

Starbucks to set up shop in Allston

By Matt Rocheleau / Boston.com Staff / April 4, 2014

Starbucks plans to open its first shop in Allston next month.

The coffee chain is scheduled to debut on May 1 in a 2,000 square-foot space at the corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Griggs Street, said Bruce Percelay, chair and founder of The Mount Vernon Company, which owns the property.

The Seattle-based coffee company will open in a couple-block area of Allston that's undergone a dramatic transformation over the past few years at the hands of Percelay's real estate and development firm.

"Starbucks looked at this site three years ago, and we told them our vision for the area, but at that point it was hard to visualize," he said. So, "they took a wait-and-see approach."

But, Percelay said when officials from the coffee company saw the area again recently and the changes made to the surrounding block, they jumped at the opportunity.

"It's a big deal for us," he said Friday. "The Starbucks lease validates that this site is now in primetime."

The Mount Vernon Company [has spent](#) more than \$100 million constructing new buildings and renovating run-down properties and dated apartments to create a new high-end, environmentally-friendly residential and business area named the "Green District."

The company even recently bought the popular bar Joshua Tree because that establishment's college-party atmosphere did not fit with its vision for the area.

Percelay said Friday his company is in talks with three separate grocers who are interested in leasing the now-vacant space, but declined to name which three companies are in the running.

"We feel confident that it will end up as some type of high-quality market," he said.

He said another business Lapels Dry Cleaning recently signed a lease to move in next door to Starbucks.

While most have welcomed the changes in that confined section of Allston, some have cited concerns over gentrification.

There is no Starbucks in Allston, a neighborhood known for its affordable living and dining options, but there is one a few blocks away in Brookline and two in neighboring Brighton.

[BostInno](#) first reported on Starbucks' plans to enter Allston.



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.@starbucks coming soon to Commonwealth Ave in #allston #boston is that good or bad? I say good.

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Starbucks is coming to Allston. Soon a Whole Foods will follow. Joshua Tree is no longer a student drunk party waiting to happen. Allston is becoming gentrified at last! HURRAY!

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