

Volusia developer Henin Group plans 160 townhomes on Sanford artery

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Jerome Henin, developer of the Mediterranean-themed Riviera Bella community in DeBary, wants to build something less pricey in Sanford that will appeal to the middle-of-the-road buyer.

Henin, principal at the **Henin Group**, said new housing stock coming on line is too expensive for many potential homebuyers. That's why he wants to develop 160 townhomes on Sanford's West First Street (S.R. 46) between Persimmon Avenue and Riverview Avenue.

"I think now days we're going too high in general terms; we need to be more reasonable," Henin told **GrowthSpotter**. "A townhome is something reasonable to do for people. We need to have values people can afford."

That said, Henin could not give a price range for the townhomes because the proposed development is still early in the city's approval process. Just last month, Sanford's Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval for Henin's affiliate company, Henin Springview LLC, to rezone the 17.74-acre project site from medium industrial to multifamily residential.

Next come environmental and traffic studies, then construction plans, which Henin said will take the first half of next year. Site development likely won't happen before next summer, or even later, he said.

At this point, Henin says he has no firm plans for the size and design of the homes, nor has he come up with a name for the community. He also would not give a dollar estimate for the project's cost.

"The bottom line is I don't really have a schedule," he said. "We just go through all the phases, processes, then you have an idea."

After doing business in the area for 27 years, Henin is more certain of why he wants to build in Sanford after developing the successful **Riviera Bella** gated community and recently finishing the first phase of **Springview Woods** single-family subdivision in DeBary.

He said the City of Sanford in Seminole County has a solid record of public improvements and historic preservation in the downtown area and along Lake Monroe.

Sanford businesses and restaurants are humming, Henin added, and the city's SunRail commuter rail stops near the intersection of West S.R. 46 and West Airport Boulevard giving city residents more transportation

options.

“Many things are moving toward making things better for people,” Henin said. “You have quick access to the highway and a lot of restaurants, shopping. There are quite a few things people care for. And there’s a lot of employment in the [nearby] Lake Mary area.”

Property records show the proposed project site is owned by three tenants in common: Robert F. Steele, Jane W. Sozke and David G. White. Henin has had the vacant land under contract since Feb. 8, according to city records.

Henin said he has not decided whether his company will handle vertical construction or hand it off to a general contractor. Site development will be done by another company, he said. Gary Beverly with Civil Design Solutions, LLC of Maitland is the civil engineer.

No matter who does what, Henin said his vision must be part of the final product.

“Every time I look at something, I really want to think about the final product, [whether] we want to build the whole thing ourselves or sell to national builders,” he said. “Even if we sell to national builders, we’re discussing the architecture. It doesn’t make sense to me to sell something without having an idea what final product will be.”

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