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Hyde Park residents to get first formal crack at proposal for tree-clearing, suburban-style apartment complex on American Legion Highway

By [adamg](#) on Sun, 07/25/2021 - 4:08pm



Rendering by Heffner Architects.

The BPDA holds [a meeting](#) tomorrow on a Texas developer's plans for [a 270-unit apartment complex with 415 parking spaces](#) on what is now 14 acres of forested hillside next to the Stop

& Shop strip mall on American Legion Highway on the Hyde Park/Roslindale line.

In recent weeks, nearby residents have [organized to fight the proposal](#) and to urge the city to try to buy the land from its current owner, Jubilee Christian Church, International, of Mattapan. Jubilee, however, has said it will sell only to the Lincoln Property Co., which wants to put up nine low-slung apartment buildings on the land and put down enough asphalt for all those cars.

If the project is built, the church, which once had its own plans for a subdivision on the land, will still own 10 acres on the hillside, which is also the site of a former quarry and a failed, never opened golf driving range and recreation center - which makes up another 18 acres now owned by Eversource.

Residents opposed to the apartment project say it will remove hundreds, possibly thousands of mature trees at a time when trees have come to play an increasingly important role in reducing city temperatures - and that replacing the trees, vernal pools and meadows now on the site will remove a major rain sink and so increase flooding for existing homeowners at the bottom of the hill - as well as remove what has become a preserve for wildlife from small pollinating insects to larger mammals. The project, they say, would also require extensive blasting of ledge and large boulders.

Lincoln says many of the trees are trash species and pretty sickly; opponents dispute that.

If the city were able to strike a deal with Jubilee and buy its entire 24 acres, that alone would increase the amount of basically forested land in the entire city by nearly 14%, Save Crane Ledge Woods organizer Lokita Jackson says.

She adds that the area surrounding Crane Ledge is an "environmental justice" area because a large number of its residents are poor or members of minority groups particularly ill equipped to deal with the consequences of climate change. Although state and city officials have concentrated on the coast line, "we can't just focus on the coastlands," she said.

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