

Sports complex proposed here

VINELAND — A group of developers is expected to announce this week plans to build a \$300 million sports complex and four-star hotel on more than 250 acres in South Vineland.

The developers of the proposed Magic Sports complex, on Sheridan Avenue near Lincoln Avenue and Route 55, said they will hold a City Hall news conference Thursday to formally introduce the project and answer questions.

Plans for sports complex and destination resort will be submitted today to the city Zoning Board for review prior to its Nov. 28 meeting, according to Teddie O'Keefe, publicist for the project. The developers say it could bring hundreds of new jobs to the city.

A sale agreement is in place with South Jersey Industries, which owns the vast majority of the land that makes up the 288.6-acre site, the developers said.

"Strategically, we feel this is a great opportunity and Vineland is the place," Bruce Farrell, the project's director of development, told The Daily Journal.

The proposal is being submitted by Magic Sports Complex of New Jersey and its master developer, Sora Northeast Development of Sewell.

The plan is to build a large state-of-the-art indoor/outdoor facility that would offer a host of sports-related and recreational activities and special events, Farrell said. That includes training camps and leagues for competitive tournament events in baseball, basketball, softball, soccer and track, among other sports programs.

The facility would include medical services, health and wellness programs, Farrell said.

In addition to the sports complex, the developers want to build a four-star hotel with conference facilities, as well as an indoor and outdoor water park to be developed in the second phase of the project.

The complex would be built in two phases. The first phase is expected to break ground early next year, the developers said. The second phase would come sometime in the next three years, they said.

Farrell said the project could create

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hundreds of permanent jobs as each phase is completed, as well as 200 to 400 temporary construction jobs.

Magic Sports Complex of New Jersey LLC was founded by Ron Nametko.

Several years ago, the firm was unsuccessful in its bid to develop a similar project in Atlantic County. Hamilton Township officials voted against allowing the complex to locate in the Mays Landing area because of traffic and cost concerns. The developers have looked at Cumberland County for a while, ultimately settling on Vineland as the ideal location.

“We’ve been hearing things that are generally positive, we haven’t heard anything negative,” Nametko said. “We’ve been hearing how great this is going to be.”

Nametko said he has worked on the concept for several years, conducting market studies to determine the projected success of such a complex within the sports industry. He said Magic Sports complex would be the prototype for similar future developments elsewhere.

“I consider the Vineland location optimally well-suited to launch the complex in the highly populated northeast corridor of the United States,” Nametko said.

Sora Northeast Development is headed by Greg Filipek, who has more than 30 years of development and construction experience in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New York. Its team

encompasses a broad background in planning, financing and building of residential, retail and commercial projects.

At a glance

Magic Sports Complex of New Jersey LLC is expected to submit plans for the sports complex to the Vineland Zoning Board today. .

A news conference is planned for 11 a.m. Thursday with Magic Sports at City Hall council chambers. The news conference is open to the public.

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