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COURTESY BLUMENFELD DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Construction of the new theater, here in an artist's rendering, is slated to begin later this year, following a review by the Nassau County Industrial Development Agency and the county fire marshal.



Construction of Lynbrook's long-awaited new movie theater will begin as soon as the project gets approval from the Nassau County Industrial Development Agency, and the work will keep the local cinema closed for more than a year, according to officials with the project's contracting firm.

The IDA will review the project's impact on businesses in the area and approve any county tax exemptions. A decision to proceed with the work is expected by the end of the month. If approved, it would begin within three months, starting with the demolition of the existing theater.

As reported in the Herald in April, the Lynbrook village board approved the demolition of the United Artists Lynbrook 6 theater on Merrick

Road, owned and operated by Regal Cinemas, and its replacement with a state-of-the-art theater, at a cost of over \$25 million. Mayor Bill Hendrick said that the new theater, which is expected to include 13 screens and 1,660 seats — seven more screens and nearly 700 more seats than the current theater — would be good news for residents and local businesses.

"Lynbrook is very lucky to get this movie theater," Hendrick said. "I'm very happy with the plans ... I think the new facility is going to be absolutely beautiful. ... This is a giant leap forward in the right direction."

According to Village Clerk John Giordano, the village's engineering consultant and the county fire marshal are also reviewing the plans. The current structure, which opened nearly a century ago, will be torn down after the project receives IDA approval. A demolition permit is expected to be approved this fall, Giordano said.

Jerry Grewe, vice president of Regal Cinemas, said the renovation planning began over a decade ago — but didn't include demolition of the building. "We initially planned to just renovate the

current structure, but that didn't turn out to be feasible," he explained. "Instead, we'll be building a new structure at the same site as the existing one."

Regal tapped Blumenfeld Development Group for the planning and construction of the 77-foot tall building, which will feature new leather recliners and significantly enhanced lobby and concession areas. Upgrades will also be made to the small nearby Patrick Henry Park, including a new flagpole, a brick plaza and a seating area. The park is used by the village for the Christmas tree and menorah lightings, and other events.

Lynbrook will be without a movie theater for roughly 18 months, according to Seth Silver, a spokesman for Blumenfeld, and the project will be minimally invasive and will not have a large impact on traffic, according to an environmental impact survey done by VHB Engineering. Additionally, Chris Robinson, vice president of Blumenfeld, promised that the construction would not disrupt use of the park.

"The construction will not occupy any space currently occupied by the park," Robinson said. "Instead we'll just be renovating certain areas of the park to give it a facelift."