

Briarcliff, Developer Celebrate Ball Field Groundbreaking

By Kristan Bove

The developer of a yet-to-be-built luxury senior housing complex in Briarcliff celebrated the official purchase of the property and ceremonial groundbreaking of a new ball field it is building for the village by throwing a barbecue last Thursday for more than 200 area residents.

The new field, on the grounds of the old Kings College property at Scarborough and Sleepy Hollow roads, is being constructed by Integrated Development Group. IDG plans to build the \$300 million The Club at Briarcliff Manor, which will be one of two fee-for-service continuing care retirement communities in Westchester County. The June 25 event included tours of the 59-acre site, live music and a complimentary barbecue.

During a presentation at the site with Briarcliff Mayor William Vescio and the village board, IDG President and Chief Executive Officer Matthew Phillips said that it was "very rewarding to see tangible progress to the development." Phillips said village officials and IDG have met to discuss the planning of the six-acre ball field, parking lot and restrooms. He projects the field will be ready for the 2010 soccer season.

"Today marks the first event as owners of the property," said Phillips, noting the event was the culmination of years of working to

obtain licenses and state approvals.

Vescio said construction of the ball field would provide relief for the overused Lynn McCrum Field at Chappaqua Road and Route 9A. The new field would be run by the village, and events will be scheduled through the Briarcliff Manor Recreation Department. Vescio said it was "very rewarding to see it come into fruition."

When completed, The Club at Briarcliff Manor will feature 325 independent living residences and a 60-unit assisted living center, where licensed and professional staff will provide skilled nursing care on site 24 hours a day. Construction is set to begin in 2011 with occupancy expected in 2013.

Development of the ball field was one of the conditions set for The Club at Briarcliff Manor to gain approval. The Club was required to donate 10 percent of the land for recreational use. In addition, the developer also agreed to donate \$2.25 million to the Briarcliff Manor Public Library, give the Briarcliff Manor Fire Department \$5,000 toward a new fire truck and create a new municipal water system. The Club at Briarcliff Manor also agreed to pay municipal taxes rather than seek an exemption from the state.

Last week's event was a hit among prospective buyers and future residents.

"It's a neat idea. I think they need all that," said Rosemarie Widulski of Scarsdale, who



Left to right, Kathryn A. Barnes, equity investment officer for National Electrical Benefit Fund; Matthew K. Phillips, president and CEO of Integrated Development Group, LLC; and Briarcliff Manor Mayor William J. Vescio at the June 25 groundbreaking of a new ball field. The new field is one of the conditions of approval agreed to by the developer of The Club at Briarcliff Manor, a \$300 million luxury senior housing complex scheduled to be built by 2013.

is considering buying a unit.

Widulski said it was a plus to have the land donated because it promotes good will in the community. She said she was interested in The Club, but it was too early to make a decision.

"Because of the real estate market you can't sell your house; you don't know how long you will be sitting on your house. A lot of factors go into making an investment," she said.

Longtime Briarcliff resident Stanley Goldstein, who plans to live at The Club, has already signed a contract and placed a deposit.

"I love Briarcliff," said Goldstein, who has lived in the village for 35 years. He said he has had good experiences with age-restricted facilities because his parents prospered while living in one. The location is "well located and advantageous," he said.

Goldstein added that the ball field was an important contribution to the community and the future residents because seniors enjoy seeing younger people in their lives.

The club's upper village will feature 288 unfurnished one-, two- and three-bedroom independent living residences in Tudor-style buildings. The residences will range in size from 930 to 2,030 square feet. The apartment building will also contain a clubhouse, spa and fitness center, and supportive living center.