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## Ayers Hill's 100 homes win final approval

By Hilary Roxe

*Eagle-Tribune Writer*

HAVERTHILL -- Last night city councilors gave final approval to a 100-home development for Ayers Hill near the Newton, N.H., border -- repeating their preliminary vote of a week ago.

The decision came as Ayers Hill neighbors condemned councilors for giving up some of Haverhill's most precious land and selling out their votes.

The vote mirrors last week's decision to let Lowell developer K. William Krikorian build the homes geared to people over 55, after he promised to make 10 of the homes affordable units -- four of which will be handicapped accessible -- and make a \$350,000 contribution to the city's affordable housing fund.

Councilor John J. Curtin Jr. voted against the project last week and again last night.

"I want to thank Councilor Curtin for being the only councilor who didn't sell out his vote" for the \$350,000 donation, said Vincent Silvia, who added he was speaking on part of the Lesiczka family, which lives on land bordering the proposed development. "You need to start standing up for what's right in the city. When the City Council stands up to the developers trying to rape our city, maybe they'll go away."

Resident Michael Lesiczka, another opponent of the development, said he grew up playing in forests in the Ayers Hill area. The land is so steep, he said, that climbing the hill requires "pulling yourself from one tree to another." This makes the property unsuitable for development and ripe for

problems like landslides, he said.

When the council turned down his original proposal months ago, Mr. Krikorian took Haverhill to land court, but stalled the suit to negotiate further. Council President William C. Pike said the development would be "an asset to the city."

In other business last night, the council:

Decided to charge for dock and mooring permits, and for permission to operate a dock or moor a boat off city land. Asking residents interested in short-term permits to pay \$35 could help cover the harbormaster's costs and salaries. The harbormaster currently inspects docks and provides those permits without charge, councilors said.

Running a dock from city property will cost \$200 per season. Harbormaster Michael J. Vetts said the costs will not stop people from wanting to use Haverhill's land to get to the river, and the city will have to remain vigilant to protect its property from being over-permitted. Councilors Curtin and William H. Ryan voted against the charges.

Heard from barbecue vendor Thomas Beauschane, who sells from a cart on the boardwalk. There are three licensed vendors in that area, and another cart has both elbowed in on his space and started selling ribs, he said. Councilor James J. Fiorentini said he would not consider limiting what the other vendor can sell, because it would create a "monopoly."

Councilors said they will consider assigning particular spaces to every vendor. The city could break down the boardwalk, into three distinct sections, for example, to ease potential disputes.

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