

LIFESTYLE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS, NEWS

## COMING SOON: LYNNWAY LIVING

BY OKSANA KOTKINA | June 8, 2022



*A rendering giving an idea of how the new project will change the face of Lynn.*

LYNN — The new 811 Lynnway development will change the face of Lynn and attract new residents and clients for many of the city's businesses, according to Charles J. Gaeta, the director of the Lynn Housing Authority & Neighborhood Development.

The project complies with all zoning regulations, and its request for the parking ordinance at the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) hearing Tuesday night passed unanimously after some minor issues were clarified. But still, the ongoing protest shows that there are some Lynnners who feel that this project leaves them out.

Economic Development Industrial Cooperation (EDIC) Executive Director James Cowdell representing the City of Lynn Development Team, said the project was supported by both the Master Waterfront Plan and the Lynn Housing Production Plan.

“It’s a major investment in Lynn,” said Cowdell. “It’s replacing a used car lot with a beautiful mixed use development.”

The developer is also the first person to give \$3 million for the Lynn Affordable Housing Trust, according to Gaeta. Affordable housing, he said, was aimed at the specific categories of individuals – for example, for the first-time buyers, or for those who could afford the rent.

“The mayor has made it clear that creating additional affordable housing opportunities in the City is a priority, and the contribution of this developer is a big step in that direction,” Gaeta said. “For all of us who have been involved in the Housing Production Plan, including the mayor even prior to his taking office, we made it clear that in the absence of including affordable units in a development we want to make sure the City obtains funding that can be used for that purpose in the future.”

However, for the people who are forced to leave Lynn because of the growing rent, the situation does not seem to be exactly a win-win. The organizers of the affordable rent rally last week maintained that thousands of Lynn families could not afford to pay rent and were being pushed out of the city.

“I would like them to make condos for the people who are here,” said Sandra Lopez, a Lynn resident at the same event.

The current deal still allows for the corporations and developers coming into Lynn and setting up separate areas that tend to exclude working class and lower-income Lynn residents, said Isaac Hodes director at Lynn United for Change.

“In this case, we want 811 Lynnway to include some on-site affordable apartments that are in line with Lynn’s average income levels, ideally with some units at 50 percent Area Median Income (AMI) and some at 30 percent AMI,” said Hodes.

Moving aside from the affordable housing debate, the project is accurately legally formulated, and it passed the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) hearing unanimously. The three minor issues that required clarification at the ZBA were the number of the parking spaces per unit, parking space dimensions, and floor area ratio (FAR).

The FAR issue occurred due to a technical mistake, said Attorney Sam Vitali, who is representing the developers, and the development satisfied the requirements. The second issue concerned the designed standards for parking spaces, which provision for the standard parking spaces 9 feet’ by 18 feet, whereas the development has spaces that are less than 9-by-18.

Thus, the development had enough parking spaces for both housing and retail, and the only relief that it sought was from a strict adherence to the parking requirements of 1.5 parking spaces per unit for projects under 300 units, while for the projects for more than 300 units in WF4, the requirement was 1.0, and 811 Lynnway had 1.2 parking spaces per unit.

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