

Community college seeks Suffolk land

■ **Goal is to create** space to develop high-tech center

■ **County says** it's too soon to decide on transfer

BY RICK BRAND

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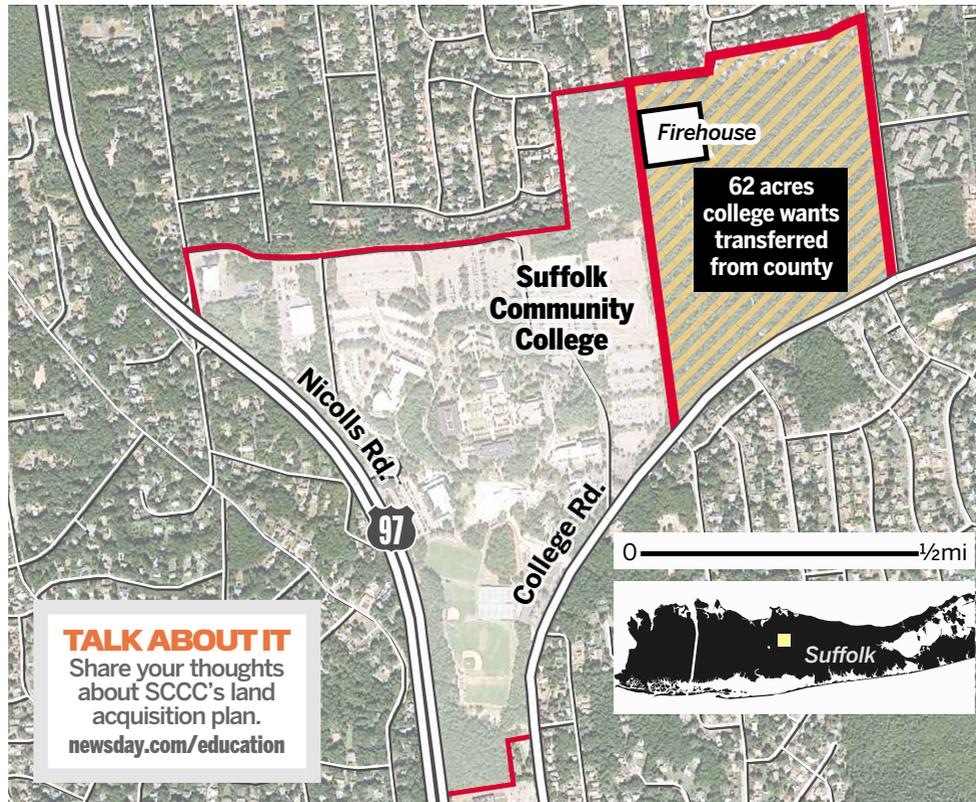
Suffolk County Community College officials have quietly asked the county to turn over 62 acres to substantially increase the size of their largest campus in Selden so it can develop a high-tech center just northeast of existing school grounds.

The college first approached Bellone administration officials and local legislators in the past six weeks about a possible transfer, which would increase the size of the 156-acre Selden campus by more than one-third.

The request for the county-owned land comes as the college plans to submit preliminary application to the state this week to take part in Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo's "Start-Up New York" program. That initiative is aimed at luring private high-tech start-ups by creating tax-free zones at local college campuses, which could also provide research and get potential training for students in cutting-edge fields.

"Right now, we're landlocked," said Shaun McKay, college president, noting the Selden campus is already overcrowded with 14,000 students and parking for only 5,000 cars. He said the college is also soliciting request for proposals to evaluate how to best use college facilities on all campuses.

The expansion would be the first major increase in the footprint of the three-campus commuter college in nearly four decades. The college first opened in 1960 in Selden in what once was a tuberculosis sanitarium. The 200-acre Brentwood campus was added in 1974 and the 200-acre eastern campus outside Riverhead opened three year years later. Today, SCCC, with 26,000 students, is the largest in the state's system of



The college's Selden campus is hoping a 62-acre expansion to the northeast will provide sufficient space for high-tech research.

36 community colleges.

Vanessa Baird Streeter, a spokeswoman for County Executive Steve Bellone, said that the administration is looking to partner with both the community college and other colleges on the state program, but that it's premature to talk about land transfers. "The land is adjacent to the college so it makes

sense, but it's too early to determine what structure [of the program] will be," she said.

Legis. Sarah Anker (D-Mount Sinai), the education committee chairwoman, also questioned whether the college would need the entire tract.

"I love the idea," said Legis. Tom Muratore (R-Ronkonkoma), who represents the area.

"We need high-tech industry and what better place than next to the college." He said he will work with college officials to vet the idea with the community and address any concerns.

In the past, officials have debated various uses for the county-owned parcel, including a nine-hole golf course and using 6.6 acres for the Long Island headquarters of Empire State College. William Lindsay, the late presiding officer, even proposed budgeting \$4 million to sell the land for development during the county fiscal crunch, a move local residents opposed.

"What we have in Selden and Centereach is a lot of big box stores with low-paying jobs," said Debbie Felber, Selden Civic Association president. "If we get something more high-tech and brings better paid employees, who can live in our community, that's something we could live with."

Boycotts no threat to Israel, PM says

The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu dismissed warnings by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry that Israel could be targeted by a growing boycott campaign if peace talks with the Palestinians fail.

Netanyahu tried to reassure Israelis yesterday, saying any boycott attempts are immoral, unjust and "will not achieve their goal."

Kerry's comments and the aggrieved Israeli response led the main TV news shows in Israel yesterday.

A Palestinian-led campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions, launched in 2005, was long considered by Israel as a minor nuisance. Recent warnings by Europe and by Israel's own finance minister about potential damage from a widening boycott have raised the level of concern, however.

Over the weekend, Denmark's largest bank, Danske Bank, blacklisted Israel's Bank Hapoalim because of links to settlement activity.

Kerry is expected to present a framework for a peace deal in coming weeks. Anticipating resistance from Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, he has spelled out the risks if they say no to his plan.

Israel won't be able to preserve its future as a democratic, majority-Jewish state and will endanger its prosperity, while the Palestinians will inadvertently embolden hard-liners, Kerry warned last month in an apparent attempt to appeal directly to public opinion on both sides.

On Saturday, at a security conference in Germany, he sent a tougher message to the Israelis.

"There are talk of boycotts and other kinds of things," Kerry said. "Today's status quo absolutely, to a certainty, I promise you 100 percent, cannot be maintained. It's not sustainable. It's illusionary."