

Minutes from Jan 29, 2020 Abutters' Meeting re: 156 Poplar Street, Roslindale MA

Anthony Ross, Esq, presented the plans for 156 Poplar. The older plans for a three-unit triple-decker from the last meeting were rejected in the abutters' meeting in September. The new plans are more in character with the buildings on the Sycamore St side.

The redesign has positioned the building as far back as possible from Poplar and was designed in consultation with an arborist. The building is currently 39ft back from Poplar, and the new structure would be 36ft back from Poplar.

The back yard, which will be used for 3 parking spaces, creates a 3ft zoning insufficiency.

The current building's square footage is 1309, and the proposed, redesigned building would be 1544.

The new building would have 3 units, each with 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, and requires no change in the curb cut.

Daniel Cohen is the advising horticulturalist on the project. He recommended staying away from the tree during the demo work, and having the construction approach from the back of the house. The owner Gerald Marcus has said that the construction manager will create a fence next to the construction to create a buffer zone around the sycamore tree. He has also committed to working with the City's arborist for the duration of the project. Daniel Cohen will continue to consult on the project during construction to ensure that the tree's root system is not harmed. As requested by the neighborhood association, owner Gerald Marcus has put these commitments in writing – a scan of the letter delivered at the meeting is available on the [RWVNA website](#). The arborist recommended taking down dead branches and fertilizing the tree.

Anthony Ross took questions from the attendees. Notes from the discussion follow:

- Current utility conduits will be reused.
- Lead remediation will occur, if needed. (The area will be sprayed with water to keep the dust down).
- Condo association docs could contain a deed restriction to prevent future construction by the tree.
- Units will be market rate. There are no plans for affordable units. Some attendees expressed their concern about continuing displacement of Roslindale residents as a result of increasing housing costs. They expressed their support for a change to affordable housing guidelines which would require one-third of all new construction to be affordable, instead of the current one per 10 units.
- Gerald noted that the previous tenants were not displaced, they chose to leave on their own.

- The tree has been trimmed since the September meeting.
- The tree belongs to the city, so the new owners shouldn't be able to cut it.
- Next steps are to take the plans to the zoning board of appeals- public testimony can be done in person or by writing to City Councilor Ricardo Arroyo at ricardo.arroyo@boston.gov
- Variances to be brought before the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) are that there are 3 units, and that there are 3 parking spaces instead of 6. Also, the 8000 sq ft yard is 422 sq ft too small - 3ft short in the back yard.
- An architect will review the plan and will apply aesthetics criteria.
- Construction will be fore 4-5 months.
- If construction is after-hours, the community can provide input on this.

New Boston City Councilor for District 5 Ricardo Arroyo was also in attendance. He encouraged residents to contact him regarding any concerns in the neighborhood. His contact info is: phone: 617-635-4210, email: ricardo.arroyo@boston.gov

Hank Cohen, Ricardo's constituent services manager, was also in attendance.