

51-story Legacy Hotel in Miami Worldcenter wins city OK

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Written by John Charles Robbins on September 21, 2021



Miami Worldcenter, the evolving city within a city, is ready for its next skyscraper: Legacy Hotel, 51 stories and nearly one million square feet of floor space to rise at 938 NE First Ave.

The applicant-developer is Royal Palm Companies, represented by attorney Marissa A. Nuefeld. She and other members of the developer's team, including architect Kobi Karp, presented the mixed-use project to the City of Miami's Urban Development Review Board on Sept. 14.

The board recommended approval with one condition: revisit having stucco on larger columns, and consider a different material for a richer finish.

The new building is to have 990,019 total square feet of floor space, with residential condominium units, hotel rooms, 117,566 square feet of office space, 51,708 square feet of commercial-retail, and parking for 482 vehicles.

In a letter about the project Ms. Nuefeld wrote: "The Project includes a vibrant mix of uses, integrated both horizontally and vertically. The ground floor program includes hotel and condominium lobby areas, retail, dining, and an exciting pedestrian hardscape program.

“Traveling vertically through the Project, the second level houses a +/- 3,000 square foot shul, which will serve the religious needs of the surrounding community. The remainder of the building includes a premier 251 +/- key hotel, a 290-unit residential condominium, and several levels of office space. Amenities for the Project include a full suite of wellness facilities, multiple swimming pools, hotel ballrooms, and sky lounge,” she said.

The architectural features are some of the most high-end design elements featured in the city, she said.

“The garage screen-element alone is a work of art, composed of a four-layered system that overlaps to create a geometric masterpiece,” Ms. Nuefeld wrote. “The visual enhancement continues upward through the Project, and includes multiple elements that contribute to a sleek, art-deco feel. The pinnacle of the Project is the soaring spire feature, that will certainly become a focal point on the downtown skyline.”

Review board member Robert Behar said, “It’s a very well-done building. Congratulations.”

“The building looks very, very nice,” said board member Dean Lewis. “Very well worked out ... It’s a complicated program (and) I see a dedicated drop-off area and parking egress. My compliments, well done.”

Ms. Neufeld said that after multiple discussions with city staff, the developer incorporated several additional elements into the drop-off area in order to address staff’s comments.

“Specifically, the Plans were revised in order to provide a flush curb throughout the drop-off area, decorative bollards, an enhanced landscape median, and the reduction of pinch points.

“All of these design elements were revised in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts on pedestrians traversing through the drop-off area,” she wrote.

Miami Worldcenter is billed as a \$2 billion project out to transform 27 acres of urban core in the Park West neighborhood.

It is a collaboration of Miami Worldcenter Associates and a team of development, design and engineering firms. The entire development promises a mix of residential towers, hotels, retail stores, restaurants, entertainment venues and a convention center to an area hugged by FTX Arena and MiamiCentral, a mixed-use railroad station and transportation hub.