



Coral offers land for larger detention basin

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By Bob Sandrick
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Peter Rubin, president and CEO of the Coral Co., said he would donate land toward a detention basin near North Huntington Drive if the city chooses his plan for a lifestyle development in Solon.

City Council could make that choice Monday (see story, this page.)

The basin now is about three-quarters of an acre. The city has plans to enlarge it to help residents who have experienced flooding.

The basin is next to 22.8 acres owned by University Hospitals Health Systems on Solon Road. Coral is negotiating a contract to buy that land from UHHS.

Rubin said he would donate part of the UHHS property to the city for the enlarged detention basin.

"This is a chance, once and for all, to address the drainage issues in that part of the city," Rubin told the Solon Herald Sun Monday.

Rubin said he would make sure the detention basin is big enough to handle any storm water that might come from his development, which he wants to build between Bainbridge and Solon roads just east of SOM Center Road.

Rubin said he may even shift the enlarged basin away from homes in the North Huntington area. That would save trees and draw storm water away from homes, he said.

Rubin discussed other elements of his mixed-use plan:

Rubin defended choosing the Route 422-SOM-Solon Road area for his development. He said potential tenants would come to Solon only if they have close freeway access.

"We chose the site because it's transformational," Rubin said. "It changes the entry point in Solon."

Rubin agreed with most City Council members that a rezoning issue needed for his development and a competing plan by Stark Enterprises should go on the November ballot instead of the March ballot.

Rubin said there's not enough time to launch and complete a voter-education campaign by March.

Waiting until the November ballot also leaves the developer and the city more time to tweak the plan, he said.

However, Rubin said council should decide soon between his and Stark's development because the city and the chosen developer will spend thousands of hours planning the project.

"To really understand the implications of a site, you have to pick one," Rubin said.

Also, Rubin said neither Coral nor Stark will be able to recruit retail and office tenants until council picks one of the developers.

Rubin wouldn't commit to paying for sound barriers along 422, but he didn't dismiss the idea, either.

"We never encountered a project that required sound barriers, but we don't think it's helpful to take an issue out of context with all of the other issues.

"Sound barriers should be dealt with the way the other issues are," Rubin said. "What's the problem and what's the solution? At this point, any answer we give is irrelevant, it's non-responsive, because we don't know enough. We will as the project evolves."

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