

Fort Myers Beach hotel developer pays \$7.2 million



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Torgerson Properties spent \$7.2 million Thursday to pick up another 3.3 acres for its hotel project just south of the Matanzas Pass Bridge(Photo: Special to news-press.com)

Minnesota-based Torgerson Properties spent \$7.2 million Thursday to pick up another 3.3 acres for its hotel project just south of the Matanzas Pass Bridge on Fort Myers Beach.

The property was purchased from Grand Resort-Ft Myers Beach LLC, which is managed by Torgerson CEO Tom Torgerson, from Huntingburg Partners Ltd. Fort Myers-based real estate broker Frank Helmerich was the broker for the owners.]

Helmerich said in September 2013 that he was working on a "massive redevelopment" of the bedraggled commercial area, which he said could be replaced by a national motel resort with a multilevel parking lot.

The property bought Thursday consists of Helmerich Plaza and a parking lot at Estero Boulevard and Fifth Street, according to Lee County Property Appraiser's online records.

On March 27, Grand Resort-Ft Myers Beach bought about half an acre of nearby beach-front property stretching north from canal Street for \$6.1 million.

Torgerson said Monday he couldn't release much information about the project because "it's too preliminary in the process for me to make comments. We're still formulating our plans."

But he said one of his goals is to use the development to help ease the severe traffic congestion that often afflicts Estero Boulevard close to the Matanzas Pass Bridge, where cars pour onto the island from the mainland.

Torgerson has met with Fort Myers Beach town officials but no details have been discussed, Town Manager Don Stilwell said Monday.

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