

# Great Neck has hearing on waterfront apartments

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The Village of Great Neck held public hearings this week on two rezoning proposals that would allow luxury apartments on the local waterfront and town homes on a main artery.

One of Tuesday's hearings focused on a new zoning district that would be created to allow AvalonBay Communities Inc. to build a 191-unit luxury apartment complex on a contaminated fuel-storage site on East Shore Road off Manhasset Bay.

Under the proposal, AvalonBay would work with the owner of the nearly 4-acre property to remediate the site, which currently contains fuel tanks, then would build four stories of residential units and two stories of parking. "Cleaning up this inactive tank farm is a very real positive for the village," said Jeff Forchelli, a Uniondale attorney representing AvalonBay.

Mayor Ralph Kreitzman agreed.

"I think this is an opportunity to both create residences on the waterfront and also just reclaim a nice piece of property that is an eyesore now," Kreitzman said.

He said the village wanted some changes in the wording of the zoning proposal, and said the board would continue the hearing on Dec. 17.

Resident Stuart Feigenblatt questioned the developer's quest for tax breaks from the county and the village for the plan.

"I am fully against any developer getting a break whatsoever in a market where they're going to be reaping big money here," Feigenblatt said. "You have a fiduciary responsibility to the residents of this village, not to the developer, that we get out of them as much a pound of flesh as we can."

Kreitzman said that it was a "delicate balance."

"If they don't make money, they don't build," Kreitzman said, adding that the property has been "fallow" for about a decade. "Be sure we will extract as much as we can, but we don't want to extract so much that we scare them away and we wait another 10 or 20 years."

The village also held a public hearing on a proposal to allow town homes on Steamboat Road and mixed-use developments on Middle Neck Road.

Kreitzman said the village board will hold a work session at 1 p.m. Wednesday to review the comments it has received on the proposal, and to discuss board members' own thoughts.