

A neighborhood transformed



NOW
Homes left in disrepair in the former public housing on Lee Gray Court in Glen Cove.



PROPOSED
Renderings of what the new privately funded development would look like after completion on the Lee Gray Court site.

Housing that became 'real blight' to be redeveloped

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The 19 vacant duplexes of Lee Gray Court have become magnets for vandals and monuments of decay.

In the five years since it closed, the public housing development at the edge of Glen Cove's historic Landing neighborhood languished. A plan to raze it and build 60 private condominiums stalled in late 2009 as the economy sank.

Now, a less-dense redevelopment effort is moving forward, with officials expressing far more confidence that it can be realized.

The City Council on Tuesday authorized the \$3-million sale of Lee Gray Court from the Glen Cove Housing Authority to builders operating as Morgan Estates of Glen Cove Llc.

Doug Moskow, of Glen Head-based Cornerstone Properties

of New York, and James Vilar-di, of Valley Stream's Bedford Construction Group, hope to break ground on the project in the next two months, and complete it by next spring.

"We're really excited. It's not often you get an opportunity to transform a neighborhood," Moskow said. "This has been a real blight to the community."

Unlike the earlier proposal, Morgan Estates won't tear down existing structures but will gut and transform the unadorned block or brick buildings by installing porticos, new roofs, windows, facades and other features. The 19 two-family homes would become 17 two-family and 2 detached single-family houses.

"We're looking forward to seeing this get done," said City Councilwoman Delia DeRiggi-Whitton.

Moskow estimated each old duplex would require \$150,000 to \$200,000 of rehabilitation.

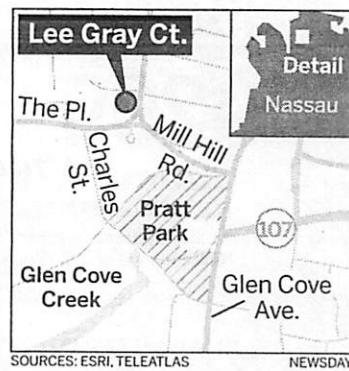
Sales prices for the units — to be built with "green" elements such high-efficiency toilets and mold-resistant insulation — weren't discussed.

The privately funded development, including new trees, curbs and other landscaping, will target first-time home buyers.

"This gets the property back on the tax rolls for the first time in 40 years," said Mayor Ralph Suozzi, noting its almost 40-year use as U.S. Housing and Urban Development-subsidized rental housing. "This was a property that was underperforming for years."

Landing Pride Civic Association, which represents the neighborhood where Glen Cove's earliest residents settled, said it supports any project stressing owner occupancy.

"We just feel there is a high concentration of absentee ownership in our neighborhood,"



SOURCES: ESRI, TELEATLAS NEWSDAY

said association president Carol Kenary. "Anything that's owner-occupied, generally speaking, we're in favor of."

While Moskow said it's hard to exclude someone from buying a house as an investment, he hopes to work with the city to offer tax incentives for those who choose to live on site.

"We want to promote home ownership," he said. "Not just an investment vehicle for landlords."