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JAMAICA PLAIN, ROXBURY

## Developer to unveil latest proposal for 13-story, 195-unit apartment building in Jamaica Plain

Posted by Matt Rocheleau May 28, 2013 01:28 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

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A Boston developer will soon unveil its latest proposal to build a 13-story building with 195 apartments and ground-floor retail space on a wooded lot on South Huntington Avenue in Jamaica Plain.

Cedar Valley Development, LLC, which is based in Mission Hill, first proposed redeveloping 105A S. Huntington Ave about a year ago. Since then, the company has been working with designers from the Boston Redevelopment Authority to draft its latest plans for the 1.1-acre site.

Earlier this month, the city redevelopment authority [approved guidelines](#) for future development for the entire three-quarter mile length of South Huntington Avenue, including designating the site at 105A as one of four “special height zones” where “heights above and beyond typical precinct heights may be appropriate.”

Those heights are not specified. Instead, the guidelines recommend that the height maximum be determined as projects are proposed and reviewed within each of the four areas.

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The [guidelines](#) also say that along with the standard level of mitigation measures required from developers, the city will seek “exceptional public benefits, which are above and beyond typical mitigation measures” for projects along S. Huntington that would exceed certain zoning rules and guidelines for development height, density and footprint.

The guidelines were drafted during a four-month study of the S. Huntington corridor. The city launched the study late last year in response to concern from residents over a series of recent real estate- and construction-related changes and more expected in the near future, including the 105A proposal, which was first announced [last spring](#).

The redevelopment authority said the framework is not an amendment to existing zoning rules, but will serve as a “reference” for projects that require city review under the Article 80 process and zoning variances.

The latest plans for 105A call for a 214,000 square-foot, 13-story building with 195 apartments and two ground-floor retail spaces that together comprise about 1,860 square feet, according to the redevelopment authority’s website. There will be a mix of one, two and three-bedroom units.

Further details about the latest proposal were not immediately available.

The redevelopment authority’s website announced the proposal is scheduled to be presented at a public meeting on Monday, June 10, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the community room of the James W. Hennigan Elementary School on Heath Street.

When the developer submitted its original, detailed proposal to the city [last July](#), the company said it had hoped to start construction by this spring and to finish the project in about 18 months.

The developer paid the state \$1.5 million for the property in September 2005, public records show. The property is assessed by the city at about \$1 million. The land sits near the MBTA Green Line E branch’s Heath Street terminus.

Some residents have said they are wary of significant development proposed, underway and recently completed along South Huntington near where Jamaica Plain and Mission Hill meet.

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Most opposition to the projects has come from Jamaica Plain residents, while most support has come from residents of Mission Hill.

Several hundred feet from 105A S. Huntington is 161 S. Huntington, where another developer received city approval in [November](#) to demolish a 98-year-old special education school building and construct a residential building with about 196 units and around 156 parking spaces. The Home for Little Wanderers, which operated its well-known [Knight Children's Center](#) on that 3.5-acre property, [recently relocated](#) some programming and services from the center to a larger campus it owns in Walpole.

In [December](#), the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council filed a lawsuit against the city's Zoning Board of Appeals and the project's developer in an attempt to overturn the board's approval of the plans. The case was dismissed on May 17, online court records show.

At 201 South Huntington, next door to the former Little Wanderers site, sits an 85-year-old building that housed the [Goddard House](#) nursing home until early September when it [abruptly closed](#). Goddard's nonprofit board put the two-acre property on the market in [March](#). Some expect it will be redeveloped.

Across the street at 150 S. Huntington, a five-story, 500-space parking garage is [under construction](#) on the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center campus.

At 81 South Huntington, a 39-room boutique hotel opened last summer abutting 105A S. Huntington. Construction of that building began about two years before at the site of the former Pond View Nursing Home, which closed in 2008, according to the [Jamaica Plain Gazette](#).

At 125 South Huntington is the 47,000 square-foot AstraZeneca Hope Lodge Center, which [opened](#) in fall 2008. The facility offers free temporary homes in 40 suites to cancer patients and their families. It is directly south of the [North American Indian Center of Boston](#), which is abutted to the north by 105A.

And, about a half-mile away, the redevelopment of the former Blessed Sacrament church campus on Centre Street [has drawn criticism recently](#) because revised proposals would build a higher mix of market-rate housing than originally planned for the site.

Residents of Jamaica Plain have clashed in recent years over concerns about gentrification in the neighborhood.

For more details on the S. Huntington Ave. corridor study's dimension-related guidelines for new development and for background on recent and ongoing development along the S. Huntington corridor, [click here](#).

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