



REALESTATE

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Inked



333 Wyandanch Ave., West Babylon

Tri State Signs & Awnings leased 5,000 square feet of industrial space at 333 Wyandanch Ave. in West Babylon. Jeremy Hackett and Michael Pisciotta of **Metro Realty Services** represented the tenant, as well as the landlord, Classic 201 LLC, in the lease transaction.

Burman Boulevard and David Court, Calverton

Calverton Fields LLC, which is registered to William Fields, owner of Apple Honda in Riverhead, purchased 5.02 acres of industrial land at the northeast corner of Burman Boulevard and David Court in Calverton for \$2 million. Nicholas Romano of **Metro Realty Services** represented the buyer, as well as the seller, Robert Birnbaum, in the sales transaction.

307 Christopher St., Ronkonkoma

Rock Ridge Sales Inc. leased 3,000 square feet of industrial space at 307 Christopher St. in Ronkonkoma. Michael Zere of **Zere Real Estate Services** represented the tenant, while landlord J&L Investors was self-represented in the lease transaction.



400 Montauk Highway, West Islip

Kiska Construction leased 1,200 square feet of office space at 400 Montauk Highway in West Islip. Jamie Winkler of **Winkler Real Estate** represented the tenant, as well as the landlord, Jafco Associates, in the lease transaction.

729 Acorn St., Deer Park

Rip 'n Ship Arena LLC, a gaming company, leased 1,400 square feet of office space at 729 Acorn St. in Deer Park. Jamie Winkler of **Winkler Real Estate** represented the tenant, as well as the landlord, Chemark International, in the lease transaction.



Courtesy of Beechwood Organization

THE VANDERBILT: Beechwood is eyeing its Westbury apartment building for a rooftop solar installation.

Beechwood plans to expand community solar power initiative

By DAVID WINZELBERG

The Beechwood Organization, Long Island's most prolific multifamily home builder, is planning to expand its community solar energy program.

Beechwood became the area's first residential developer to offer discounted power to a handful of its tenants and homeowners in January, when it launched a community solar pilot program.

The company contracted Farmingdale-based EmPower Solar to install solar panels on the roof of its sprawling 175,000-square-foot headquarters at 200 Robins Lane in Jericho, which allowed Beechwood to offer 10 percent savings on the electricity bills for about a dozen tenants who live at The Vanderbilt apartment complex in Westbury and some condo owners at Country Pointe Meadows in Yaphank.

Since the pilot program proved successful in reducing electric bills, the developer is looking to install more solar panels at its Jericho headquarters and other roofs, such as The Vanderbilt and Beechwood's 237-unit Selby rental complex, currently under construction on Merrick Avenue in Westbury. The expansion could provide discounted power to hundreds of Beechwood's tenants and homeowners.

"It's been great," Beechwood principal Steven Dubb said about the community solar program, "which is why we're looking to expand it."

Community solar got its start on Long Island in 2017, when a few early programs tested the idea of distributed power generated by remote installations. But lately, the practice is beginning to gain traction,



Courtesy of Beechwood Organization

The solar panels on the roof of Beechwood's Jericho headquarters powered the developer's community solar pilot program.

according to EmPower CEO David Schieren.

"People who are historically not able to participate, whether they live in an apartment building or whether their roof is not suitable for a solar installation, can now benefit through community solar," Schieren says. "It provides benefits to all the participants. The building owner can host a system and directly provide a benefit to tenants in the form of lower energy rates."

And building owners can expect a significant return on investment as well. The rooftop solar installation serves as an additional tenant, and Dubb estimates that the company's existing community solar installation will provide a 10 percent annual return on investment, but that return could grow with the addition of more subscribers.

Dubb adds that having the solar installation off-site is a good alternative for homeowners who want to join the renewable energy movement.

"They don't have to put up the initial

investment of installing a system and they don't have to look at solar panels on their roof," Dubb said.

The way it currently works, participating residents get an electric bill from Beechwood and, if they use additional power, they get a second bill from PSEG-Long Island. However, the state's Public Service Commission recently approved an order to consolidate community solar payments into one single bill that would be split between the building owner and the utility.

EmPower has embarked on several community solar installations in the last year or so. The company is currently building a 2-megawatt system on the roof of the 250,000-square-foot Holbrook headquarters of Four Seasons Sunrooms. The installation will provide power for about 200 Long Island homes.

Schieren called community solar "transformative" for owners of commercial buildings.

"Previously there wasn't a mechanism for building owners," he said. "The majority of commercial building owners don't use the energy themselves, instead it's their tenants. It's unlocking all of these roofs owned by real estate companies."

Beechwood plans to expand its community solar installations before the end of the year.

"What I like about it, whether you care about climate change and the environment or you don't, it's still a good idea because you're saving money," Dubb said. "We have an extensive waiting list for the discounted power from Beechwood tenants and homeowners."

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