

# The Gazette

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## Briarcliff gives final okays to 3rd version of luxury seniors development

The Village of Briarcliff Manor has now given all of its needed approvals for the third rendition of the long-proposed 385-unit/bed "age-in-place" luxury seniors housing project on the former grounds of The King's College.

The Briarcliff Manor Planning Board signed off on the site plan at its public meeting last Thursday night. A week earlier, also at the Municipal Building, the village's Board of Trustees approved required amendments to the previously revised special permit needed to build what is now to be known as The Club at Briarcliff Manor. The special permit allows the project to be constructed on land zoned for single-family homes.

Mayor William Vescio says that the developer, Integrated Development Group LLC, based in Chicago, Ill., has recently agreed to step up the timetable on providing the village with two projects that the interests in the original and subsequently revised project were committed to: a new athletic field, suitable for soccer (or for two junior soccer games), and replacement of the village's aging water tank located on the 58-acre site.

Integrated Development still needs state approvals for the \$330 million project, but representatives of Integrated Principal Matt Phillips recently indicated these applications have been proceeding along well. Integrated was last expecting to have all of its needed approvals from the state by January.

Under state regulations, Integrated cannot begin construction of the project until

it has 50 percent "pre-sales" on the units. As of two weeks ago, Integrated reportedly had refundable 10 percent deposits on "entrance fees," which range from about \$650,000 to \$2 million, from 28 people.

But Mayor Vescio says that Mr. Phillips has agreed to begin construction in the spring of the athletic field (which will be scheduled and maintained by the village's Recreation Department). That means the grass field could be ready for use in 2010. Field space in the village for youth and adult sports has been at a premium for several years.

While work on the similarly promised comfort station will not take place until a later date, and the open-air parking lot will initially be gravel and not paved, Mayor Vescio said having the field sooner than later is what's important to the village.

As for replacement of the water tank, Mr. Vescio said Integrated has committed to install a new hydro-pneumatic system earlier than it is required, and expects the work to start this summer. That will afford eliminating the 150,000-gallon storage tank within two years. While not in danger of failing, the tank, which provides storage capacity and pressure for the village's water system in this area and reportedly dates back to the 1960s, has developed numerous pinhole and other leaks.

Discussions on building what is known in the trade as a "CCRC"—continuous care retirement community—began with

*continued on page 10*

## Briarcliff/seniors project

*from page 1*

representatives of another Illinois firm, Barrington Venture, in the late 1990s. Barrington received approvals from the village in 2003. But Barrington decided to sell the project to Classic Residence by Hyatt, which wanted various modifications of the plan. Those changes were approved in early 2006. But in September of that year, Hyatt pulled out of the deal with Barrington, saying it would no go through with a closing with Barrington because the project had become too costly to build, and the area's high property taxes didn't help.

Mr. Phillips, a former Classic Residence by Hyatt executive, said he was subsequently approached by Barrington, and various modifications of the original two plans should make the project cost-effective to build. He anticipates completion in 2013.

Changes include no longer planning for underground parking and, instead, providing a multi-level parking ramp. As well, the project is more "spread out" on the site than envisioned by Barrington or Hyatt, and there has been a reshuffling of the location of facilities. Nonetheless, Mr. Phillips maintains the project remains a "five-star luxury CCRC."

The project entails 325 independent and assisted living units, with 288 in the "main building" that will measure some nine stories in height and also contain 60 skilled nursing beds. There will also be 24 townhouses and 13 detached villas on the site.

Mr. Phillips also remains committed, in writing, to paying the \$2.5 million of \$2.75 million promised initially by Barrington and, later, Hyatt. The village has previously received \$250,000 of the latter figure. The money is to be used to help offset the cost of the village's new library addition, now expected to open in February, and a firetruck acquired for the Briarcliff Manor Volunteer Fire Department a year and a half ago.