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Language:

BRA board approves six new development projects at final 2015 meeting

By Web 2015/12/11 Announcements

BOSTON – The Boston Redevelopment Authority’s board of directors ended the year yesterday by approving six new development projects representing an estimated investment of over \$244 million in Boston’s economy, capping off another strong year in what has been an unprecedented period of growth for the city. The final board meeting of 2015 included approvals for a new auditorium on Harvard Business School’s campus in Allston, a hotel in East Boston, a school in Dorchester, and three housing projects stretching from Chinatown to Roslindale.

The projects are anticipated to create over 380,000 square feet of new development and 377 construction jobs. Two of the three housing projects will be entirely affordable, adding over 90 such units to the city’s housing stock.

This year, the BRA has approved 7.1 million square feet of new construction.

While the board’s authorization of new projects consumed much of the meeting, the body’s policy votes were just as significant. Mayor Martin J. Walsh’s freshly signed executive order to enact a new **Inclusionary Development Policy** was ratified last night and will take effect January 1. Officials hope the new policy, which had been in the works for over a year, will help improve access to affordable housing opportunities for moderate- and middle-income families. It leverages the strength of Boston’s development economy to create these units using a three-zone model that requires developers to produce or fund more affordable units in the city’s higher priced areas if such units are not included within a developer’s market-rate project.

The new policy is a significant enhancement over the previous one size fits all approach that mandated the same percentage of inclusionary units regardless of where a project was located.

Wellesley Public Schools SY15-16 Anticipated Opening

1.0FTE Elementary Long-Term Substitute Music Teacher needed beginning January 29, 2016 until the end of the school year. Please apply to www.schoolspring.com or send a cover letter, resume, transcripts, and three letters of recommendation addressed to **Gayle McCracken, Director of Human Resources** and e-mail to spruillv@wellesleys.org
Actively Seeks to Increase the Diversity of its Workforce

After a year-long BRA-led community engagement process, the board also voted to approve the ten-year

extension of 14 urban renewal plans across Boston. The BRA, like similar agencies in cities and towns across the country, relies on **urban renewal tools** to foster responsible redevelopment and revitalization of Boston's neighborhoods. Urban renewal, which today is used in a much more thoughtful and restrained manner than the heavy-handed approach of the 1960s and 1970s, helps to create affordable housing restrictions, promote and protect open space, and assemble parcels and clear title for development to allow projects to secure financing.

The BRA board vote is just the first of several approvals needed to extend the agency's urban renewal authority. The Boston City Council, Mayor Walsh, and the state's Department of Housing and Community Development will also have to sign off on the request before the urban renewal plans expire in April of next year. Having obtained preliminary approval, the BRA will continue to work with the City Council and the state on the details of a two-year action plan, which will reflect the public comments and conversations that the engagement process has elicited, to accompany the ten-year extension.

Below is a summary of the new development projects that were approved last night.

Harvard set to build new auditorium on business school campus

Total Project Cost: \$171,100,000

Total SF: 105,100

Construction Jobs: 81



Harvard University – Klarman Hall/ G2 Pavilion

Harvard is moving ahead with another project in Allston under its approved **Institutional Master Plan**. The BRA board approved the construction of a two-phase development known as **Klarman Hall and G2 Pavilion**, which will replace the existing Burden Hall on the Harvard Business School campus. The first phase of the project involves the construction of Klarman Hall, a modern, media-equipped 1,000 seat auditorium with reception, meeting, and service space to accommodate the school's signature events. An underground connection to Spangler Center, one of the main buildings on campus, will also be constructed during this phase.

During phase two, Burden Hall will be demolished and replaced with a one- to two-story facility that contains meeting and classroom space that will be closely integrated with the adjacent Klarman Hall.

Separate and apart from the approval of the business school project, the BRA board last night approved the disbursement of \$100,000 in funding from the Harvard Allston Partnership Fund. The fund, which is maintained by the BRA from contributions made by Harvard University, relates to the school's planned science and engineering complex along Western Avenue. As a result, 12 community organizations that serve North Allston and North Brighton will receive grants to support educational, cultural enrichment, and neighborhood improvement programs.

New housing coming to Taft Hill Terrace in Roslindale

Total Project Cost: \$4,000,000

Total SF: 15,353

Construction Jobs: 12



20 Taft Hill Park

Parkhead Development, LLC, led by Michael Indresano, received approval on plans to construct 19 condominium units off of Taft Hill Terrace in Roslindale. The project, designed by Embarc Studio, will contain two one-bedroom units, 15 two-bedroom units, and two three-bedroom units spread between two new buildings. Two of the units will be deed restricted as affordable housing, and the developer will make a \$96,000 contribution to the City's Inclusionary Development Fund to fulfill their obligations under the current policy.

The project will include bicycle storage and 19 on-site parking spaces for vehicles. Each condo owner will receive a \$2,000 credit towards a car share account to encourage active transportation.

Dorchester's Epiphany School will grow to provide better services for students and families

Total Project Cost: \$8,800,000

Total SF: 87,979

Construction Jobs: 64



Epiphany School

For nearly twenty years, Dorchester's Epiphany School on Centre Street has served economically disadvantaged children and families, providing an intensive educational experience, free or reduced lunch, and scholarships to support academic achievement. The tuition-free middle school will soon begin work on an \$8.8 million project to expand its facilities in order to alleviate the growing pains that it currently faces.

The school has acquired property along Centre Street within walking distance of the current school house that will become the new location for administrative functions and graduate support services. StudioMLA has designed plans for administrative offices, a greenhouse and outdoor gardening area for students, three dwelling units for teaching fellows, and early learning classroom space to primarily serve younger siblings of the Epiphany School's students.

Two community developers win approval for large affordable housing project on Heath Street in Jamaica Plain

Total Project Cost: \$17,400,000

Total SF: 56,290

Construction Jobs: 42



General Health Square

A partnership between the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation and Back of the Hill Community Development Corporation will develop **General Heath Square Apartments** in Jamaica Plain after receiving approval from the BRA board yesterday. The 47-unit project, which will transform currently vacant lots a short distance away from the Jackson Square Orange Line Station, will be entirely affordable with a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments. 2,000 square feet of community and office space along with covered bicycle and car parking spaces will be included in the project.

The affordable apartments will be available to households at various income levels. 18 units will be permanently reserved for families earning less than or equal to 30 percent of area median income, or approximately \$30,000 for a family of four. The majority of the remaining apartments will be reserved for households at or below 60 percent of area median income, or approximately \$59,000 for a family of four.

Several apartments within General Heath Square will be permanently reserved for formerly homeless individuals and families as well as clients of the Massachusetts Department of Development Services.

Former industrial building in East Boston to be renovated for loft-style hotel

Total Project Cost: \$20,000,000

Total SF: 75,000

Construction Jobs: 83



175 Orleans Street

A five-story industrial building dating back to 1912 in East Boston's Jeffries Point neighborhood will be overhauled for a hotel with 127 guestrooms. The façade of the existing building at **175 Orleans Street** will be restored, and a 6,000 square foot addition will be built atop to house hotel common areas and mechanical space. With guestrooms featuring loft-style 12-foot high ceilings, large windows, and exposed concrete, the project has fittingly been dubbed Loftel.

A new restaurant serving hotel guests and the East Boston community will be constructed on the ground floor of the project, and a café facing Orleans Street will help to further activate this corner of the neighborhood.

Historic building on Boylston Street to be restored for dozens of affordable housing units

Total Project Cost: \$22,900,000

Total SF: 40,535

Construction Jobs: 95



48 Boylston Street

Two Boston non-profits, St. Francis House and the Planning Office for Urban Affairs, will undertake an ambitious rehabilitation project to restore the historic Boston Young Men's Christian Union building at **48 Boylston Street** in Chinatown for

affordable housing. Once restored, the currently vacant building, which is on the National Register of Historic Places and is a designated Boston Landmark, will contain 46 units of affordable housing, nearly 11,000 square feet of office space for St. Francis House, and 3,800 square feet of commercial space.

20 of the units will be targeted to homeless individuals and families. The development team will work to secure operating subsidies through the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program or Section 8 Program. Six units will be targeted to low-income households earning 30 percent of area median income or less, and the remaining units will serve households at or below 60 percent of area median income.

Special care will be taken to restore the exterior masonry and replace the building's windows in a historically accurate manner.

About the Boston Redevelopment Authority

As the City of Boston's urban planning and economic development agency, the BRA works in partnership with the community to plan Boston's future while respecting its past. The agency's passionate and knowledgeable staff guides physical, social, and economic change in Boston's neighborhoods and its downtown to shape a more prosperous, resilient, and vibrant city for all. The BRA also prepares residents for new opportunities through employment training, human services and job creation. Learn more at www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org, and follow us on Twitter [@BostonRedevelop](https://twitter.com/BostonRedevelop).

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Upcoming Events

12/16/2015 First time in 240+ yrs, East India Tea returns to Boston to be thrown into Boston Harbor at 242nd Boston Tea Party Anniversary & Annual Reenactment on Dec. 16

12/17/2015 Join Senator William "Mo" Cowan and Boston City Councilor Ayanna Pressley on December 17th

12/18/2015 Dedication ceremony

12/18/2015 Dedication ceremony for the Stanley & Josephine Chen Center of Excellence for Immigrant Learning, Dec. 18

12/18/2015 Haitian Parent Engagement Project (HPEP) Community Celebration on Dec. 18

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