

Suffolk County to acquire parcel for offshore wind training center

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By Mark Harringtonmark.harrington@newsday.com**MHarringtonNews** Updated
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The Suffolk County Legislature on Wednesday is scheduled to vote on the county's acquisition of a parcel in Brentwood to serve as a community hub that will incorporate the region's first stand-alone offshore wind training center.

Newsday first reported on the proposed \$1.46 million purchase of the state-owned parcel in March, when Suffolk Department of Labor Commissioner Rosalie Drago said the project's vision includes the creation of a community-centered space that expands access to "economically empowering work" and educational advancement, particularly for those ages 14 to 24.

An August resolution by County Executive Steve Bellone said Suffolk is in the process of acquiring the parcel for "varied workforce services," most prominently as a National Offshore Wind Training Center Inc. The center, funded through a \$10 million grant from offshore wind developers Orsted and Eversource and their Sunrise Wind project, would have a 22-year license agreement with Suffolk.

Roger Clayman, former executive director for the Long Island Federation of Labor and one of three directors of the National Offshore Wind Training Center, said the site at 350 Crooked Hill Road will serve as a vital training spot for Sunrise Wind and other wind-farm developers and top-tier suppliers, and introduce Brentwood youth's to the possibilities of a nascent industry.

It will be a "job opportunity center and a training hub, mostly to give young people a view of what goes on in the world of work," he said.

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The facility also will collaborate with the Suffolk County Department of Labor, Licensing and Consumer Affairs to "provide education and training to Suffolk County youth," the resolution said.

For nearby Suffolk County Community College, the center "will provide an outlet for some of our faculty to teach many of the courses that are going to be taught as part of the global wind industry's basic safety skills," said Lou Petrizzo, executive vice president and general counsel of the college and a director for the National Offshore Wind Training Center.

"It will also provide an opportunity for our students to go through the program to be able to work on offshore wind platforms," Petrizzo said, adding it also will provide "an opportunity to get into the Brentwood community and school district and discuss" offshore wind and the college with future students and workers.

He said it will be the first such training center in the state.

Clayman said the center will expand from the building's footprint for its uses, and provide wind-farm developers with a mandatory safety and first-aid training for employees working in the field. In the future the facility could expand into training for manufacturing and maintenance operations for farms, including composite materials work for turbine blades, he said.

Mark Harrington, a Newsday reporter since 1999, covers energy, wineries, Indian affairs and fisheries.

