



Some 45,000 square feet remain in 135,000-square-foot 2020 Ponce.

2020 Ponce incentive: the lease-to-buy option

By YUDISLAIDY FERNANDEZ

Miami developer Tibor Hollo is giving prospective tenants an incentive to rent now and buy later at his newly-built 14-floor office tower in Coral Gables.

Signed tenants who commit to buy their space within the first year of leasing get to put the net rent paid during the first year toward purchasing the space, said Mr. Hollo, founder and chairman of Florida East Coast Realty.



Tibor Hollo

The 350,000-square-foot tower at 2020 Ponce de Leon Blvd. consists of seven stories of offices totaling 135,000 square feet, a six-level parking garage and ground-level retail.

"We wanted to make the best-looking building in the area and I think we succeeded," Mr. Hollo said.

Of the 135,000 square feet of offices, about 45,000 are still available for lease or sale, he noted. So far, he said, 40% of deals are sales and 20% leases with option to buy.

Coral Gables, like other business hubs in Miami-Dade, is being hurt by the slowdown in office market activity. The city's overall vacancy is 19.5%, according to Jones Lang LaSalle's second quarter office report.

Available space at the tower ranges from 500 to 16,500 square feet of column-free floor plans. Parking ratio is four spaces per 1,000 square feet.

Leasing rates, depending on the floor, range from \$35 to \$45 a square foot, full service, Mr. Hollo said, and sale prices vary from \$500 to \$700 a square foot. Donna Abood of Colliers International, who handles the sales and leasing, was on vacation and couldn't be reached.

The developer is in negotiations with an upscale Italian restaurant from New York to occupy a 6,000-square-foot space on the ground floor. A deal, he says, he should wrap up in a month.

The remaining retail space on the ground floor has been sold and should be occupied by a bank. Mr. Hollo still owns the drive-through connected to the space, which he says he is to lease to the new bank tenant. The bank's name hasn't been disclosed.

"People recognize the quality of the building," he said.

The Gables office condos have appealed to such businesses as architecture firms, industrial firms, lawyers and accountants.

Also, a division of global conglomerate The Cisneros Group took over one of the two penthouses.

The Cisneros Group of Companies, headed by Chairman Gustavo Cisneros, is a diversified umbrella of high-profile businesses with holdings in Venezuela's leading TV network, Venevisión, the country's second-largest brewery and beer distributor and the Miss Venezuela pageant. The company's global headquarters is in the Gables' Alhambra Towers, developed by The Allen Morris Co.

The 12,900-square-foot penthouse, with a wraparound balcony and a 360-degree view of the city, is to house Vision Strategic Services, a member of Cisneros Group.

The building recently became home to local artist Luisa Mesa's art installation "Evolution," which is made up of colored circles of various sizes displayed on the walls and ceiling of the lobby.

"I wanted to make it unique," Mr. Hollo said. "There's a lot of beautiful office buildings in the Gables, let's face it, so I wanted to do it extraordinary."