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## HEMPSTEAD: Project draws new input

BY NIA-MALIKA HENDERSON

[nia.henderson@newsday.com](mailto:nia.henderson@newsday.com)

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The developers of the massive, \$2-billion Lighthouse building plan got support and suggestions yesterday at a public hearing on the environmental impact of their project, which includes a renovated [Nassau Coliseum](#), hundreds of hotel rooms and 2,000 apartments.

Uppermost in the minds of the residents who spoke out at the "scoping session" at Hempstead Town Hall, attended by about 100 people, was workforce housing.

"We support it but we want 20 percent affordable housing and we want it on site," said Marion Schurade, 71, of North Merrick, and a member of the League of Women Voters. Developers said 20 percent of the apartments would be "next generation" housing, which young adults could afford.

"There are also transportation concerns," Schurade said. "If they don't solve the traffic problem, it won't fly. "

Additional traffic would add to an often-congested Hempstead Turnpike, Meadowbrook Parkway, and Merrick Avenue, observers said.

Several residents said that the project offered a chance for widespread transportation enhancements.

"This is an opportunity to improve the public transportation in the area by connecting our existing bus and train stations," said Lisa Tyson, of the Long Island Progressive Coalition.

The site, which would span about 150 acres, would include a five-star hotel, a sports complex, a minor league ballpark, conference center, condominiums, restaurants and shops. Developers have applied to create new zoning along Hempstead Turnpike and are looking to create a pedestrian-friendly streetscape. They expect to give the Town of Hempstead an environmental impact statement in July.

"We are going through the identification-of-issues phase now, but most people are for it," said co-developer Charles Wang, the billionaire owner of the Islanders hockey franchise. "It's a great project and hopefully it will be a catalyst and economic engine. "

The Lighthouse team, which includes real estate mogul Scott Rechler, says it would like to begin the Coliseum renovation in July of next year, a project expected to generate thousands of construction jobs. Completion of the entire project would take about 10 years.

The next public hearing is Tuesday at 7 p.m. at Hempstead Town Hall.

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