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BRA approves 100 Weld St. development, neighbors not happy



The Boston Redevelopment Authority approved the final plans for the 100 Weld St. condo development, which included the removal of the roof deck for two side decks to fulfill the open space requirement from the BRA.

COURTESY PHOTO

Jeff Sullivan
Staff Reporter

The Boston Redevelopment Authority approved the 16-unit condominium project for 100 Weld St. on the West Roxbury/Roslindale line.

While some residents are excited that the decaying eyesore of the old Weld American Gas Station will finally be redone, many residents feel that the project was too big and had too much of an impact on the nearby neighborhood.

“I’m not happy about the decision,” said Hazelmere Road resident Will Escobar. “I kind of feel like the city hasn’t listened to the neighbors and their concerns. It seems like Hazelmere has become sepa-

rated from this whole process, even though we’ve been very vocal and present at the meetings. We just knew from the first meeting that this was going to go through.”

Escobar said he was concerned about the change of the address from the initial project, as originally the proposal had the address of the building at 1400 Centre St., which makes the building’s front, legally, facing Centre. He said changing it to make the legal front of the building to Weld Street made it so that the rear-yard setback was no longer facing the Hazelmere neighborhood, but instead the parking lot next to Citibank and Kelleher’s Bar and Grille.

“Centre Street becomes the side yard,” he said. “Now the other side of the building can be right up against the property line.”

Escobar said another town house project, which did not go through, had similar zoning issues as its address was Centre Street.

“The back yards were looking right into the second floor bedrooms of all the homes on Hazelmere,” he said. “It’s just a feeling that I have that the reason they switched it over to Weld was in their plan to get around the variances.”

Walkup Roslindale Member Matthew Lawlor said the project is a welcome change to the old decrepit lot.

“I think speaking for Walkup Roslindale, I was the one who drafted our comment

letter we’re satisfied to see that project moving forward it’s replacing the long-standing eyesore,” he said. “It’s replacing it with a project that we think makes sense and we support it.”

Lawlor said that this project, besides helping to solidify the two-lane intersection on the Weld side of Centre Street, would help increase walkability in the neighborhood. He said the group feels that increasing housing does not necessarily increase parking concerns, as most Millennials are more concerned with access to transit rather than parking.

“In terms of choosing where they live and work, 95 percent of Millennials base their decisions on access to transit,” he said. “That’s a much different response than what you would get in older cohorts in Boston.”

Lawlor conceded his group has a different outlook than the residents on Hazelmere Road.

“We’ve got a different perspective than they do,” he said. “We know Roslindale is growing, the city is growing, and our focus is as new development occurs to see if it be the best plus for the neighborhood it can be.”

The development was planned as an as-of-right project, meaning if the Zoning Board sees no variances needed in the project, the project developer can obtain building permits and then start construction.

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ART ASSOCIATION DEMONSTRATION

WRAA is announcing an art demonstration for Nov. 16 to be held at the WR library, 6-8 p.m. Artist Frank Costantino from Winthrop will be the guest artist for the open to the public meeting. He is a Grand Prize Award winner in both oil and watercolor paintings and a member of the Boston Society of Architecture. He has painted from Block Island to Australia and will now be our guest artist for Nov. 16. The library is handicapped-accessible and meeting is held in the first floor hall. He will paint in the oil medium.