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ALLSTON BRIGHTON

Developer eyes grocery store to replace old Brighton funeral home

Posted by Matt Rocheleau June 28, 2011 01:39 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

A local developer hopes to build an organic- and natural-foods grocery store on the site of a Brighton funeral home that closed earlier this year.

Hera Development Corporation plans to raze the former McNamara Funeral Home at 460 Washington St. and replace it with a 9,000 square-foot [Nature's Green Grocer](#) store that would include a 35-space parking lot.

The development company hopes to begin construction this coming September and have the store open about one year afterward, said Gary Hendren, an architect for both the developer and the New Hampshire-based supermarket company.

City officials said the existing two-story building at 460 Washington St. has no definitive construction date, but it is believed to have been built prior to 1875. The McNamara Funeral Home business established there 77 years ago.

Plans to demolish that building will be reviewed at a city landmarks commission hearing Tuesday night to determine whether the facility meets requirements for a 90-day demolition delay.

During such delay periods, developers are encouraged to work with the community on alternatives to demolition. However, once the 90 days expire, developers can legally proceed with demolition unless the property receives landmark protection status. City officials at the landmark commission said Tuesday the funeral home site is unlikely to meet the criteria to receive such a designation.

If the developer receives approval to tear down the existing structure, the project would not require any change in the less than one-half acre property's commercial zoning, Hendren said.

He added that the plan for 35 parking spaces is nearly double the 18 city zoning rules require for such a project.

Hendren said the proposed market would be a "neighborhood store." Its location and size make it conducive for walking, biking and bus public transit access, he said. The store would employ between 50 and 60 people.

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Plans for the store are scheduled to be brought before the neighborhood's Brighton Allston Improvement Association in August, the architect said.

Hera is owned by Nicholas Heras, who grew up in Brighton, Hendren said. The company has previously developed two adjacent business properties – 462 Washington St. and 470 Washington St, which is where the developer operates.

There is one Nature's Green Grocer store opened in Peterborough, N.H. The expanding company is constructing its second store in Nashua, N.H. If the Brighton store's plans remain on track, it will be the third Nature's Green Grocer and the first in Massachusetts.

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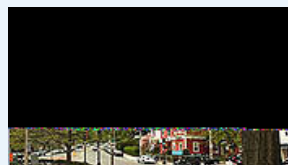
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