

Around LI

Islip reviewing safety protocols

Islip Town officials are reviewing safety protocols for municipal facilities in case of emergencies, Supervisor Angie Carpenter said.

Townwide emergency action plans were last put together a couple of years ago, and officials want to update them by the end of the year, she said.

“We are looking at our emergency evacuation plans and making sure we’re cognizant of how things have changed over the past couple of years as far as public safety with terrorism and other issues that have transpired,” Carpenter said.

Carpenter declined to say what specific concerns prompted the review, including whether recent MS-13 gang activity played a role.

The review will be led by Acting Public Safety Department Commissioner Anthony D’Amico and Deputy Commissioner Tony Prudenti, who are both retired NYPD officers, Carpenter said. — RACHELLE BLIDNER

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SOUTHAMPTON

A rendering of Speonk Commons, one of two affordable housing complexes to be built on the East End. ■ Video: newsday.com/suffolk

AFFORDABLE OPPORTUNITY

Groundbreaking held for 38-unit housing complex

BY VERA CHINESE
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East End officials have taken another step to provide affordable housing in a region where much of the workforce must endure long commutes because high rent and property costs have priced them out of the area.

Development has begun on Southampton Town’s first affordable rental complexes — the 38-unit Speonk Commons in Speonk and the 28-unit Sandy Hollow Cove in Tuckahoe — after a ceremonial groundbreaking at the Speonk site on Tuesday.

The two complexes will cost \$30 million to build and will each include a mix of studios and one- and two-bedroom apartments. The monthly rents, including utilities, will range from \$950 to \$1,715.

At the Speonk site, five units will be reserved for residents earning up to 50 percent of the area median income, which in 2017 was \$77,600 for a single-person household, according to the town’s website. Twenty-eight units will be for those earning up to 60 percent of area median



Verna Brown of Speonk says the units replace “The Castle,” a vacant, rundown building.

income, and four units will rent to those earning up to 90 percent of area median income. An onsite manager will live in the remaining unit.

“We’ve lost people. . . . They’ve gone to areas where wages and housing are more aligned,” Southampton Town Supervisor Jay Schneiderman said at the groundbreaking. “We have to bring our community back. We have to create opportunities for people to stay.”

The Speonk development, on

Money to build

- \$1,298,000** Low-income housing credits from the New York State Homes and Community Renewal division
- \$469,692** State low-income housing credits
- \$3,146,676** State Housing Trust Fund
- \$2.2M** Acquisition loan from Suffolk County
- \$4.5M** Loan from Community Preservation Corporation
- \$2.5M** Morgan Stanley settlement funds.
- \$250,000** Southampton Housing Authority

Source: Office of Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo

4.27 acres on the west side of North Phillips Avenue, was initially opposed by community members, who cited density concerns. Developer Georgica Green Ventures presented the current plan, and the town board unanimously approved a zoning change in March.

“It represents the process gone right,” said Craig Catalotto, a Speonk resident and vice chairman of the town’s Citizen Advisory Committee-West.

Georgica Green president David Gallo said the complexes will likely be ready for occupancy in late spring or early summer.

Speonk Commons will include two buildings, one of which will offer retail and commercial space, and is next to a Long Island Rail Road station.

“This is exactly the kind of transit-oriented development that we need on Long Island to reach our economic potential,” Suffolk County Executive Steve

Bellone said at the groundbreaking.

Advocates said more needs to be done to support municipal, hospital and other workers in the town.

“We need thousands of units,” said Hank Beck, a Westhampton resident and chairman of the Southampton Citizen Advisory Committee-West. “We’re looking for sites like this to be developed all over Southampton Town.”

The Tuckahoe site was previously used for gravel and sand mining. Verna Brown, whose home is next to the Speonk complex, said the new development is an improvement over a rundown vacant building on the site, locally referred to as “The Castle,” that was demolished last week.

“It [the renderings] looks nice,” Brown said. “People do need someplace to live, and it looks better than the torn-down buildings that were here before.”