

## OUR TOWNS

## FARMINGDALE

# Proposed mixed-use building praised

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A mixed-use building with 39 apartments and 6,000 square feet of retail space may rise this year in central Farmingdale, and a planning board member predicted it would lure tenants. "If you build it, they will come," Nick Parisi said.

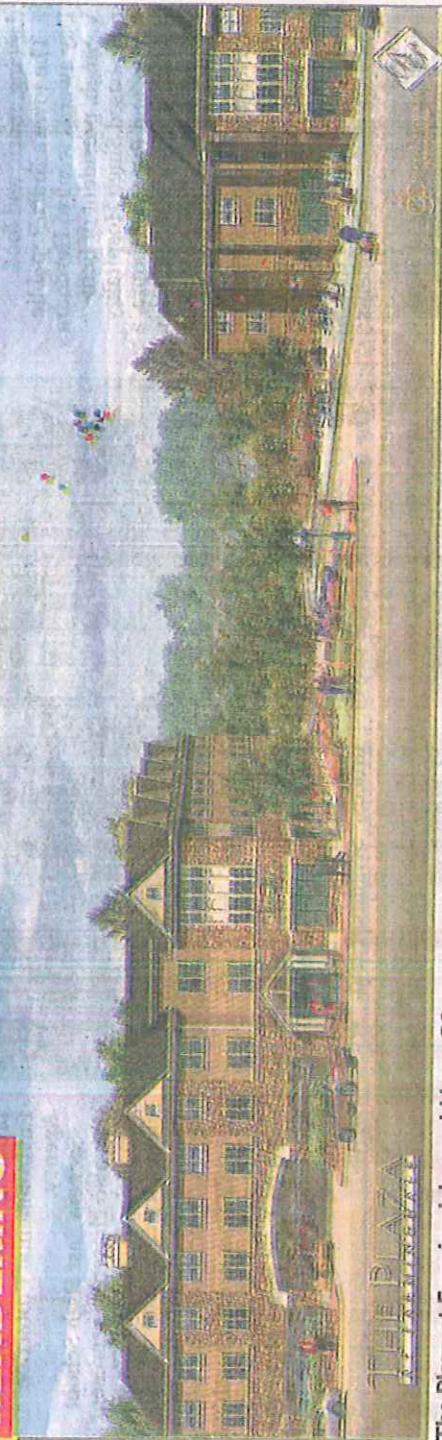
The project would replace an 85-room Hilton hotel once envisioned as the centerpiece of a revitalized downtown.

It would complement a larger, already-approved mixed-use building, creating a \$35 million complex along Secatogue Avenue by the Long Island Rail Road station, developers said. Construction on that building, which has 115 apartments and 15,000 square feet of retail space, is set to begin in May.

"We see . . . [the second building] as an enhancement of the project across the street," said developer Anthony Barone of Farmingdale, "creating a boulevard feel."

The second mixed-used project was presented Tuesday

## RENDERING



The Plaza at Farmingdale would have 39 apartments along with retail space. The building on the right has already been approved.

to the Farmingdale planning board, which was generally receptive and passed the application along to the board of trustees with recommendations that traffic, parking and pedestrian safety be evaluated.

Some residents and planning board members asked how businesses would be attracted to Farmingdale considering Main Street has 20 vacancies. They

also worried about a shortage in parking and an increase in traffic.

"We're going to have more empty stores," resident Hank Pieloch said. "Until we have something signed, you can promise anything you want."

Others said a gamble must be made to improve Farmingdale. "We need traffic. We need people looking for parking," res-

ident Tom McDonald said. "This is never going to be 'Little House on the Prairie.'"

Developers next must obtain trustee approval on height and density variances in exchange for "development incentive bonuses" that include parkland improvements and buried utility lines, as well as annual payments to the village.

The hotel was scrapped from

plans after developers failed to secure funding for it.

Planning board members on Tuesday didn't focus on the loss of the hotel. Board chairman Frank DeStefano said he had wondered whether a hotel would do well in Farmingdale.

Bartone Properties late last year partnered with Irving, Texas-based development company TDI to build the complex.

# Developers submit new plans at horse farm

BY CANDICE RUUD  
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Plans to build 240 rental units on the historic Knoll



Ramos said the potential development "provides a built-in market for the downtown businesses. Within walking distance, people can go from their apart-