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Tuesday, JAN 22, 2008

Supermarket, CVS on tap for Upham's Corner



An artist's rendition of what a new CVS would look like is plans progress to revitalize a portion of Upham's Corner.

Dana Forsythe 04.OCT.07

DORCHESTER — The Upham's Corner community — alongside representatives of it's Main Street program and the Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation — met with representatives from CVS and Brother's Market, last Thursday, to discuss the impact and construction of the two business at 776 Dudley St.

"I'm really excited to see everyone here tonight, especially since this is a big change for the neighborhood," said Zach Cohen of the Upham's Corner Main Street program.

Over the years, the property has changed hands many times. Previously, America's Food Basket ran their market in the space, but after leaving a few years ago, the community has been eager to fill the space. Now with CVS solidifying their deal to move into half of the property, the neighborhood is getting closer to having a functional market. Brother's Market, who owns and operates a few stores in Dorchester and around the city, hasn't signed the lease yet, according to Main Street's Cohen, but have been on the path to move in for a while. In all, the process has been going for over a year.

Due to a decades-long restriction on the property, the land has to have a market present for use.

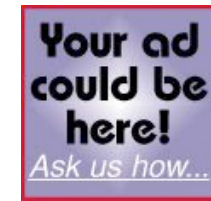
"We're happy to provide a market," said Jeanne DuBois, whose company, Dorchester Bay, owns the property. "But it's been a struggle to find good tenants to bring to the market side."

BK architects, who designed the building for CVS, had a representative on-hand to describe the building plans for the project. He showed a rendering that would create a one-story building and remove the overhanging awnings along the street.

The CVS side of the property, he said would encompass an 8,500 square foot first floor and a 4,440 square foot basement. The representative also pointed out that the back of the store would be isolated for deliveries only, and that both Brother's Market and CVS would have separate loading docks.

Residents asked about the second floor of the building and if there would be offices or merely a store extension in the space. CVS representative Debbie Constantine explained that the top floor would be merely cosmetic and that it wasn't practical to open it up or rent it due to its small space.

"It will essentially be empty space that is kept to balance the look of the entire building," said the BK representative.



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Residents also raised questions about the proposed height of the windows, citing numerous CVS stores had high windows blocking vision into the store. The designer said the store would use low windows to allow passers-by vision into the store and that taller windows in other stores were mainly used if the cash register was close to the window.

This brought up, the use of cameras on the street in front of the store. CVS representatives said they would certainly use cameras inside the store but weren't sure if they'd have one outside. A concerned resident said that it'd be a good idea and a deterrent for criminals. CVS representatives welcomed the idea, saying that the corporation was open to ideas to provide greater safety to the community.

There were some complaints about no direct access from a parking lot in the back, but the designer said it would compromise the market side if they wanted something like that. DuBois said that she'd be around after the meeting to hand out applications and help anyone towards the media center if they wished to apply online.

Nelson Fernandez, of Brother's Market, said he and his family were happy to be a part of the community and that the larger store would help them provide for the neighborhood.

- The Boston Peoples Voice



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