buildings would be redesigned so their storefronts face the street. Sidewalk café seating would be introduced.

The plan was crafted by Zyscovich Architects; **Dover, Kohl & Partners**; LAND Landscape Architects; Street-Works Studio; and **David Plummer & Associates**. Attorney Jeffrey S. Bass represents the developer.

In the first phase of the project, 91,147 square feet of the Shops at Sunset Place would be demolished at Red Road and San Remo Avenue. The pedestrian bridges, the escalator and the three-story staircase would be torn down. The developer would build 53,633 square feet of new space, with 32,840 square feet of that in offices.

In the second phase, the buildings on the northern side of the property at Red Road and South Dixie Highway would be completely demolished and replaced with the two apartment buildings and the hotel, plus the underground parking and the extra two levels of the parking garage.

The hotel would rise 17 stories. In addition to the 182 rooms, it would have 5,000 square feet of meeting space and a pool.

The apartment buildings would each rise 14 stories. The unit mix would be 13 studios, 228 with one bedroom, 153 with two bedrooms, and 20 with three bedrooms. The units would range from 425 to 1,700 square feet.

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