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by Alex Petroski



What apartments would look like at the proposed On the Common site, where Thurber Lumber Co. previously resided, on Broadway in Rocky Point. Photo from Mark Baisch

Senior citizens in Rocky Point may soon have a new living option. The Rocky Point-based development company Landmark Properties Ltd. presented plans to the Rocky Point Civic Association, Historical Society and about 100 members of the community at a meeting on the grounds of the would-be homes.

Mark Baisch, owner of Landmark Properties, constructed a plan called On the Common at Rocky Point, which calls for 40 600-square-foot, one-bedroom senior citizen apartments that would be constructed on the site of the old Thurber Lumber Co. Inc., which closed its doors in February. The plan for the 1.8-acre space near Broadway was met with hesitancy in March from some community members, though reactions from the recent meeting were overwhelmingly positive.

“I’m favorably impressed,” said Rocky Point Civic Association President Charles Bevington, who attended the presentation. “I liked everything, essentially. It’s forward thinking.”

Bevington said he was also pleased with the importance Baisch placed on environmental concerns associated with new development. The buildings would have solar energy, storm-water runoff irrigation systems, energy efficient appliances and safeguards against nitrogen pollution.

“It’s right for a lot of reasons,” said Baisch, a developer. “It brings a residential component to the Broadway-Rocky Point area.”

Baisch made the case for why the project would be an appealing option for senior citizens in the Rocky Point community in March.

“They have to pay taxes, they have to pay their oil bill, they have to pay for repairs [for their home],” he said. In the On the Common homes, senior citizens would not have to worry about upkeep and maintenance around their yard and home. Also, they would be living within a community of their peers and would have more freedom in their daily lives, according to Baisch.

He was encouraged by the positive response he received. He said he had a handful of people sign up to reserve apartments in the event that the plan becomes a reality.

“I think they realize it’s a major step in the redevelopment of Rocky Point,” Baisch said, adding that he’s noticed more commercial development in the Rocky Point area.

Suffolk County Legislator Sarah Anker (D-Mount Sinai) said in March she would prefer to see a community center on the centrally located property in downtown Rocky Point, because it is a high-density area already, but recently said she is coming around on Landmark Property’s plan.

“It’s a drastic change from the original rendering,” Anker said. “It looks very much improved from the original conception. I’m listening to the community. If the community supports it, I will support it. ... Community input is always incredibly important when significant change is happening in the community.”

Town of Brookhaven Councilwoman Jane Bonner (C-Rocky Point) said there’s a large number of seniors who live in North Shore Beach who are interested.

“Many have reached out to me excited about this,” she said.

Baisch’s plan also guarantees 25 percent of the 40 homes will be reserved for senior citizens who are veterans of the United States military, a point which was appealing to Bevington.

The plan still needs to be approved by the Town of Brookhaven though, before ground is broken and development can begin.