

Around LI

Town destroys Coram store

An abandoned Coram antiques store has been torn down by Brookhaven Town demolition workers.

Town officials said the Swap and Shop store on Middle Country Road had been vacant for more than 20 years. Complaints from Coram residents had led to numerous building code violations filed against the property owner, officials said.

The building was demolished on April 22 after engineers found it was unsafe.

"This property has been an eyesore for so many years and I am happy that it has finally been demolished," Town Councilwoman Jane Bonner said in a statement.

The costs of razing the building and removing debris will be added to the owner's property tax bill, town officials said.

— CARL MACGOWAN

More on next page



BURNING QUESTION

Why isn't there an Exit 47 on the LIE?

The short answer:

This exit is indeed missing, and in fact, Exit 54 is missing, too. Exit 47 was never built.

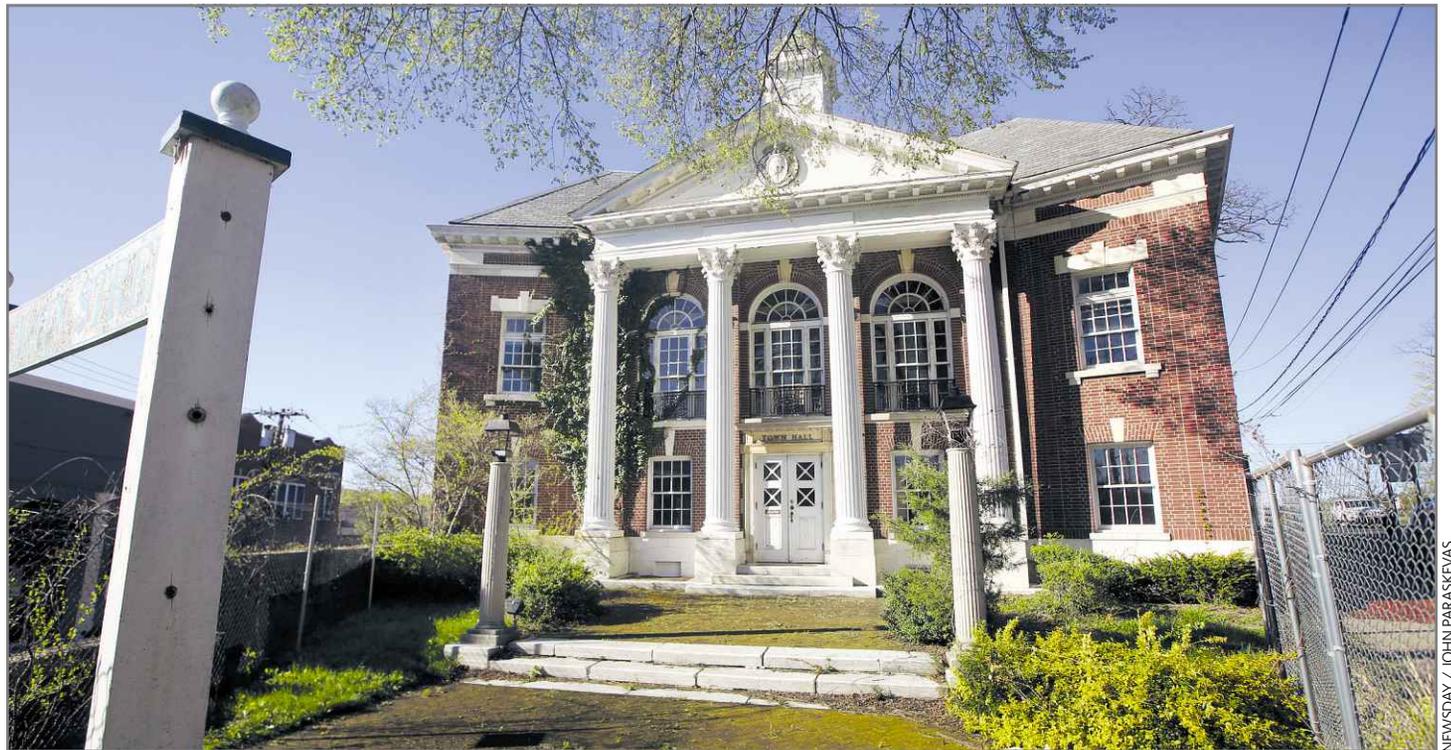
Exit 54 was in use at one time, but eventually closed to improve traffic conditions.

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HUNTINGTON



The old Huntington Town Hall on Main Street, built 109 years ago, could have the original plan for a 55-room hotel expand to 80 rooms.

BY DEBORAH S. MORRIS
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Plans to turn the old Huntington Town Hall on the corner of Main Street and Stewart Avenue into a boutique hotel could now have 80 rooms, up from 55.

Town officials have scheduled a public hearing to consider extending the Historic Building Overlay District to an adjacent parcel of land east of the old Town Hall site. Such overlay district designation gives owners of historic commercial properties and large residential estates the flexibility to explore additional uses for the property than what's allowed by the underlying zoning. The flexibility is designed to help preserve historic structures but also put them to use.

Property owner Emerson J. Dobbs in 2013 gained town planning board approval to build a 55-room boutique hotel on the Town Hall site. Those plans call for the existing 2½-floor structure to be preserved as the hotel's lobby, lounge and meeting rooms, with a new wing constructed for the guest rooms. The old Town Hall, which dates to 1910 and features a four-dial tower clock, has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

But Dobbs never received the necessary building permits before a five-year deadline expired. The planning board in

Thinking BIGGER

Developer wants to expand the size of onetime Town Hall into larger boutique hotel

February 2018 extended conditional approval for the plan until March 2023.

In an email Friday, Emerson J. Dobbs III said he is in contract to sell the building to Holtsville-based Huntington Village Hotel Partners. The company applied to the town to extend the overlay district for a parcel of land east of the approved site. The additional parcel allows the hotel to expand to 80 rooms, town officials said. Department of state corporation documents list Melville-based Buzzell, Blanda, and Visconti LLP as a contact for Huntington Village Hotel Partners. Attempts to contact the com-

pany were unsuccessful.

Under the proposal, the addition would house the guest rooms while the original building would contain the lobby, offices and common areas, town officials said. The addition would be constructed over an existing parking lot. Valet parking would be utilized to maximize parking capacity, town officials said.

"The Huntington Village Hotel will enhance Huntington's status as a destination by adding convenience and comfort while sparking renewed interest in one of our historic landmarks, Old Town Hall," Town Supervisor Chad Lupinacci, who sponsored the public



hearing resolution, said in an email.

Old Town Hall ceased operation as municipal offices in 1979.

Town Historian Robert Hughes says renovation of the site is a project historians have been looking forward to for many years.

"It's concerning that it's taken so long, so anything that will help get it back on track is a welcome development," he said.

The expanded plan requires the removal of a wood building behind the old Town Hall.

"Unfortunately, this latest proposal means the loss of the old police annex," Hughes said. "But in the greater scheme of things, it's more important that old Town Hall be saved."

The public hearing is set for June 18 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall, 100 Main St.

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newsday.com

NEWSDAY / MONDAY, APRIL 29, 2019