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Developer aims to move forward with housing project after settling lawsuit



A home at Bella Marie Estates near Homestead.

VANFU HOLDINGS



By **Brian Bandell** – Real Estate Editor, South Florida Business Journal
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A developer plans to move forward with a single-family home project near Homestead after settling a lawsuit against a former partner.

The Bella Marie Estates project covers 21 home lots on 6.4 acres at 29125 S.W. 167th Ave. Despite a flurry of home development in the area, the project has been stalled for more than a year due to litigation. The property is owned by Homestead-based Vanfu Holdings, which bought the land in 2018.

The legal issues started in March 2022, when Yanser Robaina filed a lawsuit in Miami-Dade County Circuit Court against Vanfu Holdings, Norexa Hernandez and Elisa Hermida. The lawsuit alleged Robaina was unfairly dismissed as a member of Vanfu Holdings and prevented from financially benefiting from the project. Robaina filed liens that tied up title to the property.

Then in July 2022, Vanfu Holdings filed a lawsuit against Robaina. It alleged that he caused the homebuilder to enter into a sales listing agreement with a real estate company without approval from Hernandez, the majority owner of Vanfu Holdings. Vanfu Holdings asked the court to rescind the listing agreement.

Finally, GDF Lending LLC [filed a foreclosure lawsuit](#) against Vanfu Holdings in February 2023 over a \$4.65 million mortgage on Bella Marie Estates. It alleged the loan had reached maturity.

Court records show that the litigation between Robaina and Vanfu holdings was recently settled and dismissed.

Attorneys Ari Tenzer and Alexander Salinas of TA PLLC, which represents Vanfu Holdings, said the settlement was highly favorable to their client.

State records show Robaina relinquished all membership interest in Vanfu Holdings. Robaina also released all liens on the property, county records show.

When reached for comment, Robaina's attorney Sheri Alter of Assouline & Berlowe said her client had no comment on the settlement beyond "wishing the parties well."

Robaina's lawsuit against Vanfu Holdings was dismissed on Jan. 30.

However, the foreclosure lawsuit by GDF Lending against Vanfu Holdings remains pending.

Salinas said his client is working to reach a forbearance agreement with the lender so it can resume development of Bella Marie Estates. He believes the lender will let them start marketing the homes for sale again.

"To a large extent, the reason the foreclosure came to be is when the lender got wind of the internal partnership dispute it became very uncomfortable," Tenzer said. "Now that we got all of this resolved and Vanfu has complete control, the lender is more comfortable."

Boca Raton-based attorney Kelly A. Pena, who represents the lender in the lawsuit, couldn't be reached for comment.