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## **2020 Ones to Watch: Abe Menzin, Principal at Samuels & Associates**

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Abe Menzin  
Samuels & Associates

Which project, deal, or transaction was the “game-changer” in the advancement of your career? The first project I led was the construction of Van Ness, which not only advanced my own skills in developing complex urban projects, but really cemented Samuels & Associates’ presence in The Fenway. It reaffirmed that I could navigate bigger processes and manage the design, permitting and financing of a large mixed-use project.

Who or what inspires you? My dream has always been to work on projects that are shaped by progressive urban design and transportation planning goals that push the envelope in terms of complexity, great urban design, and sustainability. Having a hand in shaping the full direction of the project is what drew me to development. I love complex, technical projects. It’s why I’m so excited to be leading Boston’s first air rights project in 40 years, Parcel 12. Whether permitting, financing or construction oversight, each project is unique in its needs; I enjoy the challenge that comes with putting all the pieces together.

What advice can you offer to someone who is interested in a career in your industry? Take on the most challenging projects or assignments available to you, solve problems and be a sponge – in our business experience matters. The more you take on, the more you will learn and develop.

How do you contribute to your community or your profession? I am most focused on contributing my expertise through industry organizations like Urban Land Institute, A Better City and NAIOP, which help direct the research efforts around issues that I care about. I’m most focused on initiatives that focus on sustainability, advancing transit-oriented development projects, advancing housing production, and transportation issues. Developers have a unique opportunity to shape the urban fabric and therefore have a responsibility to partner with municipalities, urban planners, and transportation agencies to create more effective solutions to issues that impact society at large. I’ve also found it really rewarding to donate strategic advice to non-profits. Many desperately need advice with real estate matters as they don’t often have those resources on staff.

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