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JAMAICA PLAIN

## Cafe eyes vacant Hyde Square spot; JP Whole Foods seeks to serve prepared food

Posted by Matt Rocheleau April 3, 2012 02:15 PM

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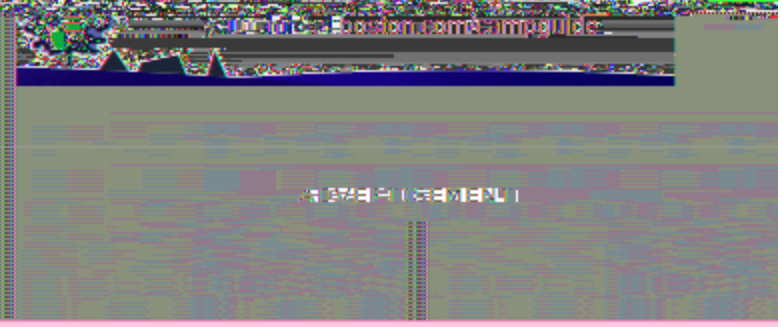
(Matt Rocheleau for Boston.com)

A photo of the outside of the new cafe that is seeking city approval to open soon in Hyde Square in a prominent business strip that has seen some notable, long-lasting vacancies in recent years.

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

After a two-year vacancy, a prominent retail space in Jamaica Plain's Hyde Square neighborhood is in line to soon be filled by a new Italian-style café.

Caffe Aromi is seeking city approval to open at 403A Centre St., a space that



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formerly housed June Bug Cafe, which closed in 2010.

The storefront sits next to another larger space at 403-405 Centre St. that remains vacant three years after the popular Bella Luna Restaurant and Milky Way Lounge **relocated nearby**.

Owners of the June Bug Cafe and the Bella Luna Restaurant and Milky Way Lounge each said they were forced to leave due to **sharp rent increases** by the property's landlord. A number of **nearby Hyde Square businesses departed** around the same time or shortly after those well-known neighboring storefronts emptied.

The manager of Caffè Aromi, Theresa Bruce, has applied for city permits to operate there every day from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. and to play recorded music. The business will seek support from the neighborhood council at the group's monthly public service committee meeting Tuesday night.

A sign on the cafe's front window said it plans to offer products including baked good, sandwiches, coffee and espresso.

Whole Foods, which opened in Hyde Square in the fall amid some resistance in the neighborhood, is also scheduled to appear at the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council's committee meeting Tuesday to seek the group's support to cook, prepare and serve food at a 22-seat area inside and a 16-seat area outside the supermarket. The grocer chain is asking to be allowed to serve the prepared food every day from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Tuesday's JPNC meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. at the old Cheverus School building behind the old Blessed Sacrament Church at 365 Centre St.

A coalition that formed last winter to oppose Whole Foods' then-planned arrival to JP, the Whose Foods group, sent an e-mail this week seeking support to oppose the supermarket's request to serve prepared food.

"We need to remind the Neighborhood Council that rents are already rising, and it is not fair to make the small restaurants--the same ones that make living

in JP special--compete with a corporate giant," the group's e-mail said in part. "Based on offerings at nearby locations, JP Whole Foods may offer items in competition with local restaurants, cafés, and catering companies."

*E-mail Matt Rocheleau at [mjrochele@gmail.com](mailto:mjrochele@gmail.com).*

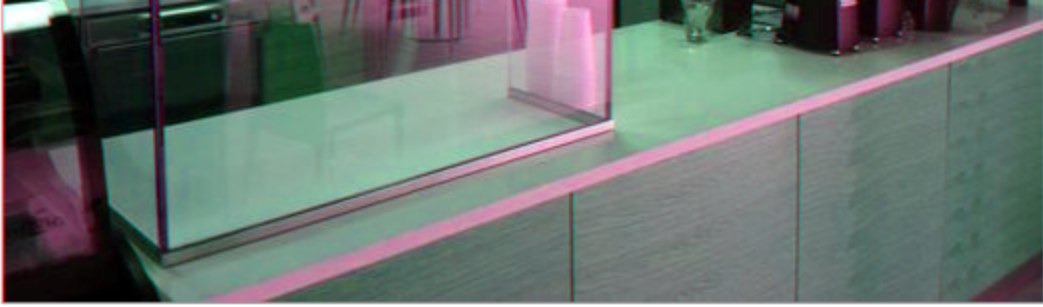
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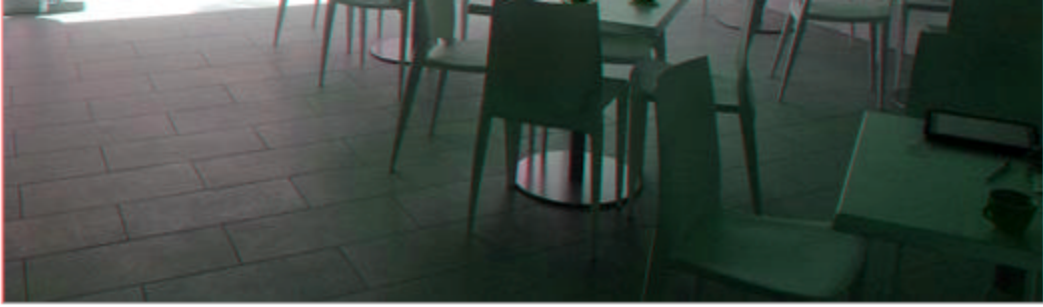




(Facebook.com/CaffeAromi)

A photo from inside the new cafe that is seeking city approval to open soon in Hyde Square.





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A photo from inside the new cafe that is seeking city approval to open soon in Hyde Square.



(Facebook.com/CaffeAromi)

A photo of the outside of the new cafe that is seeking city approval to open soon in Hyde Square.

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