

BEST MIXED USE DEAL OF THE YEAR



Neighborhood compromise saves Kendall Village Center

This is a tale of the project that almost wasn't.

And if not for Coconut Grove developer Jeffrey Berkowitz's persistence, Kendall Village Center might never have happened.

The 650,000-square-foot center on North Kendall Drive is this year's winner as Best Mixed-Use Deal.

Initially, the Kendall Village Center site was to be a 10-dealer auto showroom and park.

That's what Berkowitz and partners, auto giants Alan and Robert Potamkin, envisioned when they purchased the land for \$12 million.

The problem was, neighbors didn't take to the plan. The Kendall Federation of Homeowners and other neighborhood groups argued it was inappropriate for the entrance to west Kendall. The county commission denied the park by a 5-4 vote.

That left Berkowitz and his partners with 23 acres now zoned for a million square feet of offices. Too bad, there wasn't a market for offices in Kendall. Disheartened, but not defeated, Berkowitz compromised with neighbors, cutting a deal to build a mix of retail, office and residences on the site.

The Kendall Federation liked the plan so

WINNER

Kendall Village Center

Deal: \$100 million

mixed-use center

Berkowitz

Development Corp.

2665 S. Bayshore Drive, Suite

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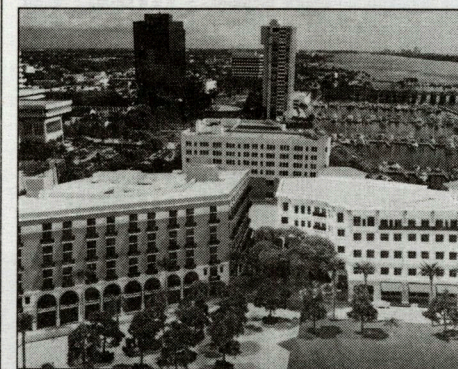
much, it nominated Berkowitz developer of the year.

Berkowitz kept going.

He assembled six additional properties, consisting of 17 acres. Berkowitz landed retailers like The Gap, Pier 1 Imports, and Old Navy. Restaurants such as the Bahama Breeze, Starlite Diner and Gatsby's, an upscale billiards club, signed up. Berkowitz went from being the town's nemesis to a booster.

"Despite more than a decade of insurmountable obstacles, enormous governmental and regulatory battles and approval requirements, developers were able to preserve and create a village atmosphere," Berkowitz said.

FINALIST



Waterfront Clematis, Rendina Cos.