



Archdiocese City Of Miami To Unite For Garage Retail Offices

Written by [Risa Polansky](#) on May 15, 2008

By Risa Polansky

More parking inventory is in the works for downtown Miami.

A surface lot at 120 NE 2nd Street is to be the future home of a mixed-use parking facility after Miami Parking Authority Off-Street Parking Board members agreed last week to a joint venture to design and build the structure with POM, Inc., a subsidiary of the Archdiocese of Miami, and [Haim Einhorn of Arbel I, LLC](#).

The garage is to include 450 parking spaces and about 25,000 square feet of ground-floor retail that will have to adhere to faith-based restrictions set by the Catholic archdiocese, said Rolando G. Tapanes, the authority's director of planning and development.

Some office space is also possible, though plans are still in flux, Mr. Tapanes said. Arbel planned to build a residential project on the Archdiocese-owned property, but has agreed now to operate the retail component of the planned development as a subtenant of the parking authority, which is to lease the land for 50 years.

Should agreements be solidified soon, the project could spend up to nine more months in predevelopment stages and take 12 to 18 months to construct, Mr. Tapanes said. Funding plans are uncertain as the project takes off.

Arthur Noriega, chief executive officer of the authority, called it a "perfect overflow opportunity," citing tight occupancy in the nearby College Station Garage at 190 NE 3rd Street.

Added Mr. Tapanes in an e-mail, "there is an ever-increasing demand in this area given all the new residential stock that is coming online."

Residents of the Related Group's nearby Loft projects are also to park in the College Station Garage, so "the addition of this garage directly across the street from our G-3 (College Station Garage) but also a stone's throw from Loft's I, II and III will be a welcomed addition," he said.

The planned garage would serve retail customers, area office workers, residents with extra vehicles, residents' visitors and parishioners of the GESU church. Mr. Tapanes told board members last week that a bookstore may occupy the retail space. Entities that won't: those relating to "birth control, abortions, genetic testing or euthanasia" or those that "in any manner will offend the moral sensibilities of the Roman Catholic Church," according to the ground lease between the Archdiocese and the authority.

Though the authority is an arm of the City of Miami, "given that we are in essence a tenant of the Archdiocese, we would be bound by whatever specifications and requirements they impose regarding the use of their land," Mr. Tapanes said. Additional parking, offices and street-level retail is also on the way for downtown as part of the new Courthouse Center Garage, 40 NW 3rd St.

The authority broke ground on the 11-story structure last month. It is to include 852 parking spaces — up from 515 in the recently demolished old garage — 4,042 square feet of retail and 40,878 square feet of office space.

It's set to open fall 2009.