

# At old Bahia Cabana site, a new hotel is set to rise

By David Volz  
Contributing Writer

**Fort Lauderdale** - Years after the popular Bahia Cabana restaurant, bar and hotel was demolished, city commissioners approved a new hotel in its place.

Plans for the 10-story, 124-room Bahia Cabana Hotel, 3001 Harbor Drive, include six residential units, 98 parking spaces, a pool, café, gym, roof deck, bar and three outdoor terrace areas. The old Bahia Cabana was closed because of damage from Hurricane Irma in 2017. The hotel was demolished in 2019.

At this point, the developer, 3001-18 Harbor Drive, LLC, has not disclosed how much is being invested in the property or the timeline for construction. But, according to the Broward County Property Appraiser, the site sold in 2017 for \$17.2 million.

If the developer follows the typical timelines of the site plan approval, a building permit will be submitted within 18 months and be granted within 24 months from the date of approval by the commission, said Anthony Fajardo, director of sustainable development for Fort Lauderdale.

No residents spoke for or against the project when it was approved on Dec. 2 but the renderings have gotten a lot of positive comments on social media.

“The project was approved and was supported by all the immediate neighbors, which is unusual for a beach project. This will be an attractive project for that part of the beach,” said Vice Mayor Steven Glassman.

Mayor Dean Trantalis said he’s looking forward to a new hotel and touted the employment opportunities it will provide.



The planned 10-story Bahia Cabana Hotel will include 124 rooms and six residential units. [Adache Group Architects]

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“This will be good for Fort Lauderdale and will be an important addition to the southern beach area . . . We are excited about this project,” he said.

Along with new jobs, the hotel will also generate an increase in the amount of people utilizing the



water and sewage services in that area.

That increase was the focus of commission discussion and questions at the Dec. 2 meeting.

Glassman initiated the conversation about infrastructure by asking if there was any idea about the age and condition of the pipes. He was concerned that there might be substandard clay

pipes or issues with inadequate maintenance.

“We don’t know the condition because we were not asked to study this area,” said Raj Verma, director of the Public Works Department. He said the area is scheduled for repair and maintenance in three or four

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## Depression obsession

# A love of Depression Era wares is the passion that powers vintage glass show

By Michael d'Oliveira  
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John Fiore knows he's obsessed with Depression Era glass.

It started while he was a politician in Wilton Manors in the 90s, going to yard and antique sales as a way to meet constituents.

But Fiore didn't want to develop a reputation as the guy who never bought anything, so he would buy small pieces of Depression glass; \$5 here, \$10 there.

It wasn't long before he and his partner, Michael Pierce, were hooked.

"We bought more of it. And we bought more of it. It's something we enjoy," said Fiore. "It's our hobby." When Fiore and Pierce lived in their condo, the glass filled much of the space. Things didn't change when they moved into their current home. "We're in the house now. It's fuller," said Fiore.

The glass gets its name from being produced in the 20s and 30s, during The Great Depression, but club members are interested in any American made glass from the 1880s to the 1980s.



John Fiore and Michael Pierce show off some pieces of their Depression glass collection. [Staff]

For Fiore, it's all about the colors and designs, but it's not just decorative. When he and Pierce host parties, out comes the glass.

"The fun part is you can use it. You just got to be little careful with it and never put it in the dishwasher. Ever."

Fiore said the parties are on hold during the pandemic. But so, too, are the meetings of the South Florida Depression Glass Club, of which Fiore is a past president.

Before the pandemic put a halt to things, the club, which began in Hollywood, met monthly in at the Woman's Club of Wilton Manors.

One thing that is still on is the club's annual sale – the Vintage American Glass & Pottery Show and Sale, Feb. 6 [9 a.m. to 5 p.m.] and Feb. 7 [10 a.m. to 2 p.m.] Early buying is Feb. 6 from 9 to 10 a.m.

"You bet your glass" is the name of this year's show.

There will be raffle prizes and the first 100 attendees on each day will get a free gift.

The cost is \$5 for attendees who present a show card [which will be placed at various locations around South Florida] and \$6 for regular admission.

Masks or face coverings will be required and hand sanitizer will be provided.

The Lauderhill Performing Arts Center, 3800 NW 11 Place, will be the venue. Last year, the show was at Florida Atlantic University.

"Hopefully we'll have a good show this year," said Fiore, who estimates about 14 vendors will be present. Like so many events before them, the glass show lost vendors to the pandemic's impact.

Visit [sfdgc.com](http://sfdgc.com) for more information on the South Florida Depression Glass Club.

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years but that can be fast-tracked.

"If they [the developer] want to fast track their project, we expect them to help us," said Verma.

Attorney Robert Lochrie, representing the developer, said his client will contribute \$200,000 towards capital

improvements "and we believe that should assist with any items that need to be fixed." Lochrie added that his client has a vested interest in making sure the infrastructure is good enough to meet the hotel's needs.

As to the question of an unexpected infrastructure problem that may go beyond the

money already pledged by the developer, Lochrie said his client is willing to work with the city "to the extent we can."

The commission was advised by the city attorney that it cannot use possible infrastructure problems as a reason to deny or delay a project, something that Glassman and Trantalis said should be

revisited.

Trantalis said previous inadequate commission action is the reason the city is having so many infrastructure problems.

Said Glassman, "At the end of the day it just behooves all parties to make sure that this is in good shape."