

# THE REAL DEAL

SOUTH FLORIDA REAL ESTATE NEWS

## North Miami Beach board gives nod to 5 Park, with apartments, offices, retail

*High-rise complex, designed by Kobi Karp, would have 415 apts, 50k sf offices, 30k sf retail*

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*By Erik Bojnansky*



*Rendering of 5 Park (Credit: Kobi Karp Architecture and Interior Design)*

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The North Miami Beach Planning and Zoning Board backed the construction of a 19-story twin tower apartment building and a 7-story office facility on the east side of West Dixie Highway between Northeast 170th and 171st streets.

Monday night's 5-to-1 vote was a recommendation for the North Miami Beach City Council to approve a site plan and development agreement to replace a one-story, 43-year-old office building with rooftop parking and a string of retail buildings with a 838,712-square-foot complex designed by architect Kobi Karp, to be called 5 Park.

On April 18, the [North Miami Beach](#) City Council is scheduled to vote on the 2.8-acre project, which is slated to be developed by Macken Companies, led by [Alan Macken](#).

Macken's proposed project includes a 50,486-square-foot office building that's 115-feet in height, including the rooftop, plus a two-tower, 195-foot-tall apartment building with 415 units, 30,210 square feet of retail and a 792-space parking garage. Two pocket parks will also be created on the project site, which is just north of Judge Arthur I. Snyder Tennis Center and The Ancient Spanish Monastery.

If the development agreement is approved, Macken's team will purchase the 1.39-acres on site that's owned by the city for \$175,000. Much of that city-owned land is now used as a surface parking lot for the existing retail. Under the agreement, 26 parking spaces will be reserved for public use on the ground floor of the future parking garage.

Besides the purchase of the city-owned parking lot, Macken promised to pay an additional \$572,253 in impact fees for police, infrastructure, and parks. Macken also vowed to widen sidewalks, add in parallel parking on West Dixie Highway, and install new street lighting and vegetation. Board member Richard Weiner was excited by the prospect that 5 Park would pave the way for further development along [North Miami Beach's](#) West Dixie corridor, an area that was recently re-zoned by city officials to encourage high-rise development with mixed-use on the ground floor.

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Weiner said the “net effect for the homeowners seems to be good” because the project will increase property values in the area while decreasing property tax rates.

“This project has no variances and is being built as of right,” Weiner added. “It seems like a no-brainer. It’s in compliance with the law. I can’t find anything to criticize.”

But board member Saul Smukler scoffed at the developer’s claims that the project would not cause adverse traffic conditions on a three-lane road (including one turning lane) that is already jammed with cars during rush hour.

“I don’t think that I can look at this project and say that it fits in with the roadway at this time,” Smukler said.

A city presentation earlier in the meeting claimed that traffic conditions will be mitigated by the expansion of a free trolley system plus a future TriRail station to be located at Northeast 164th Street and the FEC tracks.

The widening of West Dixie Highway into a four-lane street is on drawing board, too, although Richard Lorber, director of community development, admitted that the road project “has been slow to get off the ground on the county side.” He said the county just awarded a contract to a consultant. Board member Julian Kriesberg said the city basically opted to sacrifice traffic conditions for an increased tax-base when its officials approved zoning that encouraged high-rises in various parts of [North Miami Beach](#) in March 2015.

“Traffic stinks everywhere. That ship has sailed,” Kriesberg said. “We’re trying to attract new residents, end of story. We’re not here to nitpick traffic studies and bemoan the fate of the free world.”

Charles Baron, an attorney residing in the nearby Ojus area, said he and his client, [North Miami Beach](#) resident David Scott, are prepared to “do whatever we can to put a stop to it [5 Park] in its current form.”

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Baron made headlines in December 2015 after he convinced the Third District Court of Appeals to kill zoning enacted by the city of North Miami Beach that would have allowed a 130-foot tall hotel complex on a 4-acre parcel at 173rd Street and West Dixie Highway by Greynolds Park's south entrance. Baron successfully argued that the city ignored its own zoning code at the time.

Baron said he's prepared to do the same thing again. His main fear: that the 5 Park project will enable more high-rises to be built around the 265-acre Greynolds Park.

"They want to continue to wall in the park," Baron complained to *The Real Deal* prior to the meeting. "The people who are promoting these things say there are [towers] by Central Park in Manhattan. Well, we don't want Manhattan. That's why we're living here and not Manhattan." But Baron told board members he's hopeful he can reach a compromise with Macken. "One where he can still make tons of money," he said.