

## Around LI

### NASA launches library program

The Middle Country Public Library in Centereach has been chosen to take part in a science education program partly funded by NASA.

The library will participate in NASA@My Library, an 18-month program that provides materials and training to 75 libraries nationwide. The program is funded in part by NASA's Science Mission Directorate.

Middle Country is one of three libraries in New York State taking part in the program. The others are in Buffalo, in Erie County, and Dryden, in Tompkins County.

Middle Country officials said in a statement the program will help them "create compelling learning experiences for our community and share the story, science and adventure of NASA's scientific explorations of planet Earth, the solar system and the universe beyond."

— CARL MACGOWAN

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## NOW ON NEWSDAY.COM



He was "twisted" and "fired" after high school, but now he spends time using his fame to help fellow Llers. Check out his and dozens of other Long Island celebrity yearbook photos at [newsday.com/yearbook](http://newsday.com/yearbook)

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A rendering of one of the duplex town houses proposed for the Indian Hills Golf course in Fort Salonga.

## Builder takes a mulligan to keep golf course, reduce town houses

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A zoning change application for the Indian Hills Country Club in Fort Salonga is being withdrawn amid continued community opposition to plans to build more than 100 town houses.

The developer now plans to build slightly fewer townhomes on the site and preserve the golf course using zoning already in place.

Jim Tsunis, managing member of the Hauppauge-based Northwind Group, in 2016 applied to Huntington Town to change the zoning for the property from 1-acre single family to Open Space Cluster District. He planned to preserve 120 of a total of 143 acres and build 108 townhomes for residents age 55 and older on the remaining acreage in three separate areas.

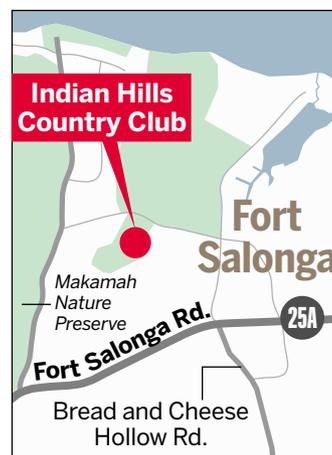
But continued opposition from nearby residents who said such a development would change the character of the

community and concerns about its environmental impact led Tsunis to reconsider the proposal.

He now plans to build 98 duplex residences on the property in three clusters on 150 acres and keep the golf course as is. The community will still be designated for those 55 and over. Two cottages originally proposed for daily use by golfers have been scrapped.

"I think this plan is fair for everybody," Tsunis said. "We're preserving 120 acres out of 150 and keeping the golf course, which defines the neighborhood."

Tsunis' attorney, Huntington-based Michael McCarthy, said the Open Space Cluster District uses a mathematical equation to determine the number of units and leaves "a lot of speculation." Tsunis recently sought a decision by the town planning board to see what he could build using the current zoning. The board found that the property would allow for



98 homes and allows for development such as town houses.

Tsunis will still need town site plan approvals and other reviews, town officials said. McCarthy said Tsunis will provide an environmental impact report.

The plan to redevelop the private golf course on Breeze Hill Road has caused fractures in the community. One civic group, The Fort Salonga Association, supports the proposal, while another, the Fort Salonga Property Owners Association, plans to continue to oppose it

because it departs from the area's character.

"This is very concerning to us," said John Hayes, president of the Fort Salonga Property Owners Association. "It's the biggest development in anyone's memory in Fort Salonga; it's a lot of houses in an area which is not used to having such density."

Frank J. Capaccio, president of The Fort Salonga Association, said preserving the golf course is the most important issue.

"We're excited that it's a 55 and over community," Capaccio said. "We feel like it's a good flight path for many of the residents in that community to ease into retirement, the additional tax to the school system without burden is phenomenal."

Tsunis said he will continue to meet with residents this fall, but plans to move ahead with getting engineering reports to create the development's infrastructure.

"I'm looking forward to building one of the most unique golf course communities on Long Island," Tsunis said, citing the location and little change to the golf course layout.