

Bay Area News

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NASSAU BAY

Buildings coming down soon

Demolition of 12 structures expected to begin within month, paving way for new development

By THAYER EVANS
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Demolition of 12 buildings to clear the way for a \$150 million mixed-use development in Nassau Bay is expected to start next month, a city official said.

On Monday, City Council unanimously approved the second and final reading of an ordinance that amends the city's zoning ordinance to allow for the project by Griffin Partners, a Houston-based investment management company.

It will feature multifamily housing units, a hotel, shops and office space.

"That vote was probably the most important vote that was taken since Nassau Bay became a city, because this will definitely change the course of our commercial area from spiraling downward to moving upward," City Manager John Kennedy said.

Griffin will demolish the old City Hall, 1800 NASA Parkway, and the adjacent fire station used by the Nassau Bay Volunteer Fire Department, as well as another 10 low-rise office buildings on 27 acres that the company purchased last year, Kennedy said.

Of those buildings, six are along NASA Parkway.

In December, the city relocated to a temporary City Hall, 18100 Upper Bay Road, which is in an office building owned by Griffin that eventually also will be knocked down.

Griffin eventually will build a new City Hall for the city that will measure 8,100 square feet, the same size as the old one, Kennedy said.

The city's volunteer fire department has temporarily moved into a 4,500-square-foot building on Surf Court.

The city will build a new public safety building that will house the fire department and which already was planned, Kennedy said.

In the meantime, fencing has been put up around the buildings to be demolished, and asbestos removal has started, Kennedy said.

"The building demolition should start in the next couple of weeks," he said.

The development's first phase is slated to be done by June 2009 and will consist of 313 multifamily housing units at the corner of Point Lookout Drive and Space Park Drive and 70,000 square feet of retail along NASA Parkway, Kennedy said.

The project's second phase will consist of building an eight-story Courtyard by Marriott hotel at the end of Saturn Lane to be finished in late 2009 and two office buildings that will be done by early 2010.

City Councilman Mark Denman said he is hopeful that the development will rejuvenate other areas in the city and help lower the city's property tax rate through the sales tax it is expected to generate.

He described the buildings to be demolished, many of which have been vacant since the 1980s, as "a cancer."

"We must have a balanced commercial area within Nassau Bay," Denman said.

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