

THE REAL DEAL

Berkowitz makes first industrial play in Homestead

Firm plans roughly 400K sq spec self-storage, distribution center

Miami / By Lidia Dinkova

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Rendering of the project with Berkowitz Development President Michael Berkowitz (Edward Silva architect)

UPDATED, Jan. 6, 2:56 p.m.: Berkowitz Development Group plans a self-storage and distribution center in Homestead, marking the firm's debut in industrial real estate in the city.

The Coconut Grove-based company wants to build a nearly 400,000-square-foot speculative project on land west of the Homestead-Miami Speedway, Michael Berkowitz, company president, told *The Real Deal*.

Berkowitz Development paid \$6.7 million for the 19 acres between Southwest 152nd Avenue and Park of Commerce Boulevard, south of Southwest 328th Street, according to records and real estate data provider Vizzda. The seller is an entity led by Clifford Lincoln.

"We have been looking in this market for years," Berkowitz said. "There has been a tremendous amount of new residential density built, and we feel there is strong demand for new industrial space."

Preliminary plans call for up to five buildings, but Berkowitz Development will build the project in chunks. The first phase is a three-story self-storage facility spanning 110,000 square feet, Berkowitz said. This will be followed by warehouses targeting last-mile delivery services and logistics. Edward Silva is the architect.

A site plan application is pending in front of the city. If Homestead officials approve the project, completion of the first phase is expected next year, Berkowitz said.

Berkowitz Development was founded in 1985 by Jeff Berkowitz, (<https://therealdeal.com/miami/tag/jeff-berkowitz/>) who is the company's chairman, though his son Michael is taking the lead on the Homestead project.

The firm has been a prolific developer in Miami-Dade County, mainly focused on retail real estate. Its marquee projects include the Miami Beach shopping center at Alton Road and Fifth Street that's home to Publix, Best Buy, TJ Maxx and other stores; the Dadeland Station Shopping Center between Dadeland Mall and a Metrorail station; and the Kendallgate Shopping Center on the southwest corner of the turnpike and Southwest 88th Street, according to the firm's website.

It recently scored a \$50 million refinancing for Kendallgate and repositioned the 200,000-square-foot property, securing new tenants for roughly 77,000 square feet, Berkowitz said. New retailers include shoe store DSW, arts and crafts store Michaels, and Foot Locker.

In 2013, the company made a splash with the announcement of a planned downtown Miami supertall (https://preview.thealdeal.com/miami/2014/02/12/developer-talks-miami-skyscraper-plans/?utm_source=therealdeal.com&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=820331&utm_campaign=trd_external_link), dubbed SkyRise Miami, overlooking Biscayne Bay. But Berkowitz Development scrapped (https://preview.thealdeal.com/miami/2021/06/29/developer-jeff-berkowitz-cancels-plans-for-skyrise-miami-observation-tower?utm_source=therealdeal.com&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=820331&utm_campaign=trd_external_link) the 1,000-foot tall project in 2021, after failing to secure financing amid the pandemic.

Homestead (<https://therealdeal.com/miami/tag/homestead/>) and surrounding south Miami-Dade areas have long been bedroom communities that have attracted residents priced out of prime Miami markets such as Brickell.

But more recently, the area has experienced an influx (https://therealdeal.com/issues_articles/southward-bound/) of commercial developers, lured by the healthy supply of developable land at more attainable prices than neighborhoods farther north.

The biggest industrial project planned for south Miami-Dade is the 5.9 million-square-foot South Dade Logistics and Technology District, which has proven controversial as it would rise outside the Urban Development Boundary.

In November, a majority of county commissioners sided with developers Stephen Blumenthal, of Coral Rock Development, and Jose Hevia, of Aligned Real Estate Holdings, by overriding (<https://therealdeal.com/miami/2022/11/15/miami-dade-commissioners-override-mayors-vote-on-industrial-megaproject-outside-udb/>) Mayor Daniella Levine Cava's project veto (https://preview.thealdeal.com/miami/2022/11/10/mayor-levine-cava-vetoes-industrial-megaproject-outside-udb/?utm_source=therealdeal.com&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=820331&utm_campaign=trd_external_link).

Opponents took their fight against South Dade Logistics to the state, asking (https://preview.thealdeal.com/miami/2022/12/02/udb-battle-not-over-megaproject-opponents-take-fight-to-state/?utm_source=therealdeal.com&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=820331&utm_campaign=trd_external_link) for a review of commissioners' approval and for a judge to ultimately nix the project.

Read more

- "Gotta go up": Mapping the supertalls on tap in Miami (https://preview.thealdeal.com/miami/2022/12/22/gotta-go-up-mapping-the-supertalls-on-tap-in-miami/?utm_source=therealdeal.com&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=820331&utm_campaign=trd_external_link)
- Here are South Florida's biggest industrial sales of 2022 (https://preview.thealdeal.com/miami/2022/12/28/here-are-south-floridas-biggest-industrial-sales-of-2022/?utm_source=therealdeal.com&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=820331&utm_campaign=trd_external_link)
- Here are South Florida's biggest industrial leases of 2022 (https://preview.thealdeal.com/miami/2022/12/16/here-are-south-floridas-biggest-industrial-leases-of-2022/?utm_source=therealdeal.com&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=820331&utm_campaign=trd_external_link)

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