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NAI Hunneman hired to sell Wonderland Ballroom - to be redeveloped into a two-story, 196-room hotel

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The big ballroom era north of Boston is officially coming to an end. The owner of the Wonderland Ballroom, the last of the big ballrooms that were once common across the region, is putting the property up for sale to be transformed into a hotel.

Wonderland Realty LLC has hired NAI Hunneman as the exclusive sales and ground lease broker for a major transit-oriented development at the site at 1290 North Shore Rd., which is envisioned to include a 12-story, 196-room hotel with a 175-car parking garage.

"It's the end of the ballroom era," said Robert Merowitz of Wonderland Realty LLC. "For decades the Wonderland Ballroom was one of the most popular nightspots around, but unfortunately its time has passed. This is a terrific development site for a hotel or other commercial use."

The site is located on Rte. 1A, adjacent to the Wonderland stop on the MBTA's Blue Line, 10 minutes from downtown Boston. The property is within the Wonderland Transit-oriented Development Overlay Zone, allowing for a hotel and first-floor retail. Increased activity at Boston Logan Airport, along with the possibility of a major development at the Wonderland Greyhound Park across the street and a casino at nearby Suffolk Downs, are among the many reasons that Revere is the newest development hot spot in Greater Boston.

"There is a high level of interest in Revere, and this project is the beginning of what will likely be a large wave of new development in the area," said NAI Hunneman executive vice president and principal Trey Agnew, who is the broker for the site. "More than 50,000 cars pass by this site on a daily basis, giving it unsurpassed visibility, and its location just steps from the MBTA Blue Line gives it unparalleled access to all of downtown Boston."

Built in the early 1960s, for many years the Wonderland Ballroom offered dancing several nights a week to the music of big bands, including Buddy Rich, Tito Puente, and Guy Lombardo. Interest in ballroom dancing at the facility waned, however, and in recent years the Wonderland Ballroom has hosted Latin, hard rock and reggae shows on weekends, as well as wrestling, boxing and private functions.

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