

# The Club at Melville breaks ground after land swap

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A groundbreaking ceremony marked the beginning of construction on The Club at Melville, a 261-unit income-restricted senior community on Deshon Drive, the site of a former Newsday preprint distribution warehouse.

The project, for which the ceremony was held last week, emerged from a complex three-way deal that allows construction of the affordable senior units, a park and a house of worship on two sites in Melville.

As part of the deal, the Town of Huntington transferred development rights from the former Meyers Farm property in the Sweet Hollow area

of Melville to the 18-acre Deshon Drive parcel. It also approved a rezoning that allowed construction of the housing, clustered on 13 of those acres.

The remaining 5 acres were sold to Bochasanwasi Shree Akshar Purushottam-Northeast, a Hindu organization known as the BAPS, to construct a temple. The former farm will be turned into a passive park.

The BAPS bought the farm property in 2003 and planned to erect a temple on the site.

But after area residents said they preferred a community park on the land, town officials, the BAPS and the Civic Association of Sweet Hollow Inc. devised the plan that transferred development rights from one property to another.

"We jumped at this opportunity, because not only does it provide housing, a religious atmosphere and a park," town Supervisor Frank Petrone said in a release, "but it provides the opportunity for other developers to start looking at the procedures we followed here."

The units will be divided among a group of income levels, all based on town code or state regulations. The developer signed a covenant that the units will remain income restricted in perpetuity.

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