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Samuels & Associates achieves milestone on Parcel 12 Air Rights project

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Boston, MA With more than 150 pieces – 520 tons – of steel and precast concrete planks now stretched across the Massachusetts Turnpike (Mass Pike/I-90), the city’s first air rights project in over 40 years has now bridged across eight lanes of highway and two railroad tracks. Samuels & Associates, the developer of the Parcel 12 Air Rights project, was joined by governor Charlie Baker, Lt. governor Karyn Polito, Boston chief of economic opportunity and inclusion Segun Idowu, and other state and local elected officials, community members, project team members, and workers from the building trades to celebrate this major construction milestone of Parcel 12.

The decking work has occurred over the past several months, building upon foundation and support walls surrounding the highway and MBTA commuter rail tracks that has been ongoing since 2020. The deck will become the foundation for a new half-acre public park and plaza, as well as 35,000 s/f of retail and restaurant space. The project also includes an adjacent office and life science building that will house the future global headquarters of CarGurus and a flagship citizenM hotel.

“At every level, this project reinforces the power of partnership. Our collaboration with the city and the state resulted in a design that will enable safer streets, more pedestrian- and bike-friendly environments, and better access to public transit, while also already creating a significantly improved onramp to the highway,” said Steve Samuels, chairman and principal of Samuels & Associates. “Our long-standing engagement with the Fenway and Back Bay communities, as well as

the Citizens Advisory Committee, proffered our team the insights and feedback to turn a vision for a project that connected these two neighborhoods into something that will be a truly spectacular destination. And the work that our own team did – with each other, our anchor tenant CarGurus, and our construction partners – assured that we could launch this at the beginning of an unprecedented global pandemic, something that was not a certainty.”

“The Parcel 12 project represents an outstanding public-private partnership that includes the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the city of Boston, community leaders, and the team at Samuels & Associates,” said governor Baker. “Today’s milestone represents an incredible feat of engineering and lays the groundwork for the completion of this exciting project which will bring new economic opportunity, public transit improvements and infrastructure upgrades that will benefit the surrounding neighborhood.”

“This remarkable project is an important step forward for the residents of Boston, making our public spaces more welcoming, safe, and accessible for all. The new benefits of this project align with mayor Michelle Wu’s commitment to improving infrastructure and revitalizing our neighborhoods as we emerge from the pandemic,” said Idowu. “I am grateful to Samuels & Associates, the residents of the Fenway and Back Bay communities, and our colleagues within the state government for their collaboration. This project proves that incredible feats can be achieved through authentic partnerships, and I look forward to seeing the positive impact it will have on the lives of our residents and our economy for years to come.”

“This location called out for improvements to the 1960’s infrastructure to make it work for pedestrians, bicyclists and bus and Green Line riders. The many voices that contributed to this project assured that we made those street level improvements and connected them to a welcoming, half-acre civic plaza and open space on a deck over the highway. Now we’re well on our way to achieving all of that, plus building Boston’s first all-electric high-rise,” said Abe Menzin, the lead Samuels & Associates partner on the project. “We are grateful to the surrounding neighborhoods, the Commonwealth, MassDOT, the MBTA, the city of Boston and its planning team, and the Boston Transportation Department, for the close coordination that was required to make sure the planning and construction happened smoothly.”

The half-acre of new civic space, at grade and fully accessible to the public along Mass. Ave., will activate a barren stretch of Mass. Ave. and Boylston St. and create a focal point along the Newbury St. corridor. A landscaped open park along the project’s western edge was added in response to community input and will be a defining public feature of the enhanced Mass. Ave. corridor. Designed by architecture firm Elkus Manfredi, the plazas and related buildings will completely transform the ground-floor experience at this high-profile location.

“For more than a decade, residents of the Back Bay participated in an intense planning process to assure that we healed the scar created when the Mass. Pike was constructed. As the decking is completed, we can see the results of that hard work and already the intersection feels transformed,” said Meg Mainzer-Cohen, president and executive director of the Back Bay Association and member of the project’s Community Advisory Committee (CAC). “The community couldn’t have

asked for a better partner than the Samuels team in this process. Every step of the way, our ideas were incorporated into the vision for the site. Today, we are one step closer to a welcoming new gateway to Boston and the Back Bay.”

“After two years of remote and hybrid work, the CarGurus team is excited about the continued growth of our team in Boston. A key part of hybrid work is an incredible office, and we look forward to fostering innovation, collaboration, and camaraderie through our new global headquarters,” said Jason Trevisan, CEO of CarGurus. “This site is a major draw for our employees with beautiful outdoor space, state-of-the-art sustainability features, and all of the amenities of the Back Bay and Fenway neighborhoods.”

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