

As Seen in the

# DAILY NEWS

nydailynews.com

## Coast is clear for marina

BY WARREN WOODBERRY JR.

THE ARVERNE BY THE SEA MARINA on Jamaica Bay is now just a vision, but developers of 2,300 new homes being built in the Rockaways hope to transform it into a popular destination for new residents in the area by 2010.

A waterfront recreation and entertainment center, estimated to cost \$35 million to build, is being planned for an area off 80th St. by Long Island-based Benjamin-Beechwood LLC.

"The marina is a wonderful amenity that will not only benefit the residents of Arverne by the Sea, but also will add a new spectacular waterfront facility to service all of Queens and, in fact, all of New York," said Gerard Romski, the project executive for Benjamin-Beechwood.

The proposed 40,000-square-foot, nautical-themed marina will rise on a now-vacant parcel between Barbados Basin and the elevated A train trestle that crosses the bay into Broad Channel.

### \$35M center set for Arverne by the Sea

The two-story facility will feature retail space, a boathouse for winter storage and a 33-slip marina that could later accommodate ferry operations, possibly between Manhattan and the Rockaway peninsula.

A restaurant/catering hall — fitted with sound-proof windows to block noise from roaring jet engines and rumbling A trains — will give diners views of sunsets over Manhattan, and flights entering and leaving Kennedy Airport.

The marina will be a short walk away from the burgeoning Arverne by the Sea community, giving residents there the opportunity to enjoy outdoor events and music festivals at the water's edge, Romski said.

And that, Romski indicated, could be just the beginning.

"We've had some interest here, like with a bowling alley and movie theater," Romski said of potential new businesses. "The Radio Shacks, the Chili's, the Applebee's — they're all calling now."

A wrecked boat, countless discarded tires and other junk litter the shores of Barbados Basin now, but once approved by governmental agencies, construction for the marina — including a community garden and protected wetlands — could begin within the year.

"What we've been seeking for 30 years out here is actually closer than we realize," said Councilman James Sanders Jr. (D-Far Rockaway).

Benjamin-Beechwood broke ground on the \$1.2 billion Arverne by the Sea project in 2003. Homes range from the high \$500,000s to over \$1 million, with Rockaway Beach just outside their doorsteps. Arverne by the Sea is expected to add 9,000 new people to the 105,000 population now on the peninsula. [wwoodberry@nydailynews.com](mailto:wwoodberry@nydailynews.com)



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