
Tuesday, May 15, 2001

Let's make a deal

By Jason Tait

Eagle-Tribune Writer

HAVERTHILL -- The city is expected to accept \$200,000 in exchange for allowing a developer to build 100 new homes on Ayers Hill near the Plaistow, N.H., border, officials said.

The deal, offered by developer K. William Krikorian, involves building 100 homes, 10 of which will be tagged as affordable housing, and making a \$200,000 donation to the city. City Council will vote on the proposal tonight at 7 in City Hall.

Despite earlier reservations when the proposed development was rejected by the city in February, Council President William C. Pike said the most recent deal is good for the city.

"I think it meets what the city was looking for, generally speaking," he said. "I think the area will benefit too. It will fill a need for housing in the city."

Mr. Pike said council will likely accept the offer to avoid a lawsuit that could allow the developer to build without city approval.

The deal was originally rejected because Mr. Krikorian wanted to build 120 luxury units for the people 55 and older at an average price of \$289,000 each.

Through negotiations, the number of homes was reduced to 100 and will include 10 homes deemed affordable -- selling for lower than market value. Four of those 10 will be handicap accessible.

"We said what conditions we'd like them to meet, and they made an offer," Mr. Pike said, explaining the \$200,000 donation is common practice in city politics. "It's an effort by the city to get something in return It's part of

negotiations."

The \$200,000 will be used for something specific, not put in the city's general fund, Mr. Pike said.

"This is not just money going into the coffers that the School Department can suddenly spear away," he said. "It will be for something like rehabilitating homes in the core community."

The development will be built on about 50 acres near Newton Road. It calls for some construction on the road to install water and sewer lines.



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