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HEMPSTEAD HOTEL CONVERSION

Village OKs plan for senior housing, stores

BUSINESS

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A plan to convert the Quality Hotel and Convention Center in Hempstead into retail stores and subsidized senior rentals has gotten a thumbs up from the Village of Hempstead.

The hotel's owner, Apple Core Hotels in Manhattan, has agreed to sell the 182-room property to Liberty Holdings LLC, a business affiliated with developer Frank Lalezarian of Great Neck, according to real estate sources.

Last Thursday, the Zoning Appeals Board approved a variance to allow retail stores to be added on the ground floor.

Apple Core declined comment and Lalezarian could not be reached for comment. But industry sources say the hotel may cease operation by year end.

The proposal calls for 105 subsidized housing units for seniors over 65, as well as

28,866-square-foot of retail along Clinton Street, according to village officials.

"It's a slam dunk for the village," says Mayor James Garner, who adds there will be no tax reduction on the property for 13 years.

The subsidies under the federal Section 8 program from the Department of Housing and Urban Development guarantees that low-income residents pay no more than 30 percent of their income in rent.

More than a third of all renters on Long Island pay in excess of 35 percent of their total income on rent, according to the Long Island Housing Partnership.

"This will help the community and revitalize that intersection," said Ralph Trionfo, president of Upside Ventures, a Manhattan real estate investment firm that is representing both Apple Core and Liberty. He said he conducted a national marketing campaign and

there were no takers looking to keep a hotel.

Village officials say there is a real need for Section 8 units for seniors. The Village of Hempstead Housing Authority has a waiting list of about 3,200 people for Section 8 seniors and families, said Frank Ashby, executive director of the agency. Advocates for seniors on Long Island complain about the chronic lack of affordable rentals.

But David Mosley, president of the Hempstead Village Chamber of Commerce, said there is more need for affordable rentals for young couples and families in the village. Still others say the proposal is better than what is there now and still keeps the building on the tax rolls.

"I'd rather see something positive there than an eyesore," noted Bill Hughes, president of the Coordinating Council of Civic Associations for the Village of Hempstead.



THE QUALITY HOTEL in Hempstead will be converted into senior housing complex with stores.

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