

# \$59M Project 'Imminent' For Farmingdale

Written by Daniel Offner Wednesday, 13 November 2013 00:00

Construction of the long-awaited TDI-Bartone property—a \$59 million development project, located next to the Farmingdale train station, at 120 Secatogue Avenue—is imminent, according to village officials.

“We plan to start within the next two weeks,” said Farmingdale Mayor Ralph Ekstrand.

Although Farmingdale officials say they have not yet received a final plan, as of press time, they anticipate the developer will have all the necessary permits to begin demolition of the existing property within the next 30 days.

Once finished with the demolition, plans for the construction of two similar, mixed-use apartment buildings, can begin. Both structures will include retail and residential components, allowing for businesses to occupy the ground floor and luxury apartments for residents above. In total the entire project will encompass the construction of 154 apartment units and approximately 19,400 square-feet of retail space.



Developer Anthony Bartone, a third generation Farmingdale resident and graduate of Farmingdale High School, initially proposed the development more than six years ago, with plans to construct an 85-room Hilton hotel on the premises. Unable to secure enough money to fund the hotel, Bartone later partnered with TDI, a national development company from Texas, to render new plans for transit-oriented development.

“It has been a long time coming,” Bartone said emphatically. “I’m excited that we’re finally underway.”

The construction aspect will be completed in two phases, with the smaller of the two buildings slated to open before the end of 2014, meanwhile, the larger facility on the west side of the property won’t open until early 2015.

The apartments will come complete with stone countertops, stainless steel appliances and tile bathrooms. In addition, the project will provide exclusive amenities, strictly for residents, including three courtyards with barbecues, two clubhouses, a fitness center, a business lounge, a theater/media room and on-site management. Rent is estimated at just over \$2,000 per month, with 16 apartment units reserved for “workforce housing,” providing rental units at a significantly reduced price.

Although there is no definitive commitment from any retail stores, Bartone told The Observer last March that a coffee shop and a dry cleaners have already expressed an interest in the property.

“We have seen a significant interest on a national and regional level,” Bartone added. “The net effect is positive.”

Expanding the village's already growing tax base, the project's first year amenity value is estimated at \$868,000, which includes permit fees and the cost of capital improvement projects. Because employees will likely shop and dine relatively close in proximity, Bartone said discretionary spending in the village is also expected to increase. Based on a study from VHB planning consultants, a firm hired by the village, the construction is estimated to generate approximately \$1.7 million in discretionary spending, thus increasing revenues for local businesses on Main Street. The Bartone project will also create 178 new construction jobs and 55 permanent positions.

As per its arrangement with the village, the construction also includes several aesthetic improvements, including widening South Front Street to allow two-way traffic and curbside parking. As a result, commuters can expect several road closures and detours during the extent of the construction.

"Construction will take approximately 18 months," Mayor Ekstrand added. "There will be road closures on Secatogue Avenue and South Front Street."

Some of the roads that will remain closed include: South front street, between Elizabeth and Secatogue avenues; Secatogue Ave. between Eastern Parkway and the Railroad tracks; and Eastern Parkway, between Secatogue Ave. and Simonson Place.

Due to the road closures, Farmingdale school district officials have started notifying parents that as of Nov. 12, bus stops for Farmingdale High School bus No. 23 and Northside Elementary bus No.3, between Secatogue Ave. and Eastern Parkway, will be deleted and will remain in effect for the remainder of the 2013-2014 school year. Families with children along these bus routes will be notified by phone of the new bus stops.

Parents with any additional questions or concerns can contact the district's transportation office at 516-752-6555.