



REAL ESTATE

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A Developing Chinatown

South Bay

Planning Study Area

Chinatown could have a huge new neighbor in coming years if a development proposal for the so-called South Bay Planning Study area goes as planned. Boston Residential Group, headed by Curtis Kemeny, was the only developer to respond to a request for proposals to develop the nearly 10-acre plot of land, which borders Chinatown, and is bounded by Kneeland and Hudson Streets, the Massachusetts Turnpike I-90 mainline, and the I-93 north-bound mainline. The site

includes parcels now becoming available for development as a result of the completion of the Big Dig project.

The proposal, which Boston Residential calls "very preliminary," envisions turning the land, now a mess of highway ramps and roads, into a new Boston district with multiple high-rises. The proposal centers around a 67-floor building called the Gateway Tower, and would include 1,669 housing units, 11.5% of which would be affordable, a 3.5-acre park, an ice rink, a library and commercial and retail space, and plenty of parking. The plan also calls for relocating the Trigen steam tower plants to the southern end of the property.

If the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority designates Boston Residential Group to develop the site, the developer envisions a 10-year development plan.

Because of the current location of Trigen's steam stacks and the need to put much of the project decks to match the height of the raised highway ramps and roads, the development would be technically challenging, said a spokeswoman for Boston Residential.

"It's a very challenging project, but it's also a project with huge opportunity to create a new neighborhood that links to Chinatown," said Janey Bishoff, spokeswoman for Boston Residential.

A Developing Chinatown

Loews Boston

An economy unfriendly to hotel development long stalled the proposed Loews Boston Hotel, but after a reworked plan, the 25-story building should break ground in 2006. Located at what is now a parking lot at the corner of Tremont and Stuart Streets, the tower will include close to 70 condominiums on the top ten floors and 198 hotel rooms on the lower levels. Loews Boston's developer, Sawyer Enterprises, had originally proposed a 390-room hotel project in 2001 but, according to Sawyer, because of the economy the project stalled.

"It will be rare to see a straight hotel proposal [without a residential component] these days," said John Connolly, Sawyer's vice president of development. Connolly said that by mixing residential and hotel, "you can get a blended level of financing." Sawyer is ironing out the specifics of the revised plan, which will need to be reviewed by the Boston Redevelopment Authority.



South Bay Planning Study Area

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ite. In 2003, Millennium won a city competition to build on Hayward Place, surprising many observers who expected to see a housing project picked for the site. Millennium was the only developer to propose an entirely office-and-retail only building for the parking lot.

Kensington Place

Despite recent legal victories by the developer of this 30-story apartment complex, challenges

Park Essex, formerly known as Liberty Place, is under construction and should be up by 2006. Opinions were divided in Chinatown about the 28-story high-rise at the corner of Beach and Washington Streets. The project will have 420 units and 471 parking spaces.

Essex Street Housing

As a public benefit for the Park Essex project, 22 units of housing

units would be rental housing and 245 units would be condominiums. A total of 70 apartment units are slated to be affordable as are 99 of the condo units. The project would include about 5,000 square feet of retail space, 6,000 square feet of space for "community uses," and a total of 165 parking spaces. The Asian CDC and New Boston Development Partners together submitted the only proposal to the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority to develop Parcel 24. After a review process, the

Turnpike Authority will decide whether to designate the team to develop the parcel. Up until the 1960s, Parcel 24 was home to many Chinese and Lebanese immigrants before their homes were taken by the state and razed to make way for a highway ramp.

87 Tyler St.

Chinatown Home for AACA and KKCS

The Asian American Civic Association, publisher of the Sampan, and the Kwong Kow Chinese School, are raising money to build a shared, six-and-a-half-story building at 87 Tyler St. in Chinatown. The project is slated to break ground in one year (see story on front page).

44 Beach St.

The BRA's board has approved plans to create 32 apartment units at 40-44 Beach St., the building of the popular Chinatown food court. The project, which is proposed by the building's owner, Raymond Choi, would require a two story addition to the existing building and renovations.

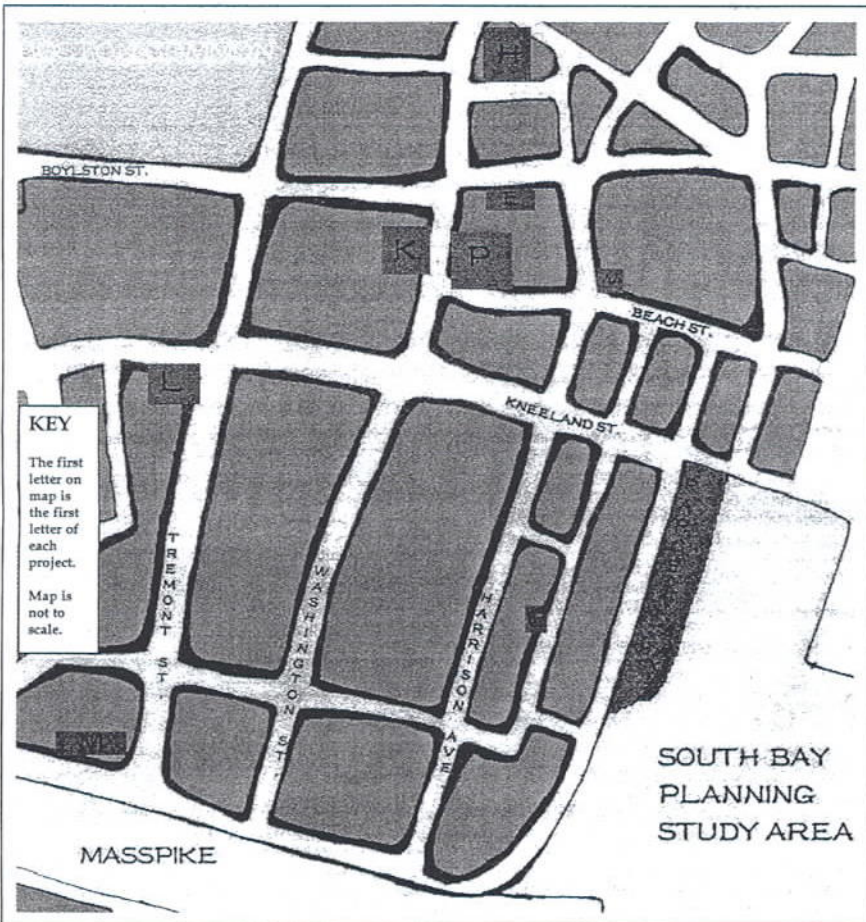
Mass Pike Towers II

It's still unclear what will happen to a proposal to construct a market-rate housing project on the site of Mass Pike Towers, a subsidized apartment complex in Chinatown. The BRA pulled developer Trinity Financial's first proposal last year.

That's not all...

The Hamilton Company has proposed a 96-unit apartment complex (not on map) at the site of Ming's Market on Washington Street. Since 1990, Hamilton Company has rented space to Ming's. It's not yet clear if the project, which is under review, would displace the market.

Also, Rose Associates Inc., which is proposing 2 Financial Center (not on map) for 201 Essex St., has changed its proposal from a 12-story office building to a 15-story residential project.



Hayward Place

It's not clear yet what shape Hayward Place will take. Months after Millennium Hayward LLC submitted plans to the Boston Redevelopment Authority to construct a 12-story office building on the Hayward Place office block, the BRA "scoped" the project and asked the developer to consider other uses, such as housing. "We asked them to contemplate a number of different uses," said Meredith Baumann, spokeswoman for the BRA, "[such as] housing use, office use, and a no-build use. We are awaiting a draft project impact report." As first proposed, the \$125 million project would house office space, with some retail on the first two floors and 153 parking spaces underground. A mostly modern-looking structure, the building will have an exterior of glass and grey gran-

by a neighboring strip club still remain. Approved by the BRA in September of 2003, Kensington Place plans to displace by eminent domain the Glass Slipper, which occupies the Kensington's development site at the corner of Washington and La Grange Streets. In addition to replacing the club, the Kensington project would also replace a cluster of low-rise buildings, including the defunct Gaiety Theatre, which was built in 1908 and designed by Clarence Blackall, architect of the Wang Theatre. Efforts by theater preservationists to save the Gaiety have not been effective, as Kensington was granted a demolition permit late last year. (A hearing challenging the demolition permit was held just before Sampan went to press; see story on page 3.)

Park Essex (Liberty Place)

targeted to middle-income earners ages 55 and up will be created on Essex Street. Also, 25 to 30 new units of single-room occupancy housing for low-income earners are expected in coming years. The housing was promised by the city and the developers of Park Essex as a public benefit of the 28-story Liberty Place project. The BRA still has not announced a site for the new housing.

Parcel 24

Asian Community Development Corporation and New Boston Development Partners have proposed to build a 315-unit project for Parcel 24, a strip of land along Hudson Street. The project would have a maximum of 20 stories near the corner of Kneeland and Hudson Streets, and a minimum height of four stories near the far southern end of Hudson Street. A total of 70