

# The Hyde Park Bulletin

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Residents expressed concerns with the tree canopy loss that would take place after this planned development for 990 American Legion Hwy. is completed.

COURTESY PHOTO

## Strong opposition to Crane Ledge development from everywhere

Mary Ellen Gambon  
and Jeff Sullivan  
Staff Reporter

More than 175 community members attended a virtual meeting hosted by the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) on the nine-building housing complex proposed to for Crane Ledge Woods at 990 American Legion Highway on the Hyde Park-Roslindale border.

The overwhelming concern was the clear-cutting of more than 14 acres of tree canopy in Hyde Park during an era of rapid and severe climate change in what is already determined to be an environmental justice area.

The message from the audience was clear: It's a well-designed project, but it doesn't belong here.

The beginning of the meeting was marred by technical difficulties and the search for a Haitian Creole translator. Because of the delay the meeting, originally scheduled for two hours, was extended by a half-hour to address participant questions.

Dana Whiteside, BPDA Deputy Director of Community Economic Development, helped run the meeting with project manager Caitlin Coppinger. He stressed that this was the first meeting of several in a community process. An Impact Advisory Group (IAG) of neighborhood residents would add their input at a separate meeting on Wednesday, July 28.

John Noone, the developer from Lincoln Property Company, described the project. There would be 270 units in nine

**Crane's Ledge**  
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City Realty is looking to put shovels in the ground this fall.

COURTESY PHOTO

## Alpha Management project sparks landlord debate

### City Realty updates Allston Square timeline

Jeff Sullivan  
Staff Reporter

The Allston Civic Association (ACA) met on July 21 and heard from several developers proposing projects in the neighborhood.

During the meeting, Drago & Toscano attorney Jeff Drago updated the ACA on the project at 14 Gardner St. Drago said the developer, Nora LLC, has reduced the overall size of the project while increasing the open space and affordable unit count, and while some residents appreciated the changes, many had issues with the company supposedly coming to manage the property afterwards.

Drago said the project has four stories with 38 residential units and 25 parking spaces. He said the affordable units went from five to seven units, making the total affordable percentage of units 18.5 percent. Also, he said they

have also increased the green roof and balcony sizes, increased the rear yard setback from 15 feet to 20 feet, increased the open space by 161 square feet per dwelling unit, reduced the driveway to one-way, and relocated the bike room for ground floor access.

Resident Christine Varriale said she would be against the project no matter what because of the fact that Alpha Management will be managing the building when it's complete.

"They are some of the worst landlords, if not the worst landlord, in Boston," she said. "It's nice that you tried, but honestly the only thing you can do at this point is to donate the land to a nonprofit affordable housing developer and then maybe, maybe I'll feel okay about Alpha. For about a week. And then I'll go back to hating them."

At-Large City Councilor Julia Mejia

**ACA**  
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## SNA wrestles with developments

Richard Heath  
Staff Reporter

Housing development continues to preoccupy the Stony Brook Neighborhood Association (SNA) in Jamaica Plain.

From an enclosed porch to a \$47-million, 51-unit apartment house over a grocery store, SNA gives it all the same concentration following its slogan printed on every agenda, "We are the stewards of our neighborhood's built fabric."

At the July 12 virtual monthly

**Stony Brook**  
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Lee Goodman of Watermark describes the two Williams St residential buildings.

COURTESY PHOTO

# Crane's Ledge *continued from page 1*

buildings with a total of 415 parking spaces. Thirty-five units would be affordable and prices would range between \$2,300 and \$2,600 per month. They would be either three stories tall or have a front of two stories and a rear of three stories to adjust to the topography of the land. A freestanding clubhouse with amenities is also proposed, as well as an outdoor pool, dog park and two playgrounds. Different combinations of building materials, colors and textures would add vibrancy to the community, he said.

"We are committed to a transparent and inclusive process," he said. "The goal is to address everything we can and hopefully build community-wide support for this proposed workforce housing."

No variances were required for the garden-style apartment community, which will be comprised of one- and two-bedroom units. In order to enter the property, an entranceway will be configured to allow access in from American Legion Highway.

Noone said there would be no traffic impact, this according to a traffic study performed in 2019. There will be a 60-foot buffer zone along American Legion Highway.

He also said there were only 135 trees on the site, some of

which he described as in poor health. Several residents contested this, saying that there are hundreds of trees on the site and called for "100 percent conservation."

Jim Kirker, former president of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association (HPNA), called for an independent arborist to inspect the property.

During the question-and-answer period several union members from various trades blasted Noone for not being transparent on another local project at 1545 VFW Parkway in West Roxbury. They charged that the subcontractors were from out of state, though a majority was promised to be Boston residents, people of color and women.

Noone refused to comment. Whiteside said the concerns about the inclusion of contractors from diverse backgrounds will be addressed by the Boston Employment Commission.

Anne Marie Yanulis of the Mount Hope Canterbury Neighborhood Association (MHC), a lifetime abutter, expressed concern about the increase in traffic, noting there were two fairly recent fatalities at the nearby Clare Avenue intersection. She also said that a new traffic report should be

conducted given the redesign of American Legion and Cummins Highway to add bike lanes and to take post-pandemic traffic increases into account.

Several residents and Rep. Russell Holmes called for more affordable units, saying that 35 were not enough for a project of this magnitude.

"A \$2,600-a-month rent is not affordable for the people of Hyde Park," said Connor Ebsary, noting the high price would lead to gentrification.

Because of these concerns, Whiteside made a commitment that the project would not be fast-tracked, and said it is not guaranteed for approval.

"We hear loud and clear the voice opposition and the voice of concern about climate mitigation," he said.

On July 20, members of the Crane Ledge Woods Coalition met before the BPDA meeting to strategize against the project. Roseberry Ruskindale Road Neighborhood Association chair Lokita Jackson ran most of the meeting and outlined the coalition's main points of opposition.

Quality-of-life concerns the neighborhood would face was key. Jackson pointed out that much of

the tree cover would be lost due to the development of the Crane Ledge land, and that in turn would lead to an increase in the urban heat sink effect, possible increases in asthma rates and increases to flooding that already are happening in the neighborhood.

"We're expecting even greater impact from climate change in the City of Boston alone," she said. "We are expecting some extreme heat temperatures as well as flooding in the city, and so climate change is going to increase the temperature and precipitation and heat-related illnesses are going to increase. And after that it will be exacerbated by the development of the Crane Ledge Woods as you're looking at more impervious surfaces."

Jackson said many of the issues they have with the development are related to climate change and infrastructure impacts. She said tree canopy cover over 40 percent has the largest cooling effect – about 10 degrees Fahrenheit – and Crane Ledge is at 48 percent.

"Protecting these 24 acres would increase Boston urban wilds by 13.8 percent and sustain the green infrastructure in this census tract that is 98 percent people of color," she said.

MHC co-chair Lisa Beatman pointed out that the plan submit-

ted to the BPDA shows woodlands on the property to the east of the site currently owned by Eversource for electrical transmission.

"But there's nothing there," she said. "There's no trees there now and there's nothing in their planting proposal that shows anything there. Those buildings back up against a landfill that is likely to become a substation."

She added at the BPDA meeting that there were no proposed renderings of the units, which she considered unusual at this stage of the process. Beatman also pointed that there is a possibility of the existence of vernal pools around Building 7 and in other areas of the site.

"We are encouraging people to insist that there be an independent audit and resource delineation to show resources like that," she said.

Beatman said she believes the only portion of this property that does not have trees currently is a meadow.

"A beautiful living meadow that has wildflowers and pollinators – bees and butterflies – and also marsh grounds," she said.

The entire Project Notification Form outlining the project can be viewed at <https://bpd.a.p.p.b.o.x.c.o.m/s/hpmuh63vmtbrk5y41ndjpsi810j3yd>.



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### Prayer to the Blessed Virgin (Never known to fail!)

Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this necessity. Oh Star of the Sea, help me and show me herein you are my mother. Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech thee from the bottom of my heart to succor me in my necessity (make request). There are none that can withstand your power. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (three times). Holy Mary, I place this cause in your hands (three times). Say this prayer for three consecutive days and then you must publish and it will be granted to you.

—A.E.P.

## WEST ROXBURY

Built in 191c, this Dutch Colonial-style residence is set on lovely tree-lined street with mature trees and beautiful perennial gardens. Renovated and well-suited for everyday living as well as entertaining, the floor plan features include a kitchen with cherry cabinetry and access

to a deck overlooking the large level yard; a living/dining room with a Mendota programmable gas fireplace and bay window; first floor family room; and a sunroom reading nook with windows. The third-floor master bedroom has tree-top views, walk-in closet, and oversized bathroom with a Jacuzzi tub and skylight. There are four other corner bedrooms. Further enhancing this property are crown moldings, central air-conditioning, second floor renovated bathroom, and an outdoor plug for electric car. Located in the Highland area, two blocks from the village center with restaurants and shops, commuter rail station, and bus lines. \$999,000



**Jan Crosby**

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## The Ohrenberger Community Center Preschool

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### JOB OPENINGS: Preschool Director & Teaching positions available

The Ohrenberger Community Center Council is seeking creative, nurturing and dedicated educators to fill openings in our Preschool. We are seeking both a **Preschool Director** and **teachers** for our program.

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