

[Front Page](#)

[Top Stories](#)

[Features and Series](#)

[Finding Florida](#)

[Community In Focus](#)

[Links Mentioned](#)

[In Your Words](#)

[News & Community](#)

[Community News](#)

[Business](#)

[Where In South Hillsborough?](#)

[Observing The Web](#)

[In Uniform](#)

[Obituaries](#)

[Community In Retrospect](#)

[Commentary](#)

[Nation and World](#)

[Columnists](#)

[Fishtales](#)

[Positive Talk](#)

[Over Coffee](#)

[Saturation Point](#)

[View From the Road](#)

[Wandering Florida](#)

[Savvy Senior](#)

[You, Me and Business](#)

[Search](#)

All Categories

[Observer Classifieds](#)

[Place a Classified Ad](#)

[Send a Letter to the Editor](#)

[Send a Press Release](#)

[Staff Directory](#)

TOP STORIES

Apartments secure funding; project's retail portion in negotiations now

By
Jan 27, 2010 - 8:35:28 AM



By Penny Fletcher
penny@observernews.net

GIBSONTON — Since the update on area developments in the January 7 edition of The Observer News and Riverview Current one major developer has secured funding for Phase I of a three-phase project and begun preconstruction work on the site.

Rey Ortega, President of the Garrison Developer Group of Florida, announced Jan. 18 that a federally-backed \$48 million loan has been secured through Prudential Huntoon Paige, an affiliate of the Prudential Mortgage Capital Company.

The funding allows Garrison to begin work on The Preserve at Alafia, a 351-unit apartment project that's entrance is on Gibsonton Drive just east of the Gibsonton-Riverview exit of Interstate 75.

As reported previously, The Preserve at Alafia was originally slated to be condominiums, but market research caused Ortega to change his plan to apartments in October 2007.

"These are luxury apartments like you would expect to find in Tampa, only in a country setting," Ortega said in a telephone interview last week. "There will be one, two and three bedroom units. Everyone will have covered parking. We will have the things we heard people living in the city say they wished they had — like a place to walk, and even wash their dogs, so they don't have to be washing them indoors in the shower. There will be a Yoga pavilion, and plenty of places to walk and enjoy the riverfront view."



The units will rent for between \$1,000 and \$1,200 a month and will appeal to people who don't want to take on mortgages or the task of home ownership," Ortega said.

"They'll have all the amenities including a clubhouse, the ability to rent canoes and kayaks on site, and the beauty of adjoining the (county's Alafia) preserve. People who have been living in condominiums say they have a lot of absentee landlords and they have trouble getting things fixed. Here professional people can leave for work knowing when they get home that night whatever (maintenance) they have requested will be done."

When completed, the project will offer residents a river walk, full-amenity clubhouse, docks, fitness facilities, a business center, cyber-café, a demo kitchen for cooking classes, big screen theater room, pool, spas, and volleyball court.

Dirt moving and preconstruction work such as electrical and plumbing are beginning now with groundbreaking imminent and a target date to open in 18 months.

Sound Construction Company based in Clearwater is serving as the General Contractor for the project. Sound Construction previously worked with Garrison to build the 12-story Garrison Condominium at Harbor Island.

The apartments will be five-story with elevators. They will have 1,200 feet of waterfront and 3,000 feet of wildlife preserve frontage.

There will be no special age designation; the apartments may be rented by seniors, families with or without children, or singles. Some of the three-bedroom units may be used for a couple with an elderly parent.

Ads by **Google**

Low Income Apartments

Find Section 8 Apartments. Get Reliable Advice In Your Area.
DoTellAll.com

Commercial Properties

The Premier Listing Site For All Types Of Commercial Real Estate
www.RealUp.com

Affordable Bellevue Homes

Condos from \$159,990 2 BR townhomes from \$204,990
www.riverstonebellevue.com

Available for Rent

Greater Seattle Area Rental Houses, Apts, Condos and Townhouses
brinkpm.com

TOP STORIES Latest Headlines

[Condo community conflicts go to attorneys](#)

[Leave plants, flowers, trees, and shrubs alone until mid-February](#)

[Mid-day golf cart ride on U.S. 301 ends in jail](#)

[Archives / Search 2003](#)

[Community Links](#)

"We have noticed a growing need for this type of space," Ortega said. Meanwhile, Ortega adds that they are close to an arrangement to build Phase II of the project, called Alafia Crossings, which will be approximately 40,000 square feet of retail space, and 20,000 square feet of professional office space. "We're about 55-percent committed on available space for it (Alafia Crossings) now," Ortega said. "And I think we're close to obtaining funding."

Because negotiations for funding are in progress, Ortega said he could not comment further at this time.

Plans for the total project also include several restaurants.

Some of the restaurant types Garrison is seeking are a large chain coffeehouse; an Italian restaurant; and possibly Thai but will consider other proposals as well. Meanwhile, Phase III of the project is a full-service Holiday Inn with restaurant and meeting rooms, to be developed by American Hotel Development Partners. "This will be different than the 'express' Holiday Inns currently in the area because it will offer all residents of the area a place for meetings and fine dining," Ortega said.

Apartment leasing will begin in the last quarter of this year, with move-ins beginning in the summer of 2011. Potential residents and professionals and retailers inquiring about space may obtain additional information by calling (877) 757-0505 or emailing info@preserveatalafia.com or info@alafiacruzings.com. Web sites are www.preserveatalafia.com and www.alafiacruzings.com.

*What follows is a public comments section. This is not from the Observer News staff - it comes from other people and contains their opinions and theirs alone. The Observer News does not control the material that follows. We do, however, reserve the right to remove objectionable material at our discretion. **By that we mean that we will edit or delete any content that we deem is inappropriate. By posting your comments, you are stating that you agree to these terms.***

[Click here to report a comment.](#)

Comments

No comments yet

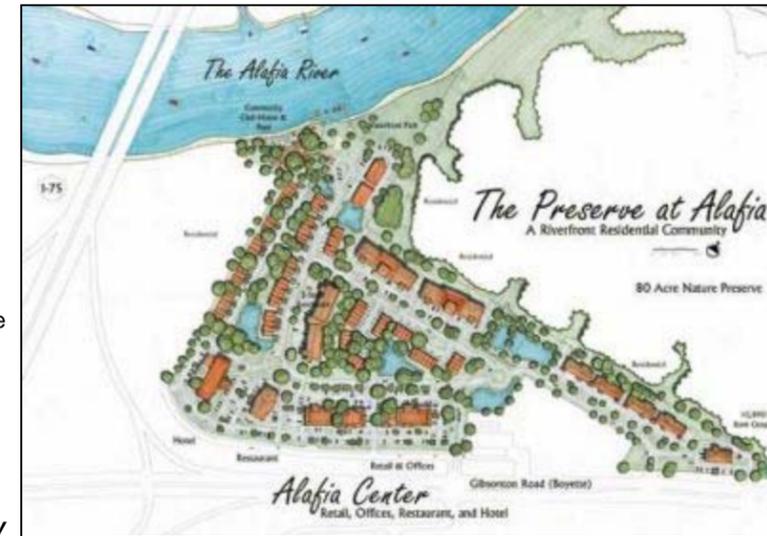
*Name:

Email:

Notify me about new comments on this page

Hide my email

*Text:



Powered by [Scriptsmill Comments Script](#)

© Copyright 2008 by The [Observer News](#) Publications and M&M Printing Company, Inc.

[Top of Page](#)