

# BOSTON HOMES

## THE COMPLETE GUIDE

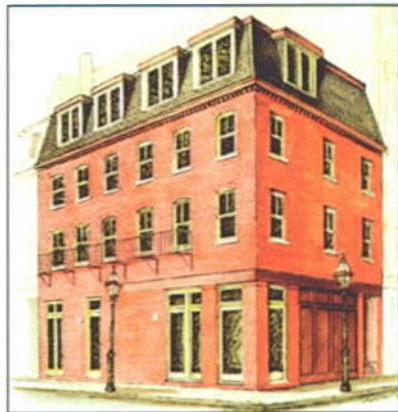
DECEMBER 15 - 21, 2007

SERVING BEACON HILL, BACK BAY, FENWAY, SOUTH END, JAMAICA PLAIN, CHARLESTOWN, NORTH END/WATERFRONT, DOWNTOWN, SOUTH BOSTON, DORCHESTER &amp; EAST BOSTON

50¢

### HOME PORTRAIT

*In the North End  
an updated 19th  
Century building*



Artist's rendering of 158 Endicott St.  
IMAGE COURTESY OF COLDWELL BANKER RESIDENTIAL, SOUTH END

BY JUNE ALBRITTON  
CORRESPONDENT

In 1899 a charming brick building with a Mansard roof was built at Endicott and Thacher streets in a corner of the North End. Of course, it is in the middle of all of the activity of the North End, but its location also makes it an easy walk to Charlestown, TD Banknorth Garden, and Boston's Financial District.

Developer Geno Ranaldi of The Huntington Group has very successfully completed projects in the South End, the Back Bay, and in the North End. He is now turning his talents to 158 Endicott. He has taken the building back to the brick.

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## South End boutique building adds style

BY MARILYN JACKSON  
STAFF WRITER

Curtis Kemeny, president and CEO of the Boston Residential Group LLC, describes his latest development of New York-style lofts as where "South End cool meets Back Bay elegance."

The mixed-use project, 285 Columbus Lofts, is located at the corner of Columbus Avenue and Clarendon Street in the former American Red Cross building. Constructed in 1924 of brick and reinforced concrete in the Classic Revival style, it was originally called the Earle Building. His company acquired the property in October 2005 for \$17.25 million. In addition to 285 Columbus Lofts, two other residential developments are under construction — the 50-unit Bryant on Columbus Avenue and The Clarendon at 131 Clarendon St., which will have 299 units. Columbus Center, a hotel/retail/residential complex, will be built nearby over the Mass. Turnpike.

Kemeny's earlier project was 360 Newbury, another boutique building comprising 54 high-end lofts together with retail space. There, all but a penthouse have been sold.

At 285 Columbus Lofts, scheduled for completion next

spring, a dozen already are under agreement. Elaine Dolley and Patrick Cotter of Otis & Ahearn Real Estate are marketing the lofts, which have been designed by ADD Inc., the Cambridge architectural firm that also designed the lofts at 360 Newbury. The general contractor is the Walsh Brothers. Prices range from \$500,000 to \$1.8 million.

The first floor will feature a 10,000-square-foot restaurant. "There's a lot of interest in the space," said Kemeny. A separate entrance to the 63 residences will open into an expansive walnut-paneled lobby with a limestone floor. Bamboo trees will enhance this space, which will be monitored by a doorman. The lobby will rise in a slight incline toward the elevators, and a parallel hallway will lead to a storage area and a loading dock — convenient for both the residents and the restaurant — and a rear entrance to the Back Bay MBTA station. The building is cantilevered over the station, said Kemeny.

Although the building is still under construction, a model unit has been created to showcase the European-influenced design. Meichi Peng, who designed the interior space of the model unit at 360 Newbury, has also staged

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A new development called 285 Columbus Lofts will feature 63 one- and two-bedroom residences where the Back Bay and South End come together at Columbus Avenue and Clarendon Street. Prices range from \$500,000 to \$1.8 million.

COURTESY RENDERING / AMD STUDIOS

## Subprime mortgage relief is available

BY HOLDEN LEWIS  
BANKRATE.COM

Advice for homeowners who are still paying the teaser rates on their subprime mortgages: Keep making those loan payments, and answer the phone when the lender calls.

Homeowners who follow those two rules might be able to take advantage of a plan to

prevent mass foreclosures. Bankers and federal regulators dreamed up the initiative, which was announced Dec. 6. With a bean-counter's tin ear for English, they call it the "Streamlined Foreclosure and Loss Avoidance Framework for Securitized Subprime Adjustable Rate Mortgage Loans." It's as complicated as the name implies.

But for now, the advice is simple: "What's most important under this protocol is to stay current on your loan," Sheila Bair, chairman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., said during the White House's dog-and-pony show to announce the plan. And, she added, get on the phone to your loan servicer.

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NEW & SEARCHABLE

BOSTON HOMES LINK.com



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Boston Homes will not be published Dec. 22 but will be published Dec. 29.  
Happy holidays!

# 285 Columbus Lofts brings high style to South End

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this model in a soothing palette of taupe and ivory that compliments the walnut cabinetry and flooring and Benjamin Moore putty-painted walls.

The model is a spacious corner unit encompassing 1,578 square feet. A gallery-like hallway from the foyer leads to a grand, open room. To the left is the kitchen, partly defined by a wide center island topped with Imperial white Italian granite. A stainless steel sink, set into the island, is opposite the Wolf electric cooktop and oven and KitchenAid hood. Rosario walnut-grained cabinets line the wall and the same wood faces the Sub-Zero refrigerator with a bottom freezer. A Bosch dishwasher and a G.E. Profile microwave are furnished as well.

The center island could also serve as a breakfast bar. Next to it is a dining area, which flows into the living room, which enjoys city views

through the large windows on two exposures.

Off the living room is the master bedroom suite, which has a generously sized walk-in closet and a spa-like bath. Here is an oversized shower with large tiles, a rain showerhead and hand shower and a partial glass wall, which is very European. The vanity has a walnut cabinet topped with marble, above which is a backsplash of glass tiles. The Toto fixtures are top-of-the-line.

The model features the available upgrades; the standard specifications call for a Jenn Air side-by-side stainless steel refrigerator and range.

The other living spaces are located near the entry. A second bedroom with three windows lies at the left of the gallery, while a ceramic tiled bath with a combination tub/shower, a study and a laundry room for a stacked washer/dryer are located on the other side of the hallway, before you step into the main living area.

Each unit will have individually controlled Whalen heat pumps to provide central air conditioning and forced heat by gas and will be wired for high-speed Internet and cable connections.

The common 1,200-square-foot roof deck with direct elevator access will have hookups for gas, electric and water service that the condo association could add, said Kemeny. The wood deck will be elevated so that folks can see over the parapet.

Kemeny said that developing 285 Columbus Lofts has been challenging. "One thing I learned developing 360 Newbury is how to make the most of the features of an old building" — the original was constructed in 1918 and reinvented in 1989 — "and provide finishes to today's standards. Buyers' expectations are



The open living and dining areas flow toward the gourmet kitchen. The high ceiling creates a sense of volume. COURTESY RENDERING / THE LUK GROUP

high and getting higher

"It's expensive to do a rehab...but there were challenges that we didn't anticipate. For example, we found a second roof, and when we demolished the baths, we found plumbing that had been capped for other baths!"

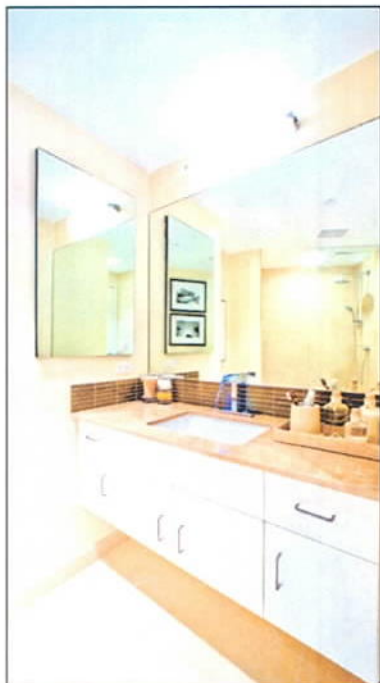
That didn't show up during due diligence, he said, but he had budgeted for unanticipated costs. A surprise, however, was the city's new regulation requiring a water recharge system to replenish groundwater. The requirement was enacted during the permitting process. "We ended up digging 20 feet to install a custom-made tank to collect rainwater," he said.

Both 360 Newbury and 285 Columbus Lofts

are adjacent to public transportation, an attribute that attracted Kemeny to the properties.

"It's an attraction to our buyers who want a downtown urban lifestyle, with or without a car, who can walk to the buses, [trolleys], trains and commuter rail," he said. And for those who have a car, parking will be available at the nearby garage at 131 Dartmouth St. Kemeny said he has executed a 25-year lease for one space for each loft at a fixed rate, which would be in addition to the condo fee.

For more information about the lofts, a Web site has been created at [www.285ColumbusLofts.com](http://www.285ColumbusLofts.com).



The master bath boasts a marble-topped vanity with an undermount sink and a European-style oversized shower with a glass panel instead of an enclosure.

COURTESY PHOTO / SEAN HENNESSY PHOTOGRAPHY / HENNESSY PRODUCTIONS



The living room of the model overlooks the corner of Clarendon Street and Columbus Avenue and is filled with natural light.

COURTESY RENDERING / THE LUK GROUP



The model kitchen has an Imperial white granite counter and center island, Rosario walnut-grained cabinetry and top-of-the-line appliances.

COURTESY PHOTO / SEAN HENNESSY PHOTOGRAPHY / HENNESSY PRODUCTIONS

## DETAILS

**Address:** 285 Columbus Lofts, 285 Columbus Ave., Back Bay/South End

**BR/BA:** One and two-bedroom units, with one or two baths

**Size:** 750 to 1,600 +/- square feet

**Price:** From \$500,000 to \$1.8 million

**Condo fee:** Approximately \$0.75 per square foot

**Features of building:** Eight-story Classical Revival brick and reinforced concrete mixed-use building, with 10,000-square-foot retail

space; nine units each on floors two through eight; common roof deck; elegant lobby with corridor and direct access to Back Bay MBTA station; bike storage and individual storage units in basement; garage parking available nearby.

**Features of units:** Ten-foot-high ceilings, state-of-the-art kitchens with white Italian granite counters, Rosario cabinetry, gourmet kitchens and state-of-the-art appliances, walnut hardwood flooring in public areas, carpeted bedrooms, marble-topped walnut vanities in master baths with oversized European-style showers and ceramic-tiled second baths with shower/tub combinations; laundry hookups.

**Close by:** Copley Square, Trinity Church, the Boston Public Library; Copley Plaza and Park Plaza hotels, many shops and restaurants in Back Bay and South End; within walking distance of Copley Place, the Theater District and Downtown; Back Bay Amtrak Station and MBTA Orange Line and MBTA Green Line at Arlington or Copley Square.

**Contact:** Elaine Dolley or Patrick Cutter, Otis & Ahearn Real Estate, 200 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116. Phones: 617-267-3500 (office), 617-252-0091 (285 Columbus Lofts), 617-331-0243 (Dolley cell), 617-620-0583 (Cutter cell). Web sites: [www.285ColumbusLofts.com](http://www.285ColumbusLofts.com) or [www.OtisAhearn.com](http://www.OtisAhearn.com)



285 Columbus lofts may be seen by appointment only.

