Supervisor Lesko and Councilwoman Kepert Unveil Plan for Redevelopment of the UA Movie Theater in Coram
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Proposed mixed-use project part of Supervisor's Blight to Light Initiative and will create over 400 jobs

Coram Civic Association president Erma Gluck (left) and Community Development Corporation president Marianne Garvin (right) display rendering of the redevelopment of the Coram UA Movie Theater site. They are joined by Councilwoman Connie Kepert (fourth from right) Supervisor Mark Lesko (third from right), Eric Alexander from Vision Long Island (left), Middle Island Civic Association president Tom Talbot (second from left) and other civic leaders from the Coram area.

Farmingville, NY - On September 20, Supervisor Mark Lesko and Councilwoman Connie Kepert unveiled the plan for the $59 million redevelopment of the former United Artists (UA) Movie Theater in Coram. This monument to blight will be transformed into a mixed-use, retail and residential town center community. The project is a joint venture between non-profit, Centereach-based Community Development Corporation (CDC) of Long Island and Conifer Realty of Rochester. Joining Supervisor Lesko and Councilwoman Kepert at the press conference were Marianne Garvin, President and CEO of the CDC, other elected officials and civic leaders.

The UA Movie Theater property was one of the first properties included in Supervisor Lesko's "Blight to Light" initiative. It was also identified in the Middle Country Road Land Use Plan, which was initiated by Councilwoman Connie Kepert and adopted by the Town Board in 2006. That plan recommended the site be redeveloped for mixed use.

The current condition of the Coram UA Theater property, a "monument to blight." Architectural rendering of the proposed plan for the redevelopment of the Coram UA Movie Theater property.
"The redevelopment of the UA Movie Theater in Coram will remove an eyesore from the community and create jobs. An abandoned shell of a building and sea of cracking asphalt will be turned into a vibrant community center," said Supervisor Lesko, "When the Town Board unanimously adopted the Blight to Light code we envisioned it would stimulate exactly this type of redevelopment."

Councilwoman Connie Kepert said, "My focus is to spur economic development and create jobs by redeveloping blighted sites such as the K-Mart site in Middle Island and the UA Movie Theater Property in Coram. I am working with our Planning Department and the Supervisor's Office to develop a plan which will create the vibrant mixed use center at the U.A Property in Coram, which was envisioned in the Middle Country Road Land Use Plan. This plan will create an attractive place for people to live, work and play."

"We are very excited about this opportunity to create state-of-the-art workforce rental housing combined with a retail center in a main street, walkable community design that we believe will transform the hamlet of Coram," said Andrew Crossed, Executive Vice President of Conifer Realty. "The Town of Brookhaven has been instrumental in the development of this project and I applaud the vision of Supervisor Lesko in aggressively addressing blighted properties throughout the town."

Marianne Garvin, President and CEO of the CDC said, "CDC of Long Island targeted this site for redevelopment because of Connie Kepert and Mark Lesko's clarion call for removing blight and uplifting the Coram community, which resonates with CDC’s mission. We have a concept plan that flows from the visioning process of the local residents. We want to help achieve their dream of a vibrant destination for the surrounding neighborhood."

Erma Gluck, president of the Coram Civic Association said, "I'm really excited that the Middle Country Road Land Use Plan is beginning to take shape. I look forward to seeing this blighted property transformed into a vibrant downtown center."

"The demolition of this movie theater is good news for the Coram community that has been a long time coming," said NY State Assemblyman Dean Murray. "I look forward to working with Supervisor Lesko and the town board in the redevelopment of this parcel with a project that fits with the vision of the local civics and residents, making the dream of a walkable downtown community here a reality."

"This project is long overdue and I am pleased that we have a plan in place to develop this property. Housing coupled with retail space is the perfect balance of creating jobs and stimulating the economy," said Legislator Tom Muratore.

The 17.65 acre UA Coram Movie Theater site has been a monument to blight in the Coram community since it closed in 2004. The existing structure is vacant and in severe disrepair and will be demolished to be replaced with new construction. The result will be 160 workforce rental housing units with gateway retail on Route 112 and main street retail totaling 48,800 square feet.

The total project cost is estimated to be $59 million, a significant investment in the Coram community that will leverage public dollars with private investment. It is anticipated the project will create 319 construction phase jobs and also create and support 112 permanent jobs.

The project will be designed and constructed using green building and sustainable community practices. The intent is to provide a convenient town center with retail that will support the needs of the surrounding community and be a very attractive destination to shop for area residents.

The concept plan that has been developed is in response to the community's visioning process and the Middle Country Road Land Use Plan for Coram, Middle Island and Ridge. CDC of Long Island and Conifer have been responsive to the part of the land use plan developed for the Coram Hamlet Center West. That vision calls for a hamlet center with an internal main street, multifamily residential and retail development, and a walkable community with opportunities for public gatherings.

The redevelopment plan (see renderings below) leverages many community benefits that include access to an offsite sewer treatment plant and a connector road (green) extending Mill Road from Route 112 to Route 25. This will ease
traffic congestion at the intersection of Route 25 and Route 112. The redevelopment will also include a bike path and sidewalks that will connect the project to the existing Avalon at Charles Pond community located to the west off Route 25, allowing residents easy "walkable" access to the retail business located in the new development. In addition, a two acre parcel on the site will be preserved in its natural state.

![Overall site plan with connector road (green) to Avalon at Charles Pond and Route 25.](image)

CDC and Conifer expect to submit a formal Blight to Light application to the Town Planning Department in about a month. After a preliminary scoring of the project as it is now by the Planning Department, the project will most likely receive incentives under the Radiant Incentive Package, which includes a special permit for change of use from the Planning Board from J2 to J6 and MF, expedited review, and 75% reduction of Town application and permit fees.

About Conifer Realty, LLC

CDC of Long Island and Conifer Realty have been development partners for over 12 years, having completed 314 units of multifamily rental housing for seniors in East Patchogue. Another 94 units of multifamily rental housing in Hempstead are near completion with occupancy expected in December 2011 and 36 workforce rental apartments are in development in New Cassel in the Town of North Hempstead.

Conifer Realty LLC is a full service real estate company specializing in the development, construction and management of high-quality, affordable housing communities. Currently it owns and manages 185 apartment communities aggregating 11,500 units in its five-state region. The company maintains offices in Rochester, New York; Mount Laurel, New Jersey; Erie, Pennsylvania and Columbia, Maryland, to serve the affordable housing market in these states.

About Community Development Corporation of Long Island

CDC of Long Island is a not-for-profit organization that supports Long Islanders pursuing their housing and small business dreams. Since its inception 41 years ago, CDC invests its resources, talents and knowledge in households, small business and communities assisting more than 93,000 Long Islanders and investing $806 million into their communities. Last fiscal year alone, CDC served more than 17,000 Long Islanders investing nearly $85 million into their communities. For more information, please visit www.cdcli.org.

About Blight to Light

On April 26, 2010, Supervisor Lesko proposed the Blight to Light initiative to eradicate suburban blight in the Town of Brookhaven. Lesko and the Brookhaven Industrial Development Agency premiered a film at Stony Brook University's Charles B. Wang Center, which for the first time ever portrays blight as opportunity. The UA Theater in Coram site was one of the "monuments to blight" that Lesko highlighted. The Town Board unanimously adopted incentives for redevelopment of blighted properties. The new code amendments introduce attractive private sector incentives for the redevelopment of blight. The code also directs development to blighted parcels and away from virgin land. Each project will be "scored" in three different categories: blight severity, location characteristics, and potential for re-development. For example, a project may receive points if the property has been vacant for decades
and is a haven for crime, has community support, generates tax revenue and jobs, and is a mixed-use project. The project's combined redevelopment achievement score determines the level of the incentive package from the Town. There are four incentive packages available, ranging from expedited review, waiver of Town application and permit fees, and an expansion of uses in business zoned properties through a special permit from the Town Planning Board.

For more information on blight to light, visit www.brookhaven.org and click on Blight to Light on the "In the Spotlight" section.