

Landmark clubhouse sold for condo

■ Some members of the Miami Women's Club approved selling their historic bayfront building. The buyer plans to renovate and put up a condo.

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A handful of Miami Woman's Club members voted Tuesday to sell the club's historic building on Biscayne Bay for \$15 million to a developer who has done renovations and new construction from Miami Beach to Cutler Ridge.

Haim Einhorn plans to renovate the club's twin, five-story Spanish Renaissance towers at 1737 N. Bayshore Dr., between Margaret Pace Park and the Doubletree Grand Hotel and build a 300-unit condo tower behind them, according to Kathryn Reid Kassner, a club member who attended a luncheon meeting at which the vote was taken.

9-7 VOTE

Kassner, administrator of the nearby Bay Oaks Home for the Aged, said nine members voted for the sale. Seven, including herself, voted against it, after a presentation by an attorney for Einhorn.

Neither club president Betty T. Lasch, 71, whose website lists her as broker/owner of Miami Shores Realty, nor Einhorn would comment last night.

Christopher Saia of Jupiter, Einhorn's lawyer, couldn't be reached.

Einhorn's website lists him as "manager and principal" of Arbel, a development, prop-



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erty management and consulting firm.

Other Arbel projects include the 17-story Capital Building Lofts at 117 NE First Ave. downtown; Galilee Gardens, a 433-unit South Miami low-rise; the Everglades Apartments and the Nassau Hotel and Apartments on South Beach.

OBJECT OF DESIRE: This 79-year-old building at 1737 N. Bayshore Dr., home of the Miami Woman's Club, has long been coveted by developers.

The club, chartered in 1900 as the Married Ladies Afternoon Club, has seen membership dwindle to about 60 from its peak of 900 — the cream of Miami society — in the 1920s.

Its major project now is scholarships to Miami-Dade Community College.

According to Kassner, 53, a longtime Miamian whose great-grandmother, Mary Moore, was club president from 1911 to 1915, "the club would retain the fourth and fifth floors; the developer would have condo rights to the first three floors. He plans to put up a 300-unit condo in what's now the parking lot and will retain water rights.

UNRESOLVED DETAILS

Kassner, a preservation advocate who joined the club last year, thinks the unresolved details might have something to do with getting a variance for the new construction on property designated as historically significant.

Kassner said members hadn't been told that the matter would come up for a vote and that she lost a request to postpone it until more members could attend.

"This is only the most significant issue in the 105-year history of the women's club, yet it went unnoticed," she said.

In comparison, Knight Ridder, The Herald's parent company, has just sold 10 acres surrounding the newspaper building — four blocks south of the club — for \$190 million.

Herald business writer Ina Paiva Cordle contributed to this story.

Eileen Cubillas, a past club president and director of the building, said no contract had been signed and that the club was working to improve the deal. Cubillas declined to provide details.

Built in 1926 on a two-acre site and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1974, the Woman's Club building has been the object of developers' desires for years.

In October, nine developers pitched their ideas to club members.

At the time, Lasch told The Herald that any deal would have to permit the club to remain in the building. She said proceeds of a sale would be deposited in an endowment.