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## **REFA president's message: Annual forecasting held Jan. 26th**

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REFA kicked off its 2011 program schedule with its Annual Forecasting Luncheon on January 26th. Bingham McCutcheon graciously hosted a capacity crowd that enjoyed an information packed program that was moderated by Jim McCaffrey, managing director, Eastdil Secured, and featured insights from industry veterans Tom Alperin, president, National Development, David Provost, senior vice president, Boston Properties, and Alicia Sasser Modestino, senior economist, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston.

In particular, the aforementioned Sasser Modestino shared some particularly insightful comments that did not bode particularly well for the state of the national economy going forward:

- \* The national economic recovery has been too weak to raise the share of population that has a job;
- \* Economic growth is tracking the early 2000s recovery, which was weaker than previous recoveries; and
- \* Housing is not playing its usual role in the recovery.

However, despite the tepid news on the national recovery there was some more promising news for our local New England economy:

- \* New England has fared better than the nation as a whole during the 2007-2009 recession (with the exception of Rhode Island);
- \* The strongest job gains in New England have been in New Hampshire;
- \* Unemployment has fallen more in New England than the nation as a whole; and
- \* Personal income continues to improve (as of Q3 2010).

The other highlight of the Annual Forecasting Luncheon is the publishing of the results of the previous year's predictions by the REFA membership. This year's winning prognosticators were:

Dow Jones Industrials on 12/31/10 - 11,577.51:

- \* Travis D'Amato, CB Richard Ellis - New England - 11,500.
- \* Beth Mitchell, Nutter McLennen & Fish - 11,500.

NASDAQ on 12/31/10 - 2652.87:

- \* Brad Sweeney, STAG Capital Partners - 2,650.

Ten-Year Treasury on 12/31/10 - 3.38%

- \* Eric Schlager, The Bulfinch Companies - 3%.

3-Month Libor on 12/31/10 - 0.303%

- \* John Collura, ColonyRealty Partners - 0.3%.

Highest Boston Office Rent per s/f - \$59

- \* Andy Rosen, Bank of America Merrill Lynch - \$57.

Highest 128 Office Rent per s/f - \$32.50

- \* Neil Waisnor, Colony Realty Partners - \$32.

Vacancy Rate Downtown Boston - 13.8%

\* John Collura, Colony Realty Partners - 13.5%.

\* Harold Dennis, The Druker Company - 13.5%.

\* Scott Jamieson, Jones Lang LaSalle - 13.5%.

\* Tom Stark, Crosspoint Associates - 13.5%.

\* Brad Sweeney, STAG Capital Partners - 13.5%.

Vacancy Rate 128/Mass Pike Corridor - 19.6%

\* Tony Harwood, Harwood Associates - 19.5%.

Single Family Home Price - Median for Greater Boston - \$455,000

\* Matt Quinn, Reznick Group - \$452,000.

Congratulations to all the winners. And I hope to see you at the REFA "After Hours" on Tuesday March 15th at Anthem Kitchen + Bar.

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