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ALLSTON BRIGHTON

## Allston Cafe to close after 26 years; owner hopes to open elsewhere

Posted by Matt Rocheleau November 11, 2010 04:23 PM

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(Matt Rocheleau for Boston.com)

Allston Cafe, formerly part of the Herrell's chain, will close this weekend.

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

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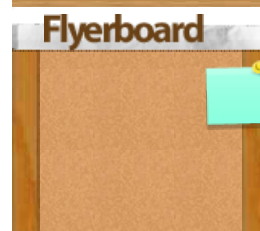
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Allston Cafe, known for its quirky, alternative, punk-rock style, will close this weekend after a 26-year run on the corner of Brighton and Harvard avenues.

Owner Derek Brown said he hopes to re-open the business, formerly part of the Herrell's Ice Cream chain, in another location in the neighborhood, perhaps as early as spring.

The economic downturn, coupled with a more than 50-percent hike in the space's lease rate that the cafe's owners had been fighting their landlord on for nearly one year, left them with no choice, Brown said Thursday.

The cafe was cherished member of "Allston Rock City" since 1984, serving coffee, ice cream, breakfast, lunch, and vegan menu options. Its final hours of business will be Saturday from 8 a.m.-3 p.m., followed by an open house to say farewell to customers from 2 p.m.-6 p.m. Sunday.

A year-and-a-half ago, the cafe cut its ties with Herrell's to run independently. As part of a regional expansion effort, Herrell's began giving its franchises a uniform look and feel, which prompted the cafe's owners to run the shop as its own entity -- free from locally-founded corporation's control and able to keep its unique, brash feel.

"They wanted people to be able to walk into any Herrell's across the nation and know it was a Herrell's," Page Masse, Brown's wife, told the Globe in June 2009. "We wanted to keep it the fun, funky place that it is."

Allston Cafe has around one dozen employees, said Brown.

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(David L. Ryan/ Globe Staff/ File Photo)

In June 2009, Page Masse (left) and her husband, Derek Brown, managers at the Allston Herrell's, decided to cut their ties to an ice cream chain to preserve their shop's brash style.



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