Partners Got Foot In The Door

ELEMENT AMONG FOUR PROJECTS

BY JAMIE D. FRIELICH
The Tampa Tribune

DOWNTOWN — Groundbreakings are becoming routine for an Atlanta developer and a group of Tampa investors.

Since 2003, Novare Group and Intowgroup, which includes the Gardner family of South Tampa, have had four residential projects in development. At last week's groundbreaking for their latest collaboration, Element, Intowgroup President Greg Minder looked over his shoulder at machinery digging into the gravel and sand and said, "No question. This is activity."

He was responding to doubts about the strength of the residential boom in Tampa's urban core.

Novare and Intowgroup's projects include:

- A 29-story, 425-unit condominium complex with a ½-acre park and rooftop restaurant at 110 N. 12th St. in the Channel District.
- The 380-condo SkyPoint, set to open in April at Ashley Drive and Zack Street in downtown.
- Element, a 34-story, 355-unit project set for completion in early 2009 at 808 N. Franklin St.
- The 43-story Twelve, which would include 410 condos and 110 hotel rooms and is set for a city

See ELEMENT PARTNERS, Page 6 ⇒ Partnership connections outlined.

Business Buzz
Get an update on business openings, expansions and relocations.

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Building On Memories

Past days are recorded with hope for a future museum in Sulphur Springs.

SULPHUR SPRINGS — When Interstate 275 tore through the neighborhood, the blacks-only Dillard Elementary School and several houses were moved out.

"We had to relocate to Jackson Heights," Johnnie Barlow said.

That was in the 1970s and one of several times Barlow moved away from Sulphur Springs. She never stayed gone for long.

At age 54, Barlow is proud to be a longtime resident. Her church, New Bethel AME, which she began attending at age 11, celebrated its 49th anniversary last weekend.

"Sulphur Springs is a pretty nice neighborhood," she said.

She doesn't worry about its reputation for crime and drug

By KATHY STEELE
The Tampa Tribune

Making History
For information about the heritage project, contact UF assistant anthropology professor Antoinette Jackson at (1843) 944-4882 or ajackson@aa.ufl.edu or Noreen Robinson at (1843) 932-7038 or noreen@tampastparks.museum.org.

deal: "I'm not afraid to go to Bible study late at night."

Those kinds of memories and loyalties are helping create an oral history of Sulphur Springs and Spring Hill. Barlow and others met Saturday at George Barbo's new North Tampa Community Center to help pre-

See SULPHUR SPRINGS, Page 4 ⇒ Boundaries divided men.

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serve the past as part of the Spring Hill/Sulphur Springs History & Heritage Day.

The project is sponsored by the Sulphur Springs Museum, the University of South Florida Heritage Research Lab and the Sulphur Springs Action League Neighborhood Association.

USF students videotaped and recorded conversations and scheduled additional interviews. The goal is to preserve an oral history, with photographs and keepsakes, and eventually open a museum. Nine oral histories were recorded before last weekend. The goal is at least 30, said student volunteer Juan Ruiz.

Finding out how the past leads to the future means looking at the good and the bad, he said.

Sulphur Springs, which has its share of both, has always been home to the working poor. Boundaries separating blacks clustered in homes around Spring Hill Park from whites closer to the tourist side of Sulphur Springs defined the city's racial divide.

Norma Robinson of the Sulphur Springs Action League plans to ask the city for help finding a museum site. For a while, items were housed at an old storefront at the Harbor Club, once home to an all-white tourist club. Robinson said the museum lost its lease in December.

"We'd like to keep it in the neighborhood," she said. "We want to make people aware of what's here and bring them here."

As a child in the 1950s, Barlow saw Sulphur Springs' heyday as a tourist resort. Everyone knew where the racial lines were drawn.

"It didn't bother me," she said.

Blacks didn't swim at the spring-fed pool off Nebraska Avenue, spend their money in the arcade shops or go to movies at the local theater.

Spring Hill Park, where Barlow's uncle was in charge, was the heart of the black community. Rain showers drove children to scrunch together under its lone shelter.

Earl Glyphy, 74, lives on Yukon Street in a 43-year-old family home.

"We swam in Hillsborough River," he said. "Oddly enough, we used to get baptized in the river."

Blacks operated barber-shops, auto repair shops and laundries from their homes, he said. He attended Florida A&M and when he graduated got a job as a janitor at the University of South Florida. He became a teacher and when schools integrated in the 1970s he was sent to the predominantly white Pinecrest Elementary.

"That was one of the greatest experiences I ever had," he said.

Former resident Joel Barnum remembers the river in the 1960s for its clear water and plentiful mullet.

"You'd just scoop them up and put them in a bucket," said Barnum, 55, a deacon at New St. Matthews Missionary Baptist Church in Palm River, which traces its history to Sulphur Springs. "The river was so pure, so clean."

Samuel Scoggins, 72, lives in the University Area but called Sulphur Springs home from 1935 to the 1950s. His father drove a taxi and was a janitor at the Sulphur Springs school.

"My mother and I worked at a skating rink near the Sulphur Springs pool," he said. "To me, it was the down-fall," Scoggins said.

There were promises the property would be developed, but said it's now a parking lot for the Tampa Greyhound track.

"I take a ride through there every once in awhile," he said of his old neighborhood. "It's improving. It's got an awful way to go."

John Clay, 62, remembers music shows at the band shell next to the pool. The shell is now fenced off.

"People would get dressed up," Clay said.

His family lived in Seminole Heights and owned citrus groves north of Sulphur Springs. He would finish his chores and head to the springs with 20 cents.

It cost a dime to get into the pool, and a dime at an arcade shop got you a big hot dog and a root beer. There was a chute at the springs that swooshed into the river, and Clay said he and friends would ride the chute at the end of the day and swim home in the river.

To slake their thirst, he said, they "would dive into the pool to the bottom where the water bubbled up and take a fresh gulp."

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DEVELOPER SURPRISED

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er better, she said.

Councilman Chip Fletcher said single-family houses also typically create more drainage problems than town houses.

"That's the kind of trade-off you have to look at," he said.

East Tampa redevelopment manager Ed Johnson said the town houses get a green light.

Most of the neighborhood housing is single-family, but Johnson said a complex of more than 100 apartments is within blocks of Palissox.

The council voted to reschedule the hearing to April 26 to allow talks between Palmers and developers. Their concern is the two- and three-square-foot lots on which the houses are built. This is the time of year when many contractors need to clear trees and brush away from streets.