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A rendering of the proposed building at 30 Leo Birmingham Prky.

COURTESY PHOTO

Developer reviews 30 Leo M. Birmingham Prky.

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Staff Reporter

An Impact Advisory Group (IAG) meeting for a proposed real estate development project at 30 Leo M. Birmingham Parkway in Brighton took place via Zoom on Tuesday, Sept. 7 where issues ranging from traffic, affordable housing, green spaces and parking were raised and discussed by various project constituents.

Bruce Percelay, chairman and founder of The Mount Vernon Company, a Boston-based real estate investment firm, and members of his

team delivered a presentation that provided an overview of a project that includes 99 residential rental units and commercial and retail space. Following the presentation, Lance Campbell, a project manager with the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA), moderated a question and answer discussion with attendees.

The project is expecting to go before the Zoning Board of Appeals, as the development team said they will be seeking variances on

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several issues. Those include the fact that multi-family residential is a conditional use, that the building height proposed is 66 feet while 35 feet is allowed, that the floor area ratio (FAR) proposed is 2.65 while 1.0 is allowed, the fact that there is no front yard setback in certain sections of the building and the fact that 20 feet of rear yard setback is required and 5 feet is proposed.

The public benefits of the proposed project include installing wider sidewalks along Leo Birmingham Parkway, Waverly Street and Lothrop Street, new landscaping, new street trees, 5,870 square feet of active retail space and 8,650 square feet of amenity space.

While the conversation was civil and professional in nature, one participant, Brighton resident Galen M. Mook, challenged Percelay on the pricing of the units - \$2,000 per month for a studio apartment, up to \$3,400 for a two-bedroom residence plus between \$165 and \$225 per month for parking - something Mook thinks will negatively impact the ability to attract diverse residents to the area.

"The fact that you have three major developments in this corridor means that you almost single-handedly as a developer get to decide what kinds of people are going to be attracted to this neck of the woods," Mook said. "And, for lack of a better word, it's going to be pharma bros."

Percelay announced that The Mount Vernon Company would be occupying one of the commercial spaces at 30 Leo M. Birmingham as the company's new primary location and that residents will be able to use the amenities at one of Mount Vernon's other properties, The Radius, which is walking distance from the new proposed development. In addition, he shared that the price for retail space will be "about \$30 a foot" and that while the company is "dying for a tenant," he is cognizant of the needs and concerns of the community.

"We had a retail tenant that was very interested in the new building," Percelay said. "It was Marty's Liquors who was going to move from 103 North Beacon to here."

Based on feedback from various members of the BPDA prior to the meeting he agreed that the package store probably wasn't the best fit.

Campbell reminded participants that the project has not been finalized and that the next opportunity for individuals to share concerns will be at a future public meeting.

