

# Developer, Miami-Dade village sued over mixed-use project

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## Story Highlights

- Jerilyn Kobrick sues El Portal, developer over eight-story development violating zoning rules.
- Project exceeds four-story limit within 250 feet of residential areas.
- Village approved six stories, with two more for public benefits contribution.

A homeowner is suing the Village of El Portal and the developer of a [planned mixed-use development](#) over allegations the project violates zoning rules.

Jerilyn Kobrick, a longtime El Portal resident, filed a complaint against the village and The Launch at Little River LLC, claiming their proposed project is too tall and too close to her home.

The approved development is an eight-story, 152-unit apartment complex with more than 2,500 square feet of restaurant space and nearly 200 parking spots, planned by Miami-based Barrington Brothers at 8300 N.E. Fourth Place.

According to the lawsuit, the building would rise above the four-story height limit set by local zoning rules for developments in such close proximity to residential areas.

Under El Portal's zoning regulations, buildings in Zone 5 must be no taller than four stories if they are within 250 feet of homes in Zone 3. Kobrick's home is in Zone 3, situated 171 feet away from the project in Zone 5.

The village approved plans to build up to six stories, with the option to add two more stories in exchange for the developer providing \$733,000 to El Portal's Public Benefits Program. The contribution may fund parkland purchases, tree planting, landscaping, infrastructure upgrades and public services such as policing and utilities, as long as they're linked to the new development.

Barrington Brothers invested over \$5 million to assemble the 1.02-acre site in March 2022. The property is just north of the city of Miami, adjacent to the Little River waterway.

Kobrick argues the height and closeness of the project would block views of the nearby Little River, negatively impact her quality of life and harm the local environment. Additionally, she alleges it would cause lasting damage to her property and the character of the neighborhood.

The homeowner seeks for the court to invalidate the village's project agreement with the developer and stop all construction. She also alleged El Portal's actions violate Florida's Development Agreement Statute, which requires local governments to comply with their own zoning standards and maintain protections for open space.

El Portal asked the court to dismiss the case May 29. Joseph Scott Geller, the attorney representing the village and the developer, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. A village spokesperson was not immediately available for comment.

Kobrick's attorney, Raul Gastesi of Gastesi Lopez Mestre & Cobiella, told the *Business Journal* the project's proximity to the home "isn't responsible planning."

"No one expects a tower in their backyard, especially when zoning rules say it's not allowed," he said. "These rules exist for a reason, and they need to be enforced."