

IDA tables hearing on Mineola development

BY NOAH MANSKAR

The Nassau County Industrial Development Agency approved tax breaks for two building projects Tuesday evening, but the controversial Village Green, a housing and retail complex proposed for 199 Second St. in Mineola, was absent from the agenda.

Mineola Metro LLC, headed by developer Frank Lalezarian, asked the IDA for a last-minute postponement on its appeal for a payment-in-lieu-of-taxes, or PILOT, agreement.

The developers told the agency it had more work to do on its application, IDA Executive Director Joseph Kearney said.

Several members of the public, in-

cluding Mineola school Superintendent Michael Nagler, came to hear discussion about Village Green and left after Kearney announced the project was off the agenda. Kearney said he expects the developers will be ready by the board's next meeting, which has not been scheduled yet.

The Mineola school district has previously raised concerns about the PILOT agreement because it cannot include the building when calculating its "tax base growth factor," meaning it could not raise taxes to account for the students the development would bring into Mineola schools.

That concern has been partially assuaged, Nagler said, because the state

Legislature is considering changes to the growth factor formula. But administrators "still haven't seen what the change is," he said.

The school district is also doing an independent study to determine how many new students might come from Village Green.

At a July hearing, Mineola Chamber of Commerce President Tony Lubrano said he thought the large number of one-bedroom units proposed for the building indicated there would not be many kids in the development.

"We're hoping (the study) will answer a bunch of other questions we have about space or the influx of kids," Nagler said.

Lalezarian could not be immediately

reached for comment.

The IDA did approve a PILOT on Tuesday for a new 165-room Hilton Garden Inn Hotel to replace a run-down health club in the Port Washington Business Park.

The board approved tax relief for the \$27 million project, led by Roslyn O-S Hotel Partners, last August, but its funding fell through.

The developers worked to reduce costs over the past year and secured financing with multiple banks contingent upon the IDA's approval, said Dan Deegan, a lawyer representing Roslyn O-S.

The hotel's PILOT agreement will start at just above the current real estate tax level and increase by 6 percent each year for 20 years.

The project is expected to create 56 permanent jobs and about 300 construction jobs, Deegan said. Its total economic impact in the area is estimated at \$56.7 million, according to Kearney.

"I've worked in the area and around the corner from it for 20 years, and this is definitely needed," IDA Secretary Gary Weiss said.

The agency told the developers, though, that they ought to talk with the Nassau-Suffolk Building Trades about securing union construction contracts.

Larry Levine of Roslyn O-S said he had been in touch with the union, but a representative said at the meeting it had not heard from the developers.

Bartenders charged with serving to minors

BY BILL SAN ANTONIO

Three North Shore area residents have been charged with knowingly serving alcohol to an underage Nassau County police officer at two bars located within the Village of Hempstead.

Jonathan D. Moisan, 24, of Roslyn; Brandyn R. Williams, 40, of Garden City Park; and Gianna M. Gallo, 21, of Port Washington, face counts of violating the New York State Alcohol Beverage and Control Law, the prohibited sale of alcoholic beverages and unlawful dealing with a child under state penal law, police

said.

The arrests — 17 in total — were made early Friday morning at McHebes Bar, Dizzy Lizard and Bangers Bar, each located in the vicinity of Hofstra University.

Police said the bartenders there knowingly served alcohol to an undercover Nassau police officer who is under 21 years old, as part of an investigation between the police department's Bureau of Special Operations and the Hempstead Police.

Following the arrests, all three bars were closed for the night, police said.

No injuries were reported, though po-

lice said a 20-year-old East Meadow man at Bangers who blocked the flow of traffic during the arrests by standing in the roadway disobeyed orders to move, and was arrested for disorderly conduct.

Those arrested will be arraigned on Sept. 22 in First District Court in Hempstead.

The arrests mark the latest police crackdown on the sale of alcohol to minors at bars and clubs in Nassau County.

In late July, 16 employees of the Warehouse 5 nightclub in Island Park were arrested for serving to an undercover officer.



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Singas presents legislation to address county heroin epidemic

BY JOE NIKIC

Acting Nassau County District Attorney Madeline Singas sent a letter on Friday to state legislators calling on them to hold a special session this fall to consider her fully written legislation designed to combat the nationwide heroin epidemic's effects in New York.

"An epidemic of heroin abuse is exploding across the country and here in New York," Singas said in the letter. "This year alone, heroin deaths are up 100 percent from the same time last year. This is a crisis that requires immediate legislative action."

Michael Scotto, a former Manhattan prosecutor is challenging Singas in a Democratic primary for DA on Thursday, has claimed that Singas has not been aggressive enough in combatting heroin use in Nassau County.

In the letter to the Legislature, Singas summarizes a five-bill package written by her staff that she said will give law enforcement the tools needed to legally take down drug dealers.

"Current law too often lets dealers off too easily, and to stop the pipeline, it's critical that the Legislature take immediate action help us take dealers off the street and end this scourge," Singas said.



Acting Nassau County District Attorney Madeline Singas

The first proposed bill in the package will create a "death by dealer" statute that allows felony homicide charges against dealers whose customers die from overdoses.

The second proposed bill will prevent dealers from qualifying for non-jail "diversion" dispositions intended for addicts.

The third proposed bill increases penalties for dealers who sell heroin to children.

The fourth proposed bill increases the penalties for drug trade paraphernalia.

The final proposed bill increases penalties and revokes licensing from doctors and

pharmacists who illegally sell prescriptions and prescription drugs, which are considered to be a gateway to heroin abuse.

"These legislative changes will give prosecutors better tools to take on street-level dealers, to identify their suppliers, and to collaborate with our law enforcement partners to cut the pipeline of heroin into our state and our neighborhoods," Singas said.

The DA's office has been engaged in the fight against the heroin epidemic with a three-pronged approach that embraces early prevention, effective treatment for addicts, and aggressive prosecution against dealers.

"As a prosecutor, I have spoken to too many heartbroken parents who have lost their children to overdoses, and seen too many promising lives cut short by this epidemic," Singas said. "By putting dealers on notice that a sale that leads to death means a long prison sentence; that selling heroin to a child means a long time upstate; that they won't be able to game their way into diversion when they should be in jail; and that dirty doctors and pharmacists who sell prescriptions and drugs for profit will be punished like the drug dealers they are, we can make headway in this difficult fight."

Dem DA primary on Thursday

BY BILL SAN ANTONIO

Voters were to decide the winner of a Democratic primary for Nassau County district attorney Thursday between acting DA Madeline Singas and Port Washington resident Michael A. Scotto.

Blank Slate Media's coverage of the primary may be found Friday on TheIslandNow.com and in the Sept. 18 edition of its newspapers.

The winner of the primary will face Republican Kate Murray, the Town of Hempstead supervisor, in November's general election.

Singas, of Manhasset, assumed the DA position in January, and in May received the county Democratic Committee's endorsement.

Scotto, a former chief assistant DA in Manhattan, has alleged Singas and predecessor Kathleen Rice's offices have been ineffective and reactive in their practices.

Reach reporter Bill San Antonio by e-mail at bsanantonio@theislandnow.com, by phone at 516.307.1045 x215 or on Twitter @Bill_SanAntonio. Also follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/theislandnow](https://www.facebook.com/theislandnow).

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