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Digging into the Hamptons' biggest projects

While some developments make headway, others are stalled for the foreseeable future

By [Richard Murdocco](#) | July 05, 2017 12:00PM



In May, executives from Rechler Equity Partners and town officials broke ground for Hampton Business Park's second bu

It's not a secret that in the Hamptons, it can take awhile to get things done. L region known for its luxury housing and rural seclusion — not for the willing municipalities to approve projects and keep them moving.

Still, the creation of a business district in Westhampton Beach is making stri local bakeries to film production. And infrastructure updates have helped a r and an affordable housing development in Amagansett progress. On the flip project in East Quogue seems to be all but doomed.

The Real Deal took a look at where things stand with some of the major deve

East End.

Building up Westhampton Beach

In May 2017, Rechler Equity Partners broke ground for Hampton Business Park, a 68,000-square-foot space at 200 Roger's Way.

The first building, 220 Roger's Way, is 60,000 square feet and opened in January. It houses such businesses as Tate's Bake Shop, Carrier Enterprise and AC Lighting & Electrical. More buildings are expected to be completed this fall.

When Hampton Business Park is finished (estimates say five years from now), the park will include nine buildings with 440,000 square feet of new commercial and industrial space, including corporate offices, medical offices, showrooms, light manufacturing, and warehouse space, plus a 145-room hotel. In all, the effort is expected to cost \$100 million.

"Our existing building at 220 Roger's Way has proven the need and demand for additional warehousing space on the East End," Mitchell Rechler told *TRD*, mentioning the growing needs of local home builders and the food industry, in particular.

Rechler, based in Plainview, New York, won the bid to develop the 50 or so-acre site in Westhampton Beach in 2009. Since then, Mitchell Rechler has seen a market for industrial space, choosing to set up shop, and he feels the project will help meet growing demand.

"The migration of companies moving west to east, particularly from areas like the Hudson Valley, has increased the demand for industrial space significantly," he said.

Revitalizing mixed-use in Riverside

Renaissance Downtowns, a developer also based in Plainview, is looking to revitalize the hamlet, a plan that many in the community felt was ignored for decades.

Renaissance's plan for the hamlet calls for 2,267 housing units, including a c

housing and market-rate apartments. In addition, the proposal calls for 62,000 and medical offices and more than 133,000 square feet of retail space.

A rendering of Renaissance Downtowns' plan for a mixed-use development in Riverside, which includes 2,267 housing units.

The project would essentially triple the housing units in the area, which is on par with Southhampton. The median income in Riverside is about \$34,000 a year, and Renaissance has been working to build the infrastructure needed for the project, thanks to the site location's mixed municipal jurisdictions, which include the Town of Southhampton.

In May 2017, the project saw its first large-scale investment in the site's infrastructure when it broke ground on \$5.25 million worth of improvements to a traffic circle.

"The area has no infrastructure," Sean McLean, vice president of development at Renaissance Downtowns, told *TRD*. "There has been nothing added for 80 years, but the circle significantly increased the viability of what we're doing. It was an important construction."

The project also needs to establish wastewater treatment for the site. Such high-level treatment are common across Suffolk County, but in recent years, a countywide effort to improve water quality has opened the door for smaller, less traditional options regarding the project's take when it comes to mitigation of wastewater impacts.

Renaissance is looking to the Town of Riverhead's sewer system for the short-term solution and a longer-term solution from the Town of Southhampton.

Though the project still exists only in renderings, McLean feels that Renaissance will empower an area that hasn't been civically active in the past.

"It's always refreshing to work with a series of governments and communities."

things,” McLean said, stressing that they are trying to ensure what he called “environmental benefits” for the community.

Amagansett may get affordable housing after all

When the East Hampton Housing Authority first proposed a 40-unit affordable acre site off Montauk Highway, the community recoiled. But according to the authority’s executive director, the project is moving along, just with a lot less last year.

“The project is still only on paper, but it’s plugging along,” Casey said. “A key wastewater treatment,” she added, noting that once they get the county okay, for approval from both the East Hampton Planning Board and the Suffolk Co

As a result of the sewerage issues, the project has evolved since it was first an buildings, down from the original 15, as well as additional parking and a new facility.

Despite the new footprint, Casey remains confident about the project’s prospects.

“The number of units has not changed, and the targeted income levels and rents. Expressing optimism, she added that they are expecting the project to break ground in the summer of 2018.

‘The Hills’ is barely alive

Of all the developmental efforts out east, few are as controversial as The Hill housing development and golf course planned by Arizona-based Discovery 1

The project, slated for nearly 600 acres in East Quogue, has attracted vitriol from boldface names as Alec Baldwin speaking out against it.

Southampton’s Town Board has been mulling over the zoning change required

since October 2014. The project has become so contentious, in fact, that the town is considering eliminating the special Planned Development District (PDD) zoning designation for developments like The Hills, altogether.

“The Supervisor’s proposal to terminate the PDD law is a welcome step forward,” said Robert G. Gifford, president and CEO of Group for the East End, a nonprofit advocacy group based in Southampton. “However, the town still seems content to let the review of The Hills’ PDD designation and the good that can come from this approach.”

But the developer, who declined to comment on the project, is still trying to get the project approved. The next step is for Discovery Land Company to submit a Final Environmental Impact Statement, which means more public hearings and additional sign-offs and approvals from both Southampton and New York State.

“It’s unlikely, even if everything went smoothly, that any construction would start before 2019,” Southampton Town Supervisor Jay Schneiderman told the Southampton Press in 2014. If The Hills is ultimately rejected by the Southampton Town Board in its current form, the town has the option to pursue development that would fit the 600-acre property’s as-of-right zoning, one house per five acres. Of course, that change would start the entire process, and possibly be rejected again.

