

Where the Party Begins

## Forest City Promotes New Development with Viral Video

By William R. Wilburn, Editor

**F**OREST CITY COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT'S LATEST PROJECT, THE VILLAGE AT GULFSTREAM PARK IN HALLENDALE BEACH, FL, is part of a mixed-use residential, retail and entertainment complex that includes Gulfstream Park, the horse racing park that is home to the Florida Derby, and Forest City is promoting it with attitude. The tagline on the web site ([www.thevillageatgulfstreampark.com](http://www.thevillageatgulfstreampark.com)) is: **Fashion. Food. Mojo.**

With the February 11 grand opening of the Village, Forest City intends to create additional buzz by releasing a viral video on YouTube and other social media outlets. The video features a group of the race park's jockeys showing off their breakdancing skills.

Nancy McCann, Forest City's senior vice president-marketing and public relations, says, "Social media is not new to us (see story on page 12). We have used Facebook and Twitter. In addition to using them at the Village at Gulfstream Park we have added a viral video. It's a collaboration with the Village and Gulfstream Park. It will be on Facebook and various other social networking sites to build excitement for the grand opening and highlight the entertainment aspect of the entire property: great restaurants,

nightclubs, casinos, the race-track, good shopping.

"We used a group of 10-15 jockeys who ride at the race-track. We're calling them D



jockeys." She says that to produce the video, Forest City took the jockeys outside the race-track to various beaches and public hotspots in south Florida where they showed their breakdancing mojo dressed in their silks.

"The point was to talk about the party begins at the Village at Gulfstream Park. We used professional dancers to work with the DJs to do a whole breakdance routine to say, 'This is a breakthrough

project. The Village at Gulfstream Park is the place to begin. It's the place to party.'

"It created so much excitement when we did it," McCann says. "People recognized the jockeys, and the jockeys loved it. A lot of people came up and asked for their autographs. We didn't know people would recognize them. It was very fun. Crowds gathered around and cheered.

"What makes YouTube great is when its fun. If it's just basic, it doesn't fly and nobody watches it. There's the potential to get anywhere from 1000 to 10,000 hits to a million. We don't know. But we'll know shortly.

"We think this is different. Using real jockeys and a couple of dancers really gives it a great

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**Help! We're Searching for Great Holiday Marketing Stories**

We're working on our March issue, a roundup of great holiday marketing programs. It's meant for readers' Great Holiday Ideas File for next year. If you'd like to share a success, please contact Editor Wilburn at 317-576-9889 or e-mail [www@Jonesreport-Plus.com](mailto:www@Jonesreport-Plus.com). Graphics are appreciated. No program is too small — we're always looking for clever Christmas STEALS.

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## Viral Video

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look. This property is very different for south Florida. We have great competition around us, but nobody has anything quite like this. So we wanted to express it through YouTube. I think it's going to be phenomenal.

"As a company we're always looking to the future," she continues. "We're always looking for newness. It's a great way to talk about the property and see it. You don't use a lot of copy. You get your point across quickly. It isn't like running an ad. What you're doing is creating energy and a sense of spirit that represents the property in a very exciting form of entertainment."

McCann said research about YouTube and viral videos had taught her three things: "One, you don't want it to be too long. Two, you have to get your point across. And three, it has to be entertaining. All three are equally important."

"The video will be on YouTube and the property's web site," she said. "We'll talk about it in our advertising. This (the video) is in addition to radio, print and billboards for the project." ■

## Window of Opportunity

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more names who might be next.

Borders is nearing the top of my list as it continues to lose money. The cutthroat atmosphere in the book category during the holiday season due to the price war among Walmart, Amazon, and Target, coupled with the apparent success of Amazon's Kindle and other wireless reading devices, had to put a big hurt on Borders, the category weakling. Sales for the 11-week holiday season were down 13.7% overall, and 14.6% on a comp-store basis. I can only imagine how bad Q4 sales and profit results are going to be for Borders when it reports sometime in March.

### The Strong Get Stronger

However, right now retailers are beginning to see a window of opportunity to take advantage of current favorable rents that will not be available forever, particularly for preferred locations. Currently there is approximately 17.6 million square feet of vacant retail space on the market in Eastern Massachusetts, 2.0 million more than we reported in March 2009 (see our KeyPoint Report for Eastern Massachusetts/Greater Boston 2009). During that span, the vacancy rate has jumped from 8.5 to 9.4% and will likely rise before peaking sometime this year. Retailers that could never afford to locate in some sectors of the region are now locking into outstanding locations with very manageable occupancy costs. As sales of existing stores

stabilize, other retailers will surely follow.

Earlier this year, savvy investors took advantage of tremendous value in the stock market and are now reaping the rewards. Smart retailers today are reacting in a similar fashion to these "deals of the decade." The cream is rising to the top. If you're a smart retailer, this is no time for procrastination. ■

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