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Doctor's Village developers launch lifestyle brand

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JACKSONVILLE — AccuBuild Development Corp. President Mark Rubin has a vision for the future of medical real estate development, and is starting in Jacksonville with his Doctor's Village concept.

The mixed-use medical office complexes will combine retail and medical, life and health, to create a specific lifestyle brand.

Rubin and real estate broker Bob Warren, president of Jacksonville-based Warren & Co. Commercial Properties, are planning a mix of 70 percent medical space and 30 percent retail to maximize cross traffic. And all growth will be tightly controlled and targeted to specific types of business.

Rubin said there are some retail shops that are a "must have" to complete the lifestyle brand for Doctor's Village, like a bank, coffee shop and nail salon, along with other more optional spaces for a restaurant or dry cleaner, among others. Turnkey medical space sells for up to \$250 per square foot, while retail space is leased and variable.

Physician access is under even tighter access controls. Physicians wanting to relocate to the development have to be invited to control growth and avert competing specialties, and encourage referrals within the center. That means there will only be one surgical center, one orthopedic group and one optometry office, for example.

"The way our model is designed, we don't look at selling business condos in Condo USA, we're developing a brand here, and that's a partnership," Rubin said.

The first of three is under construction in Julington Creek. That area was strategically chosen because it is medically underserved with a high family population and housing growth projection. The other locations were selected using the same criteria.

Warren and Rubin are launching a major marketing offensive at the neighboring housing developments, securing three years of back-page ads on development directories in several nearby high-end neighborhoods. They are also planning events to draw people in, such as art or health fairs and farmers markets.

Ray Rodriguez, a Jacksonville real estate consultant, said he expects the concept to be a win with real estate trending toward developments like Doctor's Village.

"As the population ages and the country travels through a recession for some time, centralization and consolidation will rule," Rodriguez said.

There are 209 medical office condos with about 5 million square feet of medical space in 437 medically zoned establishments in Jacksonville, but none with the concept that Rubin has envisioned, Rodriguez said. The Julington Creek location will consist of six 10,000-square-foot buildings, housing up to 24 medical offices, but each development will be individually styled for its community.

Rubin also plans for the centers to be far from cookie-cutter medical office parks, incorporating aspects of urbanist design centers, which use some existing retail in mixed-use developments, but an overall design that is very residential in character. It will also leave more of nature intact, preserving as many trees as possible, leaving a pond on one site and adding water features to others.

Rubin and Warren have been busy selling physicians on the concept, too, giving two to three presentations a week to groups of prospective tenants. They take it as a good sign.

"We're committed to doing these three, and if they are successful, we will grow from there," Rubin said. "Based on the initial reaction, I think that's possible."