

Planned Development District For Shoreham?

By Barbara LaMonica

A development project under the town of Brookhaven's newly created Planned Development District, or PDD, is being proposed by two developers, Neighborhood Founders Barnet Tallgrass, JV, LLC, and Ornstein Leyton Company, LLC. Brookhaven Town Second District Councilman Kevin McCarrick said a combined mixed-use development of residential and commercial is proposed for two parcels in the community of Shoreham.

The location of the proposed PDD involves 130 acres at Tall Grass Golf Course, and 160 acres of the sod farm across Cooper Street, which divides the pair of parcels. Both are zoned A-1 residential, which calls for construction of one house per acre. "This Planned Development District calls for a combination of commercial and a mix of residential housing that would include apartments, town houses, large single homes, condos and some recreational space," McCarrick explained. "The whole idea is to create a community," the councilman added.

To that end, Lawrence Feldman, attorney for the applicants, explained that the proposal, which was devised by the developers in conjunction with the Shoreham Hamlet Study, which was completed earlier last year, suggests construction of a variety of homes ranging from \$700,000 to starter-homes built on smaller lots. "This would include everything from starter housing to senior housing to everything in between," Feldman said. There would also be cluster development, which would essentially call for construction of residences in closer proximity to allow for greater open space for the proposed project, Feldman explained.

Fashioned by a town planning firm of Dover, Kohl & Partners, the plan, which is envisioned as a new "Center of Shoreham," will preserve the 18-hole golf course and integrate vistas as part of a new neighborhood that will incorporate principles of traditional neighborhood design, including pedestrian-friendly streets, a variety of housing types, and expansive recreational space and village center. "Our goal is to create a spirited, warm environment that will be both the centerpiece of the Shoreham community — much like the classic villages in the Hamptons and New England, as well as a prominent residential neighborhood," developer Bruce Barnet said in a prepared statement.

Alec Ornstein, a principal of Neighborhood Founders, said, "This could be a win-win for the community, the town and everyone involved." Citing comparisons between standard land subdivisions and the proposed project, Ornstein added, "This type of development is significantly more expensive to plan and build. In order to ensure its viability and sustainability, we must achieve a balance in density and use mix."

"What makes this unique is that the density was originally quite large, where originally 287 individual homes on single acres were planned," McCarrick said. "Now the developer is interested in having a certain amount of property fronting Route 25A that will be a combination of retail and professional," McCarrick explained.

Plans include construction for 155,000 square feet of retail, and another 15,000 square feet of professional

use. On the residential end of the project, McCarrick said a combination of 1,006 residential units were planned, in a mix of apartments, houses, golf villas and single-family homes. "That number has been scaled way down, because the developer is trying to get a feeling for what the community wants," McCarrick added.

Mary Daum, president of the Shoreham Civic Association, who was instrumental in developing the Shoreham Hamlet Study, concurs with McCarrick that developers are working with the community to arrive at a plan that residents will condone, but expressed some reservations. "I believe the developer is trying to work with the town and the

community to achieve a scale [number of residences] that's acceptable to everybody, but I have some concerns," Daum said. "The developer has used the Shoreham Hamlet Study extensively as a basis for this project, in particular, the mixed-use residential, and combined retail," Daum explained. The hamlet study also called for a green vista, which Daum said the developers have worked into their concept.

But what Daum calls "an important aspect of the hamlet study that was never really addressed" in the developers' plans involves the school district. "The hamlet study makes it clear that the schools are the core of the community," Daum said, "and because we are

lacking a downtown of some kind, the schools are where people go for community programs, for cultural events, driving classes, and all kinds of things, so we have to weigh all of the potential benefits versus costs, and to mitigate the impact on the school district, and what will be the greatest benefit to the school district." The schools, she continued, "are not ready and able to accommodate children within the next five years even without this development."

Still, Daum says developers are working with the community, and agrees that there is not yet a clear, definitive number of residences slated for the Shoreham PDD. "They have

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scaled down the number of residences, but you can't just pick a number, because it's a give-and-take process in order to get to the zoning they want," Daum said. "The developers have demonstrated that they are giving something to the community, and it is a matter of balance, where we will have to weigh all of the

potential benefits."

According to Feldman, his client is "going to equate 287 single family homes on one acre to the housing mix in a prescientific" manner. Developers have submitted a map to the town certifying 287 single-family homes on one acre, from which Feldman says his client will work from that base yield up. "The proposal is not to have a standard subdivision, so density is going to be arrived at as scientifically as possible — this will not be a number that is picked out of the sky," Feldman explained. "We will be working with Brookhaven Town and the community, and by mid-November there will be a meeting to discuss only density."

While initial meetings have been held, others are being scheduled, Feldman said, in an attempt to gather community input and feedback. Barnet Holdings was awarded the residential "ENVY Award" from the New York Association for Realtors for its Olde Vine Golf Club and Estates project in Riverhead.