



Officials break ground on two homes for returning veterans

Community Government Village Beacon Record

by Giselle Barkley - August 21, 2015



Supervisor Ed Romaine breaks ground where the two homes are being built for returning veterans. Photo by Giselle Barkley

Local officials joined Mark Baisch, president of Landmark Properties in Rocky Point, and Joe Cognito, commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6249, to celebrate the groundbreaking of two homes Baisch is building for returning veterans and their families.

Supervisor Ed Romaine (R), Councilwoman Jane Bonner (C-Rocky Point) and Councilman Dan Panico (R-Manorville) attended the groundbreaking event, which took place on Aug. 20 in front of the property on Tyler Avenue in Sound Beach.

“We as a nation – we as a country, as a state, as a county, as a town owe them our thanks,” Romaine said.



Bonner also commended Baisch for his efforts.

“Kudos to Mark for having the creative brain to come up with an idea and push the envelope, as you will, to create an opportunity to build houses for



Veterans of Foreign Wars Post Commander Joe Cognitore, Councilwoman Jane Bonner, Supervisor Ed Romaine and Councilman Dan Panico pose for a photo before tying a ribbon around the oak tree that will rest between two homes being built and given to returning veterans. Photo by Giselle Barkley

veterans,” Bonner said.

Baisch purchased the property two years ago and wanted to give back to the veterans by building two homes. These are Baisch’s ninth and tenth homes for returning veterans. The first home he built was also in Sound Beach, and was given to a veteran who earned a Purple Heart for his services.

“This is not something for the faint of heart,” Baisch said during the press conference.

Cognitore joined Baisch to help him execute his idea. As Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, he took on the responsibility of selecting candidates for the two \$249,000 homes.

In order for the veterans to qualify for the homes, they must be first-time homebuyers making less than \$200,000 to \$300,000 annually. The amount of time a vet served in either the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the size of the vet’s family and whether they received awards for their service are determining factors in deciding which applicants will receive the homes.

It is still unknown which veterans and their families will receive the homes.

“If you all go away with one thing, I want you to go and find me two veterans for these houses,” Baisch said. “That’s the most important thing.”