

Crane Ledge Woods impasse: here's a thought

A tempest's a brewin' over a 24-acre parcel of beautiful woodland nestled at the point where Hyde Park, Mattapan, and Roslindale all intersect. It seems that Jubilee Christian Church wants to sell this parcel to Lincoln Property Company, which wants to put up nine 2-3 story buildings on 14 of these bucolic acres.

The proposed buildings would add 270 apartments and 455 surface parking spaces to the area. (Nobody from Lincoln Property tuned into the second of two virtual community meetings, ably hosted by Lokita Jackson, to answer questions about this aspect and others regarding the huge project.)

Located at 990 American Legion Highway, the sited area currently has a 48% tree canopy coverage, well above the average of 27%, according to a Dr. Meshoulam, the co-founder of Speak for the Trees. This high percentage of tree canopy coverage has a huge effect on temperature reduction — nothing to sneeze at if abutters or future residents are concerned about the immediate effects of climate change in the census tract. Well above the 40% for effecting temperature reduction, the forested area accomplishes this by shading and sucking up water. The National Tree Benefit Calculator was offered to attendees as a means to increase awareness of even more benefits from the status quo.

And, of course, with this huge development — apparently not in need of any zoning variances — there would be increased traffic in area, as well as the diminution of hiking and walking spaces in an area that sorely needs such.

Nobody wants to see a church lose out on its ability



My Kind of Town/ Joe Galeota

to procure needed funds, but the proposed development incurs the interest, if not the opposition, of seven — count 'em, seven — neighborhood associations within the affected area. But a question needs to be asked of the city: why not purchase the acreage with money obtained from the Community Preservation Act?

Approved as ballot issue number 5 in November of 2016, the act imposes a stinging 1% surcharge on business and residential real-estate taxes for several purposes, among which is to fund initiatives for open space. In 2020 the city raised an extra \$24 million by means of this measure to fund affordable housing, historic preservation, and public recreation as well as for the aforementioned open space acquisition. For the city to buy the parcel seems like a triple win-win situation: for Jubilee, abutters, and woodlands. What a nice addition to Boston's Urban Wilds if this important parcel was spared from attack by rapacious developers, mighty bulldozers, and noisy chainsaws!

Mayor Janey introduces herself

Hey there,

Mayor Kim Janey here — Boston's first Black and first woman mayor. After several weeks in office, I wanted to check in and tell you more about who I am, my commitment to the people of Boston and what I've accomplished in my first month as mayor.

I hope you'll read what I have to say. But if you're already with me, it would mean so much if you'd take a quick moment to contribute to my campaign for a full term as mayor of Boston.



Mayor's Column

Kim
Janey

— and I'm taking advantage of this moment to implement a vision to make Boston stronger, more equitable and more just.

Boston must do better to provide every child with a high-quality public education. I've dedicated my entire career to fighting for children and promoting equity and excellence in education. I'm leading the effort to decolonize our curriculum, creating diversity in our exam schools and promoting teacher diversity. As mayor, I will continue to prioritize our young people with investments made through a racial equity lens.

Boston must do better in requiring transparency and accountability from our law enforcement officers. As a grandmother of two Black teenage boys, I worry about them growing up in our current policing environment. We had to have "the talk" for the first time when my grandson was just eight years old. As mayor, I've wasted no time getting to work on reimagining policing in our city. I've led on investment in racial equity training, appointed new leadership at the Office of Police Accountability and Transparency and demanded the release of files to shed light on our po-

lice department's internal discipline methods.

Boston must do better to ensure every resident can access safe, affordable housing. As a young, single mother, my first apartment was in Section 8 housing so I know what it's like to worry about having a place to lay your head at night. That's why, in my very first week as Mayor, I invested \$50 million in rental relief to help Bostonians who are behind on rent due to COVID-19. I'm also focusing on creating homeownership opportunities as a way to stabilize our communities.

Boston must do better to provide reliable public transportation. I don't own a car. I, like many other Boston residents, have relied on buses to get around our city. Because of a lack of equity in public transportation, Black residents spend an additional 64 hours per year on public transportation compared to their white neighbors. We must demand better state funding so we can create more equitable transportation options. In the meantime, I'm piloting a free bus program that will run through a major economic corridor of our city.

Help Us Build Something Amazing

I've only been mayor for a few weeks, but I haven't wasted any time getting to work on the issues that matter most to make our city work better for everyone, not just the privileged few.

But there's so much more to be done. Boston has big challenges to address — and they'll take longer than a few months to fix.

I know we can create a better city, but I'm counting on the support of grassroots folks like you to power this movement. I hope you're with me.

— Mayor Janey

Who I Am

I'm Boston's 55th mayor, and I bring a wealth of life experience that is radically different from that of my 54 predecessors. As a fourth-generation daughter of Roxbury, I understand the challenges our city faces like structural racism, food and housing insecurity, failing schools, faltering public transportation, hurdles to homeownership and fear for our families' and neighbors' safety because I've lived them. These experiences shape my approach to governing.

My Commitment

Because of my experience, I'm committed to leading our city with a lens of racial justice, equity and love for every Bostonian. I believe that it's simply not an option for Boston to go back to the way things were before the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, we have to go better.

What I've Accomplished in my First Month as Mayor

I'm honored to have the opportunity to lead our great city

Letters to the Editor

RESILIENCY GARDENS PROJECT

To the Editor:

I just learned about this great local opportunity to get a "vegetables & herb" raised bed garden kit, along with all the supplies and educational support!

Formed during the height of the pandemic, the group's goal was to create food resilience by growing gardens with organic produce, culinary and medicinal herbs, and pollinator-friendly plants. In 2020, they placed 40 Resiliency Gardens with 35 Needham

families. About 2/3 of their growers had been experiencing food insecurity and many were directly affected by COVID-19.

This year they hope to spread like good compost, reaching out to West Roxbury, Dedham, Newton and other towns nearby with a goal of 100 Resiliency Garden Beds. Want to join them?

The program is open to ANYONE regardless of ability to pay. In the spirit of community equity, they have a sliding fee scale from \$10-70 for a garden bed and the program. They also have a Share the Gift of Garden Resiliency program,

where a donation of \$70 gets a garden for a family facing food insecurity & \$120 helps get a garden for your family, plus a family facing food insecurity.

Signing up, you get garden beds, healthy soil, tools, gloves, a watering can or water meter and a sprouting & micro greens project. Zoom classes share gardening tips, culture and food, as well as topics in food & farming like: regenerative agriculture, soil amendments, DIY tomato cages and herbal medicine.

For more info, call or send a text to: 617-435-2851.

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