

October 26, 2016

DEALMAKERS

Weiss Serota Attorney Guides Deal for Brazilian Developer

by Carla Vianna

When Brazilian industrial developer TRX Group decided to delve deeper into South Florida's commercial real estate market, the company turned to Joe Hernandez.

The Coral Gables attorney helped TRX Investments, the group's Miami-based arm, snap up 10 acres along Northwest 112th Avenue and 140th Street in Hialeah Gardens.

Hernandez, a member of Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman, represented the buyer in the \$5.25 million acquisition northeast of the interchange at Florida's Turnpike Extension and Okeechobee Road. The deal closed Sept. 30 and breaks down to \$525,000 per acre. The real estate lawyer said the purchase mirrors a growing trend among investors looking to snag a piece of South Florida's industrial market.

The closer to Miami International Airport, the more expensive industrial property becomes, he said. With real estate prices are at an all-time high, industrial developers are moving into alternative markets.

"We've seen a trend of folks who are looking to buy or develop new industrial property moving north," Hernandez said. "There's more available land up there. It's cheaper than being next to the airport and still accessible. It's part of an overall trend. We're seeing a lot of activity moving north."

Hernandez also helped TRX secure an \$8 million loan from BridgeInvest, a Miami-based lender focused on bridge loans backed by commercial real estate. The financing is secured by the property and another previously purchased asset, Hernandez said.

TRX plans to build a 170,000-square-foot distribution center on the land, which last sold in 1996 for \$350,000, according to Miami-Dade County property records. The new product is slated for delivery late next year, according to CBRE Group Inc., which brokered the sale.

Devin White, David Albert and Andrew Fernandez with CBRE's advisory and transaction services team in Miami also represented the buyer.

"The industrial market in Florida is TRX's first entree in to the U.S., from which we will expand our footprint," said Scott Pryce, CEO of TRX's Miami division. "We are prospecting additional properties to acquire and develop throughout Florida."

Hernandez, chair of Weiss Serota's real estate practice group, has over 25 years of experience with real estate and corporate transactions.

Contact Carla Vianna at cvianna@alm.com. On Twitter: @CarlaOVianna