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Boston Development Group proposes new life science development in Watertown

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Watertown, MA Boston Development Group (BDG) has proposed a major life sciences development at 66 Galen St. The proposed life science campus, comprised of two phases totaling nearly 450,000 s/f of class A office/R&D lab, addresses the goals outlined in The Watertown Comprehensive Plan, and builds upon the burgeoning life science cluster in town that has evolved and accelerated over the last several years.

The city's planning initiatives envisioned the South Sq./Galen St. corridor as a major gateway into the downtown and an ideal place for a mix of uses including office/R&D, lab and other higher density, transit-oriented development that would serve to transform its character and identity.

Seeking to capitalize on market conditions, BDG assembled several parcels along Galen St. including the former Colonial GMC Buick dealership, a shuttered US Petroleum gas station, a Valvoline quick service oil change facility, and a vacant residential lot and property. When combined with BDG's owned property at 51 Water St., the entire site totals an excess of five acres.

Designed by Elkus Manfredi Architects, BDG's phase 1 plan features 200,000 s/f of LEED Gold certifiable office and lab surrounded by extensive open and green space (40%). In addition to the new parks, the development will transform vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian flow by adding new traffic patterns and networks. Coupled with new sidewalks, streetlights, extensive tree plantings and the elimination of seven curb cuts, these improvements will enhance pedestrian streetscapes and connections to Watertown Sq. and the Charles River.

Jodie Zussman, the second generation of the firm at the helm at BDG after a robust career in real estate in Philadelphia, assembled an experienced team to create and design a project for this corner of the City. "We are thrilled to be part of the Watertown community and look forward to working together to create a place we can be proud of and where people feel welcome on the over 40% public open space on site. We believe we can attract companies who will call Watertown home for years to come, creating new job opportunities and contributing to the economic vitality of the City," said Zussman.

Bob Doherty, a VP and partner in the proposed development said, "This prominent site featuring a riverfront location, unrivaled Mass Turnpike proximity and access will include a beautifully designed

and sustainable structure immediately abutting the Watertown MBTA bus hub and will serve to help transform the character of this strategically important gateway location.”

The team recently held two public community meetings, following months of discussions and input from planning officials, peer reviews of design, traffic, and other consultants. The project is set to go before the city’s Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals for Site Plan Review approval and Special Permit issuance. The team includes: Elkus Manfredi Architects, Ground, VHB, Moriarty, and Vannasse and Assoc.

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