

November 17, 2010

## Town approves demolition permits for the Courtesy Hotel

Originally Published by LI HERALD



The Courtesy Hotel could come down by the end of 2010.

West Hempstead's infamous Courtesy Hotel is coming down — they swear.

The Town of Hempstead finally approved the developer's building and demolition permit applications, according to Town Councilman Ed Ambrosino.

Although he was cautious about speculating on time lines, Ambrosino said there is a good chance the developer, Mill Creek Residential Trust, will break ground in December.

Wait, Mill Creek? What happened to Trammell Crow Residential? Fear not, area residents, the developer merely changed its name over the summer.

"Our development group formed Mill Creek Residential Trust, which will be engaged in the development, construction and acquisition of multi-family communities across the United States going forward," said Maria Rigopolous, vice president of the company's Northeast Division.

Rigopolous went on to say that the change will have no affect on the company's plans to erect The Alexan at West Hempstead Station — a 150-unit, four-story complex that features market-rate rental apartments.

"This business change will not alter the development plans, quality of construction or ultimate operation of the apartment community," Rigopolous said.

West Hempstead residents have lobbied for years to replace the seedy, crime-ridden, hot-sheet Courtesy Hotel with the transit-oriented building complex, contending that the project is the catalyst the community needs to start its revitalization.

Rosalie Norton, president of the West Hempstead Community Support Association, said completion of the project will change the areas gloomy atmosphere, make it safer, more visually pleasing and generally more welcoming. That will encourage other developers to look at properties nearby, and allow more residents to utilize the neighboring Long Island Rail Road station. Ultimately, the Alexan will increase tax revenue to the school district and the overall value of the West Hempstead community, she said.

With it, the Alexan will bring “youth, energy and a new start,” according to Ambrosino. Moreover, the apartment complex will be just the fix West Hempstead needs for what West Hempstead resident and realtor Sharon Lovy described as a “dire shortage of multi-family housing.”

After four years of promises unrealized, it’s time, West Hempstead residents have said. According to Rigopolous, Mill Creek Residential Trust agrees.

“Now we are in the process of finalizing the financing and transactional documents and anticipate closing shortly thereafter,” she said. “We will let you know once we schedule the groundbreaking.”