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RISE Together files plans for Inner Belt component of Sullivan Square redevelopment in Charlestown

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Charlestown, MA RISE Together, a local minority-owned developer, has filed a Project Notification Form (PNF) with the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) for the first of three neighborhood networks of its complete Sullivan Square Redevelopment project. The proposed Inner Belt Neighborhood Project is one of three components of the total project conceived to deliver a holistic vision for the larger Sullivan Sq. neighborhood. RISE Together’s three-part plan responds to city, state, and community goals to transform this heavily industrial corner of the city. The Sullivan Square Redevelopment project seeks to leverage growth in the innovation sector to deliver an affordable, inclusive, and pedestrian focused mixed-use environment. RISE Together has partnered with local minority developer TRAX on this effort.

The 1.5 million s/f Inner Belt neighborhood will provide a robust, job-centric program mix across four buildings.

Affordable Housing: The affordable component of the Inner Belt neighborhood project will exceed the city of Boston’s requirement of 13% and will provide 20% affordable housing units with a focus on families from the neighborhood ensuring the project prevents displacement within the community. RISE Together has also committed to prioritize housing for veterans and creating a homeownership program for local families, including a commitment to build family-sized units.

“The Inner Belt project is the first step in creating a more inclusive approach to development and relationship with an already vibrant neighborhood,” said Herby Duverné, founder and CEO of RISE Together. “We are thankful to our neighbors, city officials and abutters like the MBTA for their input

over the years, and we look forward to continuing this journey together.”

Innovation + Job Creation: Anchored by 857,000 s/f of office, lab, and manufacturing space in the Inner Belt section, RISE’s Sullivan Square Redevelopment Project will make the city a key contributor in the ever-growing life sciences and innovation industry in Greater Boston.

The project will ultimately create over 4,000 construction jobs and 3,000 permanent jobs. RISE will partner with Building Pathways, a Boston-based non-profit, to ensure that the project provides access to building trades careers for community residents and diverse workers, a safe and respectful work environment, and equitable opportunities for leadership roles on site. The team has also committed to donating to Building Pathways to ensure the sustainability of its work to increase the participation, retention, and advancement opportunities for under-represented groups in the building trades.

The Sullivan Square Redevelopment Project team currently includes CBT Architects, VHB, PORT Urbanism, KRM Consulting, Dain, Torpy, Le Ray, and Wiest & Garner, P.C. The team will also partner with locally owned M&WBE’s in the construction of SSQ, and will award smaller contracts to local smaller, family-owned businesses.

Community Integration: The community will have access to, and be part of, 27,000 s/f of new retail and restaurants created in the Inner Belt neighborhood.

The Raybern Building on Roland St. will be restored, preserved, and offer subsidized rents for essential, locally-owned neighborhood businesses such as doctor’s offices, dentists, local grocers, and other essential services.

After over 18 months of community integration, and 55+ meetings with neighbors, community organizations, and elected officials, RISE has identified ways to work with local community organizations and embrace what makes the neighborhood unique. The team has ongoing relationships with Charlestown Boys & Girls Club, Gardens for Charlestown, Charlestown Coalition, Charlestown Youth Hockey, Ryan “Duce” Morrissey Scholarship, Veterans of Charlestown, and The John F. Kennedy Center, where RISE has developed a new playground for their students.

“The school and playground are right at the gateway of the Bunker Hill Redevelopment, so it is especially important to see a beautiful, welcoming space full of joy right here,” said Thara Fuller, executive director John F. Kennedy Family Center. “We are incredibly grateful for the support to make this possible. The team at RISE are definitely heroes to us.”

Sustainability, Resiliency, & Open Space: 2.32 acres of new public space will be created within the Inner Belt project, replacing paved areas with prominent green parks and open space that will re-knit this torn urban fabric. Mobility and access will be improved through infrastructure upgrades, investment in BlueBikes network with subsidized stations and memberships, and other accessibility upgrades.

The complete project will add hundreds of new trees to SSQ to enhance community health as part of Boston's Complete Streets and will add a total of 5.28 acres of new publicly accessible open space. The team will utilize renewable energy and zero carbon design principles such as passive house and CLT construction to mitigate the project's environmental impact. The project will increase the previous site area by over two acres and include a comprehensive stormwater management and reuse plan to address extreme rain events and reduce overall water use. The site grading will also be raised significantly to address coastal flooding and 100-year sea level rise.

The site will promote broader mobility and accessibility for all with a commitment to global grade raising and infrastructure upgrades which will not only improve the connectivity of these areas but also ensure that the built environment is welcoming to all people regardless of age, physical condition, or language.

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