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Boylston Properties to begin construction of \$60 million LINX project - designed by Spagnola Gisness & Associates

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Boylston Properties, developer of multiple properties bringing new life to East Watertown, will begin major construction this month on LINX, a vacant former Verizon warehouse envisioned as a home to new-economy companies seeking proximity to Cambridge and downtown Boston.

The current single-story industrial building with 33-foot clear height at 480/490 Arsenal St. will be transformed over the next year into LINX, a 185,000-s/f multi-tenant office building featuring a 8,000 s/f atrium, mezzanine space, bike stations with storage and showers, adjacent recreational green space, and additional amenities attractive to innovative workforces.

Boylston Properties will break ground - more precisely, begin reconfiguring, expanding, and adding a new face to the LINX building - this month, with completion scheduled for late summer of 2016. Boylston Properties broke ground in June on a new 150-room Marriott Residence Inn on the former site of Charles River Saab, at 564 Arsenal St., almost adjacent to LINX.

The completed LINX renovation with added amenities in a building that will be LEED certified is expected to cost \$60 million.

LINX will have a section with two floors, each with 16 feet of clearance. It will feature a dramatic 33-foot-high atrium lobby, and another wing will have ground floors of 23 feet and mezzanine space above.

The building, designed by Spagnola Gisness & Associates of Boston, will feature modern, high-end exterior finishes of metal and glass curtain walls with extensive transparency. The high-tech building's industrial roots will be recalled with corrugated effects and highlights of copper that shift with varying light conditions.

"We're going ahead in an increasingly vibrant neighborhood of Watertown with construction to create the kind of space that young and creative companies and their employees want," said Bill McQuillan, president of Boylston Properties. "There's been a high level of interest from companies that see this area as a logical extension of Cambridge and Boston innovation neighborhoods."

LINX is located along the curvilinear Watertown Greenway and Dr. Paul Dudley White Bike Path, and the Bike Path has an entrance at the door of the new lobby. There will be a large bike storage room, with repair station, showers, and lockers.

"We're carving into the existing building and adding onto it so that it provides the right depth for office tenants and daylight that will reach all of the interior spaces," said McQuillan. Boylston Properties expects that the building will be occupied by up to five tenants.

Extensive landscaping of the 8.5-acre site is being done by Carol R. Johnson Associates of Boston and will include new trees and plantings and a green space that is almost 1.5 acres. The campus will feature recreational or casual work areas for tenant employees and lawn, a bocci court, grills, and lounging area.

A small parking deck is being added to one portion of the parking area so that more open space can be created. LINX will have parking for 580 cars and is accessible by the 71 MBTA bus from Harvard Sq. The 71 also connects to Watertown Sq. and many other MBTA buses.

LINX is a five-minute walk from the Arsenal Project stores and restaurants and, on the other side, a five-minute walk from the Watertown Deluxe Town Diner and Mt. Auburn St.

LINX is part of a continuing story of improvement in the neighborhood. Boylston Properties acquired several properties in Watertown, including the Arsenal Mall (now known as The Arsenal Project) and the Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates building, from Simon Property Group, Inc., as well as the Verizon warehouse facility at 480 Arsenal St.

The new Marriott Residence Inn is a new extended-stay hotel in a developing area and will have amenities including a pool, fitness center, and meeting space. The hotel is scheduled to open in September 2016.

The leasing broker for LINX is DTZ, which is showing the property to potential tenants in companies involved in technology, life science, consulting, publishing, financial services, and health care.

The Watertown Zoning Board of Appeals unanimously approved LINX's open-floor concept on July 22, following a recommendation by the Watertown Planning Board.

Boylston Properties is a 33-year-old Boston-based developer of urban mixed-use projects including retail, residential, office, and research buildings. The company draws upon urban and suburban development experience on its own or with partners in the Northeast U.S. markets, many in the Greater Boston area.

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