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## **Project of the Month: D.F. Pray completes 64,000 s/f construction project at 33 Boylston St. in Chestnut Hill**

March 27, 2014 - Retail

D.F. Pray has completed a 64,000 s/f construction project at 33 Boylston St., just six miles west of downtown Boston. The new three story, mixed-use building joins a community of retail, dining, and entertainment destinations at The Street, a 406,000 s/f open-air shopping center.

According to D.F. Pray senior project executive John Marques, the project at 33 Boylston began in January 2013 with the demolition of an existing City Sports athletic goods store.

"Because this retail building shared structural members with the neighboring Legal Seafood's restaurant, we had to apply an especially delicate touch throughout the multiple phases of demolition and construction with minor disruption to Legal Seafood's flow of business during the demolition," said Marques. "This task was particularly difficult given the already tight allocation of the construction site, parking, and storage space on the lot. Furthermore, we had to coordinate our construction efforts with the retailer's busy schedule and shared use of a commercial loading dock serving the multi-retailer development. It required a full team effort to make it flow seamlessly."

Lack of space and adjacent restaurants and retail spaces remaining open during construction were not the only hurdles D.F. Pray had to manage over the course of the project. "As we cleared space for new foundations, we encountered unforeseen underground conditions. Unearthing buried slabs, existing foundations, unexpected active gas lines, and underground storage tanks, among other things."

Despite these initial obstacles, structural steel for 33 Boylston was erected in June and construction progressed rapidly from there. By November, D.F. Pray had substantially completed construction, on schedule, of a brand new 64,000 s/f three story mixed-use space.

The first floor at 33 Boylston contains eleven units of retail and dining space. All six units on the building's northern elevation have been occupied by tenants. These tenants include David's Tea, Blue Mercury, Johnathan Adler, Ku De Ta, Skoah Spa, and Polka Dog Bakery. The southern side of the building contains space for five units, three of which have found tenants. These new tenants include three women's apparel retailers, INTERMIX, Splendid, and Calypso St. Barth's.

The north side of the second floor is occupied by Del Frisco's Grille, an upscale eatery offering modern takes on classic American fare. The southern half of the 33 Boylston's second floor as well as the third floor in its entirety house the new corporate headquarters of WS Development, the firm spearheading The Street's development.

According to WS Development, the redevelopment at The Street will feature a new village-like streetscape complete with tree-shaded pedestrian walkways, outdoor dining, cafes and new buildings with glass facades overlooking scenic Hammond Pond. The firm says the redesign creates a hip new town center in Chestnut Hill.

Founded in 1959, D.F. Pray has specialized in hands-on general contracting services regionally in

New England, as well as nationally for 55 years. The firm excels in both design build projects as well as renovations to existing structures. Employing over 100 industry professionals, D.F. Pray is headquartered in Seekonk, Mass., and maintains satellite offices across the U.S., as well as in Toronto, Ontario.

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