Supervisor Lesko and Councilwoman Kepert Announce Blight to Light Approval of Former UA Movie Theater Redevelopment by Planning Board
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**Suffolk County to provide $2 million in workforce housing infrastructure funding**

**Preliminary site plan and Blight to Light special use permits approved for mixed-use project as part of Supervisor's Blight to Light Initiative**

_Farmingville, NY _- Supervisor Mark Lesko and Councilwoman Connie Kepert have announced that the Town Planning Board has approved the $53 million Wincoram Commons redevelopment project on the former United Artists (UA) Movie Theater in Coram. The unanimous decision was made at the September 10th Planning Board meeting. The approval, which includes the preliminary site plan, allows the developers to receive incentives under the Blight to Light Radiant Incentive Package, including 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. The project is a joint venture between the non-profit, Centereach-based Community Development Corporation (CDC) of Long Island and Conifer Realty of Rochester. The next step is for the developers to file a final engineered site plan for approval.

County Executive Bellone also announced that Suffolk County will be providing $2 million for the infrastructure of the workforce housing portion of the project.

The UA Movie Theater property was one of the first "monuments to blight" targeted for redevelopment 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 and be transformed into a retail and residential town center community. In addition, on September 12, the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council selected Wincoram Commons as a Priority Project for the region's economy.

"When I created the Blight to Light program in 2010, the redevelopment of the abandoned UA Theater in Coram was one of my top priorities and the Blight to Light incentive package was crucial to its success. I want to thank the Community Development Corporation of Long Island and Conifer Realty of Rochester for their commitment to this project and also Councilwoman Connie Kepert and County Executive Steve Bellone for their partnership. I wish the development team, Town, County, and community good luck in the future with Wincoram Commons and look forward to driving through Coram and seeing what was an eyesore transformed into a beautiful, vibrant new community," said Supervisor Mark Lesko.

"The UA property is central to the revitalization of Coram. We worked for months on the site plan which provides Coram with a vibrant mixed use center containing shops, public spaces and residences," stated Councilwoman Connie Kepert.

"Suffolk County will provide $2 million in funding for the infrastructure components of this workforce housing project, including 176 affordable rental units," said County Executive Steven Bellone. According to Bellone, "in addition to providing financial resources, the County Department of Economic Development and Planning actively assisted throughout the process in moving the project forward, which will not only remove an ugly eyesore from the community, but provide a tangible boost to the local economy."
County Legislator Tom Muratore said, "I applaud the Planning Board for recognizing the significance of this project and approving it. The former UA movie theater property has been an eyesore in Coram for far too long. Wincoram Commons is a great example of how local government can effectively collaborate with non-profit organizations and private businesses to revitalize an area, provide much needed jobs and housing for the community."

Andrew Crossed, Executive Vice President of Conifer Realty said, "Conifer is very pleased by the broad support that this transformative project has received from the Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County and the community. Along with CDC of Long Island, we are very excited about the recent approvals that move Wincoram Commons closer to reality."

Marianne Garvin, President and CEO of the CDC, "It's been a long, but fruitful journey to get to this point with the Wincoram development. I couldn't be more proud of the community for its vision for this site and grateful for their support. From the Regional Council’s selection of Wincoram as a Priority Project, to the Town's Blight to Light program, to the County's Workforce Housing incentives, this is an amazing public/private partnership, where many people worked together to achieve success." "Wincoram Commons is a significant project for the region's economy that will rehabilitate an eyesore, create construction jobs and permanent jobs, and add workforce housing in the Town of Brookhaven," said Kevin Law, President and CEO of the Long Island Association and Co-Chair of the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council.

Erma Gluck, president of the Coram Civic Association said, "I'm so excited that everything is finally falling into place after ten long years of trying to get a project together for the blighted UA property. As president of the Coram Civic Association, the #1 question I’m always asked is 'when are we going to see a viable project on that site?' Thanks to Supervisor Lesko's Blight to Light project, the site is listed as #1. It has also qualified to be listed on the Long Island Regional Economic Development Council's list. This is definitely a win for Coram. The Coram Civic Association can't wait until the wrecking ball hits the old building and we finally will start to see our dreams come true for a walkable downtown area connecting Wincoram Commons, Avalon Bay at Charles Pond and Charles Pond. Thereby allowing restaurants to come to the area and other revitalization on Middle Country Road."

Left shows the current blighted condition of the Coram UA property. Right shows the approved preliminary site plan for the Wincoram Commons redevelopment.

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 176 workforce rental housing units with gateway retail on Route 112 and main street retail totaling 13,330 square feet.

The total project cost is estimated to be $53 million, a significant investment in the Coram community that will leverage public dollars with private investment. It is anticipated the project will create 145 construction phase jobs and also create and support 34 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
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 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. There will also be open green space, a public plaza, community building and playground.

**About Conifer Realty, LLC**

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 199 apartment communities aggregating 12,428 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**

Community Development Corporation of Long Island (CDC) is a not-for-profit organization that supports Long Islanders pursuing their housing and small business dreams. Since its inception 42 years ago, CDC invests its resources, talents and knowledge in households, small business and communities by assisting more than 111,500 Long Islanders and investing $844 million into their communities. Last fiscal year alone, CDC served more than 18,500 Long Islanders investing nearly $91 million into their communities. For more information, please visit www.cdcli.org. Friend us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/cdcoflongisland and follow us on Twitter @cdclongisland.

**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 will benefits from expedited review, to 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.

In addition to the approval of Wincoram Commons, many of Supervisor Lesko's identified "monuments to blight" have been redeveloped or are on their way. This includes the Plaza Theater, which was demolished in 2011 after years of sitting vacant on East Main Street in Patchogue, the abandoned former Home Depot in Patchogue, which was covered in graffiti and is now a Raymour & Flanigan and Shop Rite, and Buckley's Restaurant and Pub in Center Moriches, which was rebuilt after being damaged in a fire. Other projects have received approvals for redevelopment, including the former KMart in Middle Island and the former Parr Meadows in Yaphank. This year, the Town repealed the covenants on the vacant Bellport Outlets, which limited the operations to outlet use only, to provide more options to
the property owner for redevelopment. The Ronkonkoma Hub, which was also named a monument to blight, is well on its way to being transformed into a vibrant live-work-play destination. The Town unanimously approved a Master Developer Designation Agreement with Tritec Real Estate Company, LLC (Trec Ronk Hub) at the last Town Board meeting and the project has received $4 million in state grants for a regional sewage treatment plant.

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

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