

BOSTON HOMES

THE COMPLETE GUIDE

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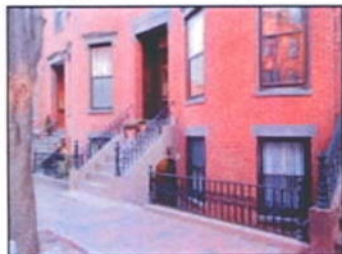
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HOME PORTRAITS

In the South End A garden duplex



A garden duplex at 29 Hanson St. in the South End features two bedrooms and two baths and is listed at \$709,000. For story and photos, see page 15.

COURTESY PHOTO / RE/MAX OLD SOUTH

In South Boston Two renovated condos



Two condominiums with two bedrooms and two baths have been fashioned at 447 East Seventh St. in South Boston. One is listed at \$539,000; the other is listed at \$549,000. For story and photos, see page 52.

PHOTO BY CINDY BAILEN

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Back Bay icon redesigned for lofts

BY MARILYN JACKSON
STAFF WRITER

Boston is unique. In a forum sponsored this week by the Boston Federal Reserve Bank and its newly created New England Public Policy Center, along with the Rappaport Institute, economists talked of how Boston reinvents itself with success to respond to market changes. Today Boston – along with the region – is repositioning itself again to compete in a global marketplace.

In the housing market, on a similar yet much smaller scale, developers see opportunities to transform existing commercial properties into residential uses. It's happening in the Financial District and Downtown; another commercial-cum-residential development is planned near Copley Square.

But the Back Bay gem at the corner of Newbury Street and Massachusetts Avenue – 360 Newbury – is exceptional. Designed by Arthur Bowditch in 1918, who also designed the Paramount Theater, this handsome building with its carved ornamentation was reinvented in the early 1980s.

Noted architect Frank O. Gehry along with Schwartz/Silver Architects redeveloped 360 Newbury St. for The Cohen Companies, changing the seven-story building from a light manufacturing and office building into offices and retail space. Its new uses, however, were not what captured national attention at that time.

A two-story penthouse level, defined by huge projecting struts, was added, complemented by more struts along the bottom of the building. The design, along with its location towering above the Massachusetts



Fifty-four luxuriously finished lofts are being fashioned on the upper floors of 360 Newbury St., the Back Bay building that was redesigned by Frank O. Gehry in 1984. ADD Inc. of Cambridge has completed the design for new lofts.

PHOTOS BY MARILYN JACKSON

Turnpike, catapulted this property to icon status.

Now, 360 Newbury is creating a new identity. The first three stories will continue to be occupied by Virgin Records, which has a long-term lease, but the upper floors have been designed to house 54 high-end luxury lofts.

Interestingly, the project manager for its redevelopment 21 years ago was Curtis Kemeny, who now is president and CEO of the Boston Residential Group LLC, which acquired the property last September.

Kemeny explains he had lunch in New York with Richard Cohen, who already had notified the city of plans to convert the building into residential space, and talked about buying the building.

One of the views from 360 Newbury St. extends all the way to the Public Garden. The trompe l'oeil mural on the Boston Architectural Center building was created in 1977 by Richard Haas.

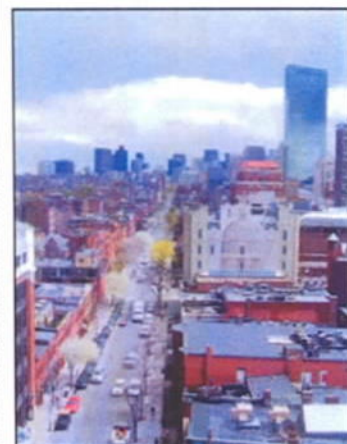
"Life has a funny way of turning full circle," says Kemeny with a smile.

The exterior of the building will not change, although the huge glass windows will be replaced. They will have a lighter tint and will reduce city noise. They also will be energy-efficient.

Little will change in the striking lobby, which features a soaring ceiling height with a backlit yellow onyx ceiling, the same stone that is inside the elevator cabs. Its floor is a lovely blue granite with white flecks, and the walls are mahogany-stained birch. Two stylized glass chandeliers, shaped like an inverted artichoke, will be installed, and the brass wall accents, hardware and elevator doors will be replaced with polished nickel to provide a more contemporary character. And, a concierge desk will be in place.

Of the 54 lofts, five will be offered at below-market prices at a later date, to com-

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Lofts at 360 Newbury offer New York state of mind

Continued from page 1

ply with the city's mandate to provide affordable housing in 10 percent of the development.

There is nothing like these lofts elsewhere in the city, says Kevin Ahearn, president of Otis & Ahearn Inc., which is marketing the lofts. Chris Willis and Amy Jacobs of Otis & Ahearn are showing the building and the model loft by appointment.

"It's a New York state of mind," says Kemeny. He, along with Ahearn and the Cambridge architectural firm of ADD Inc., spent about six months designing the spaces. Meichi Peng, an interior designer with ADD Inc., furnished the model, which was built out by John Moriarty and Associates.

"Every unit is unique," says Kemeny. At pre-completion prices, the lofts range in price from \$600,000 to \$3.5 million.

One-bedroom units have 850 square feet of living space, while one-bedrooms with a study range in size from 1,130 to 1,300 square feet, and two-bedroom lofts have between 1,300 and 1,600 square feet of living space. The penthouses contain between 1,200 and 3,000 square feet of living space.

The model unit is on the seventh floor and occupies 1,208 square feet. It is a corner unit overlooking Massachusetts Avenue and Newbury Street, with northerly views that provide glimpses of the Charles River and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology campus, including the distinctive dome of the Rogers



This contemporary chandelier of multi-glass panels is called the artichoke. Two similar chandeliers will be hung in the main lobby.



The ArcLinea kitchen boasts beautiful white lacquered cabinets with nickel handles, top-of-the-line stainless steel appliances, granite counters and a Carrara marble backsplash.



The living room in the model loft at 360 Newbury boasts two grand, arched corner windows that offer spectacular views.

PHOTOS BY MARILYN JACKSON

Building and its newest building, the Stata Center, also designed by Gehry.

The westerly views include Fenway Studios, Fenway Park and the Landmark Building as well as the wide sweep of the turnpike.

This unit already has been sold for slightly more than \$1.38 million, but other lofts with identical floor plans are available, adds Willis.

Upon entering the model unit, A01, a visitor steps into a large foyer, which has a big coat closet. The engineered oak flooring has been stained a rich, dark walnut color, providing a delightful contrast to the white walls and abundant glass. Directly ahead is a grand arched window, and a passageway turns to the left to the main space of the loft. A laundry and the mechanicals for the condo are housed here, away from the living space, significantly reducing the background sound of the heat pump.

A full bath with a walk-in shower is tiled with Carrara marble. The next space is a second bedroom or an area that could be used as a study or den. It is elevated by one step, and opaque glass sliders can provide privacy while

drawing in light from the window at the same time. Additionally, a clear glass transom between this room and the kitchen, above the upper cabinets, brings in light. Deep inside the den is a large walk-in closet.

The passageway opens into a grand open space, taking full advantage of the windows. The ceiling soars to nearly 13 feet, and even on a cloudy day, the natural light is abundant. A soffit above a dining area conceals mechanical equipment. The space itself is furnished with an elegant marble table, set for entertaining. Above it is another glass artichoke chandelier.

Against the interior wall, which is open to the living/dining area, is a beautiful kitchen, featuring ArcLinea white lacquered cabinets with nickel Mediterranean handles and self-closing drawers. Granite counters are complemented with a backsplash of Carrara marble tiles. Stainless steel appliances include a Sub-Zero refrigerator with a bottom freezer, a Bosch four-burner gas cooktop and a Bosch convection oven and a stylized and oversized Miele range hood, which are vented to the outside, a Panasonic microwave and a Bosch dishwasher.

Beyond the living/dining area is the master bedroom suite, which is carpeted. It is spacious and "very New York," says Ahearn, who suggested installing a stylized Corinthian column against one wall. The model bedroom also boasts another arched window, which like the living room is equipped with an electrically operated shade. The standard feature is a shade that can be pulled by a chain.

The marble-tiled master bath includes a long, deep rectangular soaking tub, plus a glass-enclosed marble-tiled shower. A rectangular sink is set in a custom vanity, which is built of whangee wood, topped with Carrara marble. The Dornbracht chrome faucet is cut into the frameless mirror, so that the water falls into the sink.

"This [model unit] is meant to be aspirational, what one can do," says Kemeny. Another option is the selection of doors. The model unit has doors that are 8 feet tall with four hinges and specially crafted sashes. The standard door is 7 feet high.

In addition buyers can select from five different stains for the wood flooring and choose different recessed lighting boxes.

Kemeny points out that the lofts have a sup-



A dining area has been created between the kitchen and living area, taking advantage of the city views.

plemental radiant heating system, built flush against the walls beneath the windows. They are Runtal radiators, manufactured in Sweden, and can throw out a lot of heat.

On floors four through seven are 11 lofts, while just 10 penthouse duplexes are on the top floor and have different configurations. Against the exterior walls are two-story living/dining rooms; a kitchen and bedroom and bath also are located on the lower level, while more bedrooms and baths will be built on the upper level, set back from the living area.

Just one of the penthouses, Unit PH-6, has a patio, with glass doors that open from both the living room and dining room.

"How fabulous is that?" asks Kemeny. "This product has evolved from raw space and a raw location, to a decent space and location to here, a high-end space and terrific location, with very sophisticated finishes," he says. "This is unique. It's unlike Ateliers505, Strada234 or the Channel Center."

For more information about 360 Newbury, call 617-267-3366 or visit a specially designed web site www.360newbury.com



A study or second bedroom is elevated one step above the hallway. Sliding glass panels can be closed to provide privacy, yet the glass continues to draw in light from the soaring exterior window.