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RDC approves agreement to begin SoLa project

By DONAVAN BARRIER Staff Writer

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Goodman



Matias



Sirinek



Shown is a rendering of the SoLa project planned for the north side of Michigan City along Michigan Boulevard. The project will consist of 188 condos, a 239-room hotel a 387-car parking garage, 25,000 feet of retail space and a restaurant.

Photo provided / The SoLa Development

MICHIGAN CITY — After starts and stops over the last several years, the time is now right to begin construction on a luxury housing project proposed for Michigan City, at least according to city officials.

The Michigan City Redevelopment Commission, during their Dec. 9 meeting, approved an agreement to officially begin the proposed SoLa project.

According to a presentation by Alan Shockman and Scott Goodman, the SoLa project will consist of 188 condos, with 18 being townhouses, a 239-room hotel and a 387-car parking garage, which will also be available to the public.

The project will include 25,000 feet of retail space and a restaurant for the public to use and to rent for weddings.

When asked by RDC president Sheila Matias for dates on construction phases, Shockman said the plan is to go to the state to receive a ground permit between April and May of 2025 and then be in the ground in June.

“It’ll take a full two years to complete 100 percent,” Shockman said.

“Our hope is that we can complete the condos in 18-20 months, start closing condos. By the time the entire project is done, we’ll have a big grand opening where the hotel will be open and all the condos will be occupied and sold,” he added.

Shockman said they have 28 reservations for condos.

“We’re assuming that we’ll have somewhere around 70 percent of condos presold before we start construction. Which will be important for a construction loan. So, that’s kind of the timeline,” he said.

RDC counsel Alan Sirinek said the property will be closed on June 30, with construction starting before then.

Goodman said with all that has happened over the past several years, they are excited to bring the project to Michigan City.

“The time we’ve taken to really get this thing off the ground and really focus on the community here and how this is going to be a real public benefit in addition to it being a real testament to the growth of Michigan City. We think it’s a super exciting time,” he said.

“We’ve actually been able to weather things like the pandemic and the tremendous increase in interest rates and the cost of construction. And we’ve gotten ourselves to a point of real strength on this where we know this is going to be a real transformative project for the city of Michigan City. Just knowing that it’s going to be a catalyst for so much more that’s already on the pipeline and so many things that we haven’t even imagined yet,” he added.

Matias said they, too, were also excited for the project, adding that they have talked about a “Michigan City Renaissance” for several years.

“For a long time we’ve been waiting and now we’re excited that you’re here to kind of kick off this next phase,” Matias said.

Sirinek highlighted that the developer of SoLa made a \$450,000 affordable housing donation to the city.

“We’re here, we’re finally here,” Sirinek said.

“We have an agreement that, I think, that protects the city. We have an agreement that promotes the development and, we have an agreement that protects the developer,” he added.

Long Beach resident Don Babcock, who works as a consultant with Shockman and Goodman, said this project was part of a previously started grand plan called the Lake Michigan Gateway. The redevelopment agreement was the next step to bring that project into reality and he encouraged the commission to approve it.