



# Boston Bulletin

citywide news • street by street

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FREE

## Residents, City Life and owners clash



About 70 residents, City Life Vida Urbana organizers and musicians gathered at 150 Clare Ave./145 Navarre St. to protest what they see as unsafe conditions in the apartment complex.

PHOTO BY: JEFF SULLIVAN

**Jeff Sullivan**  
Staff Reporter

About 100 supporters, residents and members of City Life Vida Urbana came out on Sunday afternoon to protest the practices of the owners and property management of 150 Clare Ave. /145 Navarre St. on the Roslindale/Hyde

Park line.

The building, which contains 98 units of affordable housing, has come under scrutiny because of what some residents and City Life Vida Urbana call unfair practices. According to City Life and several residents, there have

**Clare Ave**

*Continued on page 9*

## WRNC to vote on Roxbury Prep

**Jeff Sullivan**  
Staff Reporter

While the site for the proposed 562-student Roxbury Prep High School is technically in Roslindale, the West Roxbury Neighborhood Council (WRNC) plans to take a vote to support or oppose the project at its upcoming June meeting, scheduled for the 25th.

At last week's WRNC meeting, members debated whether or not to take the vote, but decided to table it until more council members were available.

"We were going to stay away from this because it was Roslindale," said WRNC Chair Larry Costello. "There were community meetings

**WRNC Meeting**

*Continued on page 6*

## Corrib Classic makes triumphant return to West Roxbury pavement



Thousands came out for the annual Corrib Classic 5K. The crowds took over the streets on Sunday in West Roxbury, with music, pre-race stretching and speeches from organizers and elected officials. The race has raised more than \$1 million for charity since it started 25 years ago. See Page 7 for full story.

PHOTO BY JEFF SULLIVAN

## Neighbors continue to oppose Allston Yards

**Susan Kryczka**  
Staff Reporter

Despite developers claims to have made significant changes to the proposed Allston Yards project, the majority of the over 175 attendees who packed the May 29 public meeting at the Jackson Mann Community Center remain vehemently opposed to the development. The project would turn an existing 10.6-acre site at 60 Everett Street into a mixed-use, transit-oriented development

**Allston Yards**

*Continued on page 12*



Residents are still not convinced on the proposed Allston Yards Project at the current site of Stop and Shop.

PHOTO BY SUSAN KRYCZKA

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# Clare Ave. *continued from page 1*

been retaliatory rent increases after residents brought up issues such as mold, pests and parking restrictions.

Resident Bruce Green said he became aware of City Life when they were passing out fliers to inform residents of their mission to help residents fight unfair evictions and housing practices. He said he was issued an eviction notice after discussing income issues with management and has been fighting it for almost year now.

“I thought it was all just me, but when I started going out and canvassing and hearing all the problems everyone else was having in this complex, I said it isn’t me, it’s them,” he said. They don’t repair the apartments. The apartments have rats, roaches, mold, and then they want to raise your rent every year. They have hardly done anything to my apartment since I moved in here two-and-a-half years ago. Oh, they did do something. They replaced my on/off switch for my light... And when I first moved in, December of 2016 I had no heat because they didn’t change the filter in the furnace. Because they didn’t change the filter in my unit,

there was no ventilation. I put my bed in the middle of my living room and I heated my space with the oven. I know it’s dangerous, but it’s better than freezing.”

According to a letter dated March 31, 2019, written by City Life and signed by more than 50 residents, several rent increases at the building have been reported at \$700 a month. The letter states that these increases and eviction notices are retaliatory to residents who are asking for “basic repairs and services,” and demands that these practices cease. The letter also demands that all dangerous conditions in the apartments be fixed. The letter also asks that the Low-Income Tax Credit (LIHTC) payment standard requires rent increases only go up 3 percent each year.

Lincoln Ave. Partner and CEO Zachary Ulman said they have received the letter and responded.

“We wrote a letter to every resident and we addressed a handful of their concerns,” he said.

Ulman said Lincoln has never and never will “raise rents in a retaliatory manner.” He said he does not believe the \$700 a month rent increase

accusations.

“Our rents are governed by (the Federal Housing and Urban Development Department [HUD]), and HUD sets what our maximum rents are,” he said. “The maximum increase in Massachusetts, I believe, was 9 percent. I just don’t see a world in which that would translate to \$700 within a year. I believe our highest year-over-year increase we saw when I reviewed this with my team yesterday was \$200... Our rental increases are regulated by HUD and by state and local laws, and so with the average rent in Stony Brook, \$700 would be an over 50 percent year-over-year increase in rent, so it’s hard for me to see how that could have happened.”

Ulman said, as an example of how a \$700 increase could occur, is if a resident’s income increased to a point where they are no longer subsidized. However, he did not have a specific example of that in Stony Brook. He did say he wants to work with residents to fix any ongoing concerns like the reported mold and pest issues.

“We have high expectations on what we expect from our units and, if that story is

true (the \$700 increase), we would like to work with the tenant to address it,” he said. “Our property management team Sawyer (Realty Holdings) is on site and we encourage all residents to call the office, get a ticket submitted and we’ll work diligently to work through these.”

Lincoln Ave bought the property from Sawyer last May, but Sawyer still manages the property. Ulman said they have had dealings with dishonest property management companies in the past – the company owns properties in Florida, Texas, Nevada, Washington State, Maryland and Boston (with the majority being located in Florida, according to the company’s website) – but he doesn’t see that with Sawyer, and said he does not believe there is a disconnect between the owners and the management.

“It certainly could be possible, but we’ve been in pretty close communication with

Sawyer and I think they’re, as far as we can tell, operating in good faith and are taking care of things in a timely manner,” he said. “It would be surprising to me because we’re not the type of owners who buy a property, sit on it for 12 years, totally outsource property management and don’t pay attention... We’ve had other property management companies that we’ve had issues with that we spotted early on... There’s nothing that would lead me to believe that Sawyer is not operating in good faith.”

Resident Skyndy Suffrin said she disagreed, and spoke to the majority Haitian population of the building in Haitian Creole to the residents during the protest.

“We should be united and come together,” she said. “Together we will fight better.”

Sawyer did not respond to a request for comment before the Bulletin’s deadline.

**Tell 'em what you think with a Letter To The Editor**



Please write to:  
**THE BULLETIN**  
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 Please include your name, address & telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published.

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