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Arts center might bunk with towers

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The third try could be a charm for developer Spencer Alpert, who has teamed with one of Federal Way's most significant land owners to propose a project featuring a performing arts center.

Brian Park and Alpert, of Alpert International, showcased their plans May 20 for a mixed-use development located at Park's Pal-Do World Plaza site on South 320th Street.

The presentation coincided with the city council's decision the same night to unanimously accept \$500,000 from the Legislature for pre-construction of an arts center.

But, for the second time this month, the council restrained from committing to a location for the facility.

Location

Alpert was a final contender last year for the redevelopment of the former AMC Theater property who showed interest in transforming the former Target site in late 2006. He revealed preliminary illustrations of a multiple-tower vision, called Pal-Do World Village.

Along with a performance center, Park and Alpert proposed residential, retail and office space, accompanied by parking, a hotel and a convention center. "The plans are preliminary and the heights of the buildings, the tallest measuring 30 stories, could be adjusted," Alpert said.

"I am really excited about this plan," council member Dini Duclos said.

Holding back:

The city council was not excited enough to commit to the design. Council members expressed a desire to secure a development agreement before investing funding in any particular site. "This could take up to six months to complete," Alpert said.

"Despite the council's hesitance to choose a location for a performance center, Park is hopeful the city council will soon pick his property for construction," he said.

"My impression, at this point, is my property is the most interesting, but they (the city council) could change this position," Park said.

If the city chooses not to locate the structure on his site, Park said he will proceed with the steps necessary to pursue development.

“It really doesn’t matter if a performing arts center is coming to our property or not, we have ongoing plans,” Park said Wednesday.

Funding:

With little discussion, the council moved forward in accepting \$500,000 awarded by the state during the last legislative session. The city will use \$400,000 of that to hire an architect to evaluate a performing arts center site for construction. The remaining \$100,000 will be used to hire a project manager. The funding must be dedicated by June 2009. If Park’s property is chosen, the legislative money will be used for the performance center only.

The city council was expected to vote May 6 whether to accept the state funding and pick a site for a performance center, but decided at that time to hold off until it could view Park’s plans for Pal-Do World Village.

“Taking the money does not guarantee the city will construct a performing arts center,” deputy mayor Eric Faison said. “Furthermore, the city is still considering land near Truman High School, 31455 28th Ave. S., as a possible location for such a venue.”

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Check it out:

Here are some proposed figures for Pal-Do World Village:

- 126,000 square feet of residential space
- 173,600 square feet of retail space
- 24,000 square feet of office space
- 130,000 square feet of parking
- 14,000 square-foot hotel
- 24,000 square-foot convention center
- 29,000 square-foot performing arts center

All figures provided by Alpert International and subject to change

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