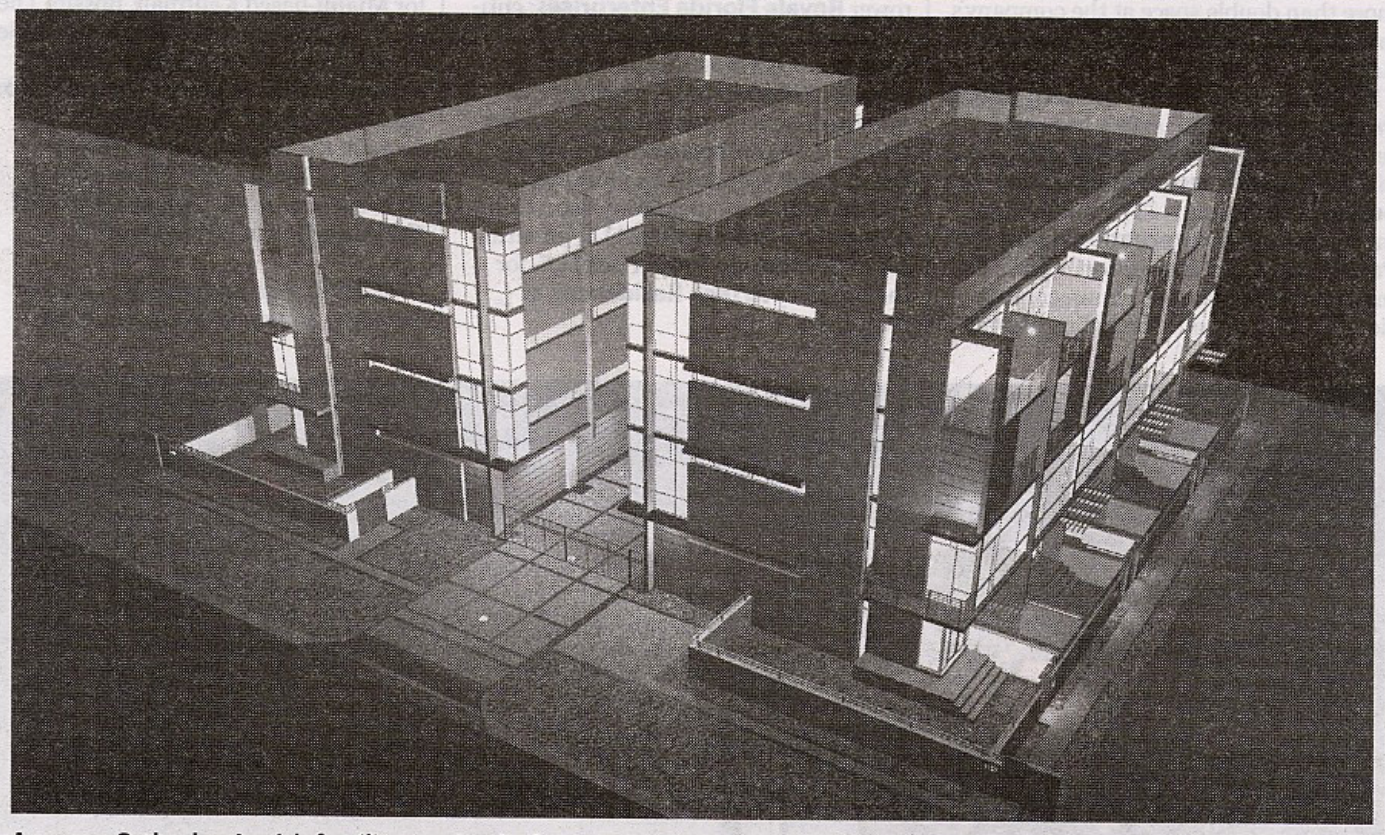


As many Orthodox Jewish families tend to be large, so are Carat Townlofts' four-bedroom, four-and-a-half-bath units.

ISLAND DIAMOND

Developer creates kosher Carat

CARAT TOWNLOFTS
Developer: Eric Harari
Web site: www.caratbayharbor.com
Address: 1100 100th St., Bay Harbor Islands 33154
Phone: (786) 543-4831

Eric Harari is building an uncommon answer to a very Orthodox need.

The Paris-born real estate developer has crafted Carat Townlofts, a 12-unit, two-building development in the heart of Bay Harbor Islands.

His market is a super-select niche: upwardly mobile Orthodox Jews who require special amenities to fulfill religious requirements.

Carat offers timers on lights and electrical systems, so owners do not violate Shabbat, the weekly day of rest. Each unit's pool is private and enclosed. The kitchens are kosher. They are big and spacey, built for two sets of stoves, sinks, dishwashers and other appliances, so meat and dairy products can be kept separate.

And, as many Orthodox families tend to be large, so are the units at Carat: four bedrooms with four and a half baths.

Harari said you don't have to be Jewish to buy one of his units, but he said the project was born from a recognition that developments weren't being built for the needs of Orthodox families.

"From its inception, Bay Harbor Islands has always attracted Orthodox people because of the closeness of the shuls," Bay Harbor Islands Mayor Peter Lynch said.

Harari is not the only developer to recognize the potential in Bay Harbor Islands. The town is tracking 23 projects as of June 17, with the largest being just 34 units. Residents of the small, two-island town in northern Miami-Dade County have struggled to save the community's quiet atmosphere of

MARK FREERKS

Eric Harari shows the side-by-side ovens that come standard in Carat units.

See **CARAT**, next page

Miramar Town Center development gets city OK

BY KEMILA VELAN

Miramar city commissioners have given a unanimous nod to three site plans for Miramar Town Center, a 54-acre, $235 million mixed-use neighborhood poised to create a central urban core for the sprawling suburban city.

The site and architectural plans, approved on July 5, are slated to carve a new face on a pie-shaped quadrant north of Miramar Parkway between Red Road, Hiatus Road and Miramar Boulevard.

The project – a partnership of the city, Kimco Developers, Rockefeller Development Corp. and Miami-based Lowell Homes – will eventually include 133 townhomes, 355 condominiums, 16 live-work units, 175,000 square feet of retail and restaurants, more than 50,000 square feet of office space and a transit hub that connects Broward and Miami-Dade counties' bus routes.

The commercial construction is the latest phase in a larger plan that includes the new Miramar City Hall, which opened in 2004. A future phase of Miramar Town Center calls for additional public facilities, including a new cultural arts center and library.

'Gorgeous and inviting'

"It's gorgeous and inviting," assistant city manager Wazir Ishmael said of his new office digs. "It sends a powerful message that the city of Miramar is on the move."

The commercial development of Miramar Town Center takes that message to the next level, officials and developers say.

Drody

"We're just delighted to be building in Miramar again," said Lani Kahn Drody, executive VP of Lowell Homes, which will break ground on the residential portion in December. "For many years, we have enjoyed a good relationship with the city. The staff and leaders are hard-working for the sake of the city and its residents."

A sales office for the new units is slated to open sometime this summer, Drody said

But already, she said, there is a 60-page waiting list of interested buyers, mostly

See **MIRAMAR**, Page 22

'Parking lots are key' to project, Rockefeller exec says

MIRAMAR, from Page 20

local with some international parties. Two- and three-bedroom condos will be priced from the mid-$200,000s to the low $400,000s, and townhomes will start in the low $400,000s.

Meanwhile, Rockefeller Group Development Corp. is to break ground this month on the first of two parking garages providing about 1,000 spaces.

"The parking lots are key, before we build anything else," said John L. Petricola, Florida regional director of the Rockefeller Group. "We will literally wrap the parking lot with condominium units. It's the mundane nuts and bolts, but we can't do the retail without the parking lot."

'We are all very excited about it and the implementation is imminent. We have been working on this for a while for the benefit of the people and the city.'

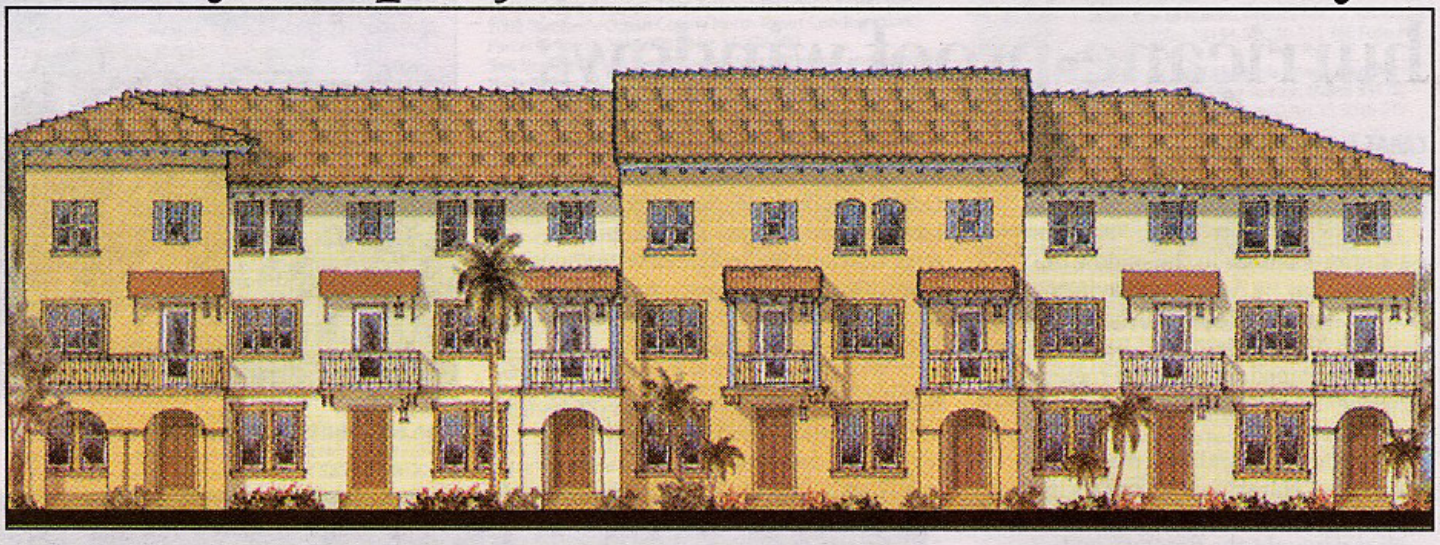
Wazir Ishmael
Miramar assistant city manager

Both local and national retailers are currently negotiating with Kimco Developers, which is overseeing the project's retail prong. Petricola declined to give specific name, but as many as 40 new tenants could be announced in September.

"We don't want to release names until the ink is dry," said Petricola, who works closely with Kimco. "But things are going really well at this time."

Projected completion for the entire project, according to Kimco VP Norman Brody, is late 2009 or early 2010.

But the city of Miramar is readying shovels to break ground as soon as this fall on its new cultural center arts park and a Miramar branch library and educational complex. These publicly funded facilities will hug each side of the new city hall.



There is a 60-page waiting list of interested buyers for the residential component of the Miramar Town Center development.

County, state funding approved

The city hired Centex-Rooney Construction Co. to build the 72,000-square-foot library, whose future tenants will include Broward Community College on the second floor and Nova-Southeastern University on the third. Miramar has been approved for $2.1 million in state and county funding to bankroll the project.

At the same time, Kaufman Lynn General Contractors will begin construction of the cultural arts center, which the state is helping underwrite with a $500,000 grant.

"We're all very excited about it, and the implementation is imminent," Miramar's Ishmael said. "We have been working on this for a while for the benefit of the people and the city."

Miramar is the second-fastest-growing city in Florida and third fastest in the nation among cities with a population greater than 50,000, according to census data.

Miramar is home to offices or facilities of 47 *Fortune* 500 companies and touts itself as the region's top corporate spot.

"It's a capstone project," Ishmael said of Miramar Town Center. "It's the defining project, the icing on the cake."

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