

Updates on the Islington Center Redevelopment Project

April 10, 2019 Update:

On March 4th, the Building Division issued a "Foundation Only" building permit to Giorgio Petruzzello for the start of construction on the new CVS building at 299 Washington Street. A full Building Permit was issued on March 27th and vertical construction began the week of April 8th. The new CVS building is expected to be ready for occupancy by the end of Summer 2019.

At 9,950 SF, this will be among the smallest CVS stores in New England. Unlike the CVS on Providence Highway and Elm Street in Dedham, the Islington Center CVS will not have a drive-thru window. Instead, two parking spaces will be reserved for curb-side pick-up.

Architectural design work for the relocation, renovation and expansion of Wentworth Hall began in March and is expected to continue through May. Plans and bid documents will be produced by Project Architect Mike McKay. Library Director Tricia Perry, Youth & Family Services Director Danielle Sutton, and Recreation Director Nicole Banks are working closely with the architect to ensure that the new Wentworth Hall complex will meet each of their department's needs. Facilities Director James McCarthy and Information Systems Director Donna McClellan will also be instrumental in the design process.

A new foundation will be constructed on the west side of Washington Street in Fall 2019 and Wentworth Hall will be relocated to the new foundation before the end of the year. The Islington Branch Library will remain open throughout the design stage. When the building is prepared for its move, a number of the branch activities will be temporarily relocated to the Islington Community Center Sanctuary Space.

Once Wentworth Hall is relocated to the west side of Washington Street, the second real estate closing will take place. In accordance with the LDA, that closing will involve the transfer of the former Wentworth Hall parcel at 280 Washington Street to Petruzzello Properties LLC, and the transfer of more than 40,000 SF of land on the west side of Washington Street to the Town. The land transferred by the developer to the Town will include the new Wentworth Hall parcel with 32 newly constructed and landscaped parking spaces, the small parcel that had previously been reserved for the Blue Hart Tavern, and an open space parcel behind homes on School Street and Schaefer Ave. This closing will also involve a cash payment of \$400,000 by the developer to the Town. This is the second of three payments which will total \$2.2 Million and will be used to defray the cost of relocating, renovating and expanding Wentworth Hall.

Following the opening of the new CVS and the second closing, the developer will begin renovations to the former CVS building at 266-278 Washington Street. Those renovations will include the construction of a new home for Mothers Morning Out Nursery School and a new ground floor retail space on Washington Street.

March 18, 2019 Update:

The Blue Hart Tavern had been stored at 9 School Street for the past 2-1/2 years while efforts were made to identify a new location and new use for the structure. As part of the Islington Center Rehabilitation Project, a small parcel of land was reserved on Washington Street with the hope of providing a new location for this building. The Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) for the Project was drafted to allow the ownership of that parcel to remain with Petruzziello Properties LLC if the developer committed to relocate, renovate and reuse the Blue Hart Tavern building. If such was not the case, the LDA provided for this small parcel of land to revert to the Town.

After several months of study and the creation of detailed architectural plans for the historic rehabilitation of the Blue Hart Tavern for retail or restaurant use on the first floor and an apartment above, the developer contacted the historic building mover who brought the structure to School Street from its former location on Washington Street. The building mover, Richard Geddes, expressed concern about the structural stability of the Blue Hart Tavern, and required a report from a structural engineer. Petruzziello Properties hired Professional Engineer Brent Goldstein to undertake a structural review. Mr. Goldstein found that the Blue Hart Tavern was in danger of collapse and could not withstand another relocation in its current condition. He reported this finding to the developer and the developer relayed this report to the Town.

Town Administrator Mike Jaillet requested a second opinion from Peter Paravalos, the former Chairman of the Westwood Historical Commission and a professional engineer with extensive experience in the relocation of historic structures. Mr. Paravalos agreed that the Blue Hart Tavern could not be moved in its current condition. He stated that the structure would need to be stabilized prior to relocation, which would require the complete removal and replacement of flooring and wall systems, leaving little, if any, of the building's historic fabric visible in the relocated structure.

Petruzziello Properties considered various options, including the complete deconstruction and partial reconstruction of the building, reusing of one or more of the original walls in what would essentially be a replica of the Blue Hart Tavern. The cost of each option was found to be prohibitive, even with the potential for a grant of \$75,000 in state funding. In addition, because the significance of the Blue Hart Tavern is related to its historic use, as opposed to its architectural style, the creation of a Blue Hart Tavern replica was not found to be desirable.

The developer then informed Mr. Jaillet that he would reluctantly abandon his plans for the relocation and reuse of the Blue Hart Tavern. Mr. Jaillet reached out to another party who had previously expressed interest in the Blue Hart Tavern and confirmed that this individual was not willing to take on the cost of relocating and restoring the structure. Therefore, in accordance with the terms of the LDA, and with the 2016 special permit for the 301-321 Washington Street project which allowed for disposal of the Blue Hart Tavern in November 2017, Petruzziello Properties LLC will be permitted to demolish the Blue Hart Tavern. An effort will be made to remove and preserve a few historic interior architectural elements prior to demolition. The land that had been reserved for this structure will be added to the parcel for the Wentworth Hall Library and Community Center, providing additional opportunity for greenspace around that building.

December 18, 2018 Update:

In accordance with state requirements, Petruzziello Properties filed an Asbestos Abatement Plan with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. The former Westwood Tailor Shop and Café Diva buildings were then prepared for demolition in accordance with that plan. Protective fencing was installed and utility connections were removed. The Town of Westwood Building Division issued Demolition Permits for both buildings in late November. (The Café Diva building was previously reviewed by the Westwood Historical Commission pursuant to the requirements of the Historic Structures Demolition Bylaw, and a Demolition Authorization was granted allowing the structure to be demolished on or after July 26th.) The former Westwood Tailor Shop building was demolished on December 6th. The former Café Diva building was demolished on December 11th.

The LDA set forth various conditions to be fulfilled prior to the First Closing. One of these conditions required Petruzziello Properties to restrict a third apartment unit at 321 Washington Street as a Local Action Unit (LAU), and for the town to obtain approval from the Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) for listing of all twelve apartments in that building on the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). On November 28th DHCD informed the town that all 12 units at 321 Washington Street had been added to the SHI. The First Closing for the Islington Center Redevelopment Project took place on November 28th. On that same date, Petruzziello Properties acquired the former residential property at 277A Washington Street. The developer now controls all properties on the west side of Washington Street that are involved in the Islington Center Redevelopment Project.

The Islington Clock was removed from the site and sent to Electric Time for refurbishment. The clock will be reinstalled in an appropriate location at the conclusion of construction.

Petruzziello Properties is now preparing an application to the Building Division for a Building Permit to construct a new CVS building on the corner of Washington and School Streets. Site work is expected to occur throughout the winter with the construction of the new commercial building in spring and summer 2019.

Petruzziello Properties is also preparing to relocate and restore the Blue Hart Tavern, and has requested consideration for the relocation of an existing transformer which appears to be in conflict with the proposed new location. Potential new locations for the transformer will be considered in the design of the Wentworth Hall relocation portion of the redevelopment project.

September 24, 2018 Update:

Three warrant articles related to the Islington Center Redevelopment Project (Articles 11, 12 and 13) were favorably acted upon by 2/3 vote at Westwood's Annual Town Meeting on May 30th.

Article 11 authorized the Board of Selectmen to take various actions in conjunction with the acquisition and disposition of land for the Islington Center Redevelopment Project, including the execution of a Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) for the project. The Board endorsed the LDA on June 11th and signed the first Amendment to the LDA on July 23rd.

Article 13 amended the Official Zoning Map to change the zoning district of two parcels known as Assessor's Plat 23, Lots 161 and 165, from Single Residence A (SRA) District to Local Business B (LBB) District, and to expand the FMUOD6/Washington Street Business District to include these two parcels. Zoning amendment articles require review by the Attorney General's Office (AGO) in accordance with MGL Chapter 40, Section 32. Documentation required for such review was provided to the AGO on June 20th. On September 14th, Town Clerk Dottie Powers received a letter from the AGO expressing unconditional approval of Article 13. On September 18th, Ms. Powers caused the posting of the AGO's approval and associated documents in five locations throughout town. Upon such posting, the zoning map amendments became effective, retroactive to the date of passage, May 30, 2018.

Petruzzello Properties reached final lease terms with CVS for the proposed new drug store at the corner of Washington Street and School Street. Town staff have been informed that the lease agreement is now in final form and is expected to be signed by October 5th.

Petruzzello Properties is now preparing an application to the Building Division for a Demolition Permit to remove the former Westwood Tailor Shop and Café Diva buildings. (The Café Diva building was previously reviewed by the Westwood Historical Commission pursuant to the requirements of the Historic Structures Demolition Bylaw, and a Demolition Authorization was granted allowing the structure to be demolished on or after July 26th.) Demolition is expected to occur in early October, with pre-demolition activity, including the installation of protective fencing and removal of utility connections over the course of the next two weeks.

Petruzzello Properties has informed town staff of its intention to relocate and restore the Blue Hart Tavern, and has requested consideration for the relocation of an existing transformer which appears to be in conflict with the proposed new location. Potential new locations for the transformer will be considered in the design of the Wentworth Hall relocation portion of the redevelopment project.

The LDA sets forth various conditions which must be fulfilled prior to the First Closing, involving the transfer of town-owned land on the west side of Washington Street (the Municipal Parking Lot). One of these conditions requires Petruzzello Properties to restrict a third apartment unit at 321 Washington Street as a Local Action Unit (LAU) and to obtain approval from the Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) for listing of all twelve apartments in that building on the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). The LAU application is nearing completion and will be submitted for review by the town's Housing Agent, Sarah Bouchard. Sarah is expecting receipt of the Fair Housing Marketing plan before the end of the month. She is hopeful that DHCD will grant approval of the LAU application within

30 days of submission. The First Closing date will be scheduled as soon as possible following receipt of this approval.

Town staff will continue to meet with members of the development team on a periodic basis.