**Cherry Hill Township seeks to buy Kingston Estates Swim Club property**

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CHERRY HILL - Township officials want to buy a swim club facing a sheriff's sale here so the site can be preserved as open space.

A resolution to authorize the purchase of the Kingston Estates Swim Club property will be on the agenda for Monday's council meeting, officials said.

The swim club is facing a sheriff's sale after foreclosure by TD Bank, which is owed about $470,000 on a construction loan.

The township expects to use Open Space funds for the purchase, with the site's price expected to be less than $500,000.

The township is acting to prevent development of the club's four-acre site at Princess and Deland avenues, officials said.

The nonprofit club, which did not open this year, has been a neighborhood institution since 1956. Its site is zoned for institutional use.

The township's statement noted the club "sits in the middle of the Kingston neighborhood, directly next to baseball fields and hockey rinks, and abuts several homes in the neighborhood."

It said the location "makes it prime land for a walking trail or a neighborhood park."

Mayor Susan Shin Angulo noted the township has promised "from day one to do everything in our power to protect the neighborhood and residents’ quality of life."

"This is a major victory for the Kingston neighborhood and our community," added Council President David Fleisher. “We look forward to seeing this property used for recreational purposes to benefit our residents.”

Public works employees "will begin to clean up, secure, and beautify the site in the coming weeks," the township said.

Bob Mangels, president of the swim club's board, called the planned sale "a great outcome for the community."

“While we are very disappointed to see the swim club close, we are thrilled that the mayor and council stepped in to protect the property,” he said.

*Jim Walsh is a free-range reporter who’s been roaming around South Jersey for decades. His interests include crime, the courts, economic development and being first with breaking news. Reach him at jwalsh@gannettnj.com or look for him in traffic.*