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Project of the month: HDS Architecture and Seaver Construction complete 9,000 s/f retail building at 70 Concord Ave., Belmont

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The new 9,000 s/f retail center at 70 Concord Ave. finished construction last fall and is now being fitted out for tenants. What was once an underutilized property with derelict buildings is now an attractive pedestrian friendly retail center which takes full advantage of its highly visible corner location.

The new one story building is clad in brick with metal accents including large glass storefronts, entrance canopies and awnings. Extensive landscaping enhances the site with new street trees, flowering bushes and ground cover. A brick walkway connects the public sidewalk to the building sidewalk and entrances. Public seating benches, decorative bollards, architectural lighting, and many other site and building amenities add character and a pedestrian friendly scale to the project. The Belmont community has warmly received the redevelopment of the property.

HDS Architecture provided architectural design services including coordination of site planning design, HVAC, structural and civil engineering services. Hans Strauch, LEED AP, principle architect-in-charge says, "Our goal was to design a highly attractive and timeless building that would provide life and vitality to this important location for many years to come." Already, East Boston Savings Bank has secured the "end cap" space and expects to open a branch facility this January/February. In addition, Indigo Fire, a clay and glass art studio for adults and children, has opened its doors for business. Additional tenants are in negotiation for the remainder of the building. Bob Orfaly, the owner/developer, reached out to the neighborhood early in the design process seeking input on the proposed project. "The result couldn't be better. The building has terrific visual appeal. The neighbors are happy with it and we have received significant interest from potential tenants," said Orfaly.

William Dillon of Landmark Real Estate is the development's commercial real estate broker.

Seaver Construction was the general contractor for the project. Seaver coordinated all subcontractors and delivered the building within an aggressive schedule from initial site and building permits to occupancy. Seaver's work included site improvements and base building core and shell. Seaver also provided interior fit-out of the Indigo Fire space. The most challenging aspect of the project was the integration of the existing structure into a completely new building. HDS and Seaver worked closely together to help deliver the project on a timely and cost-effective basis.

HDS Architecture specializes in retail, commercial and residential design and has completed several other retail centers this past year, including: 355 Fresh Pond Parkway retail center, Cambridge; 323 Speen St. design center, Natick; 11 Brighton St. office/retail development, Belmont.