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Related Beal secures approval from the Boston Planning and Development Agency for 1.1 million s/f Channelside

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Boston, MA Related Beal secured Article 80 approval from the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) for Channelside, the dynamic 1.1 million s/f development in Fort Point. Following comprehensive community engagement, the approval is an important milestone for the 6.5-acre, former Gillette-owned parking lot at 244-284 A St. Channelside will be a mixed-use destination that will deliver public parks, housing, research and commercial space, civic/cultural space, retail shops, public art, and expansive waterfront access and activation for residents, commercial occupants, and the public to enjoy.

The public engagement process included extensive input and collaboration with elected officials, city and state agencies, non-profit institutions, neighborhood associations and the arts community.

“The collective resources brought to bear on this now-vacant parking lot will create one of the most dynamic, inventive and exciting places to work, live and innovate,” said Stephen Faber, executive vice president, Related Beal. “Channelside will be a place at the intersection of art, science and nature for the entire city.”

Channelside will be a network of 3.5 acres of open space, including a new city park that will be deeded to the city’s Parks and Recreation Department. Channelside’s green space of waterfront public parks will be integrated with the project’s three buildings, and will support a variety of programming uses, such as recreational play areas for children, flexible space for events, and pop-up markets, all of which will adapt over time to meet the needs of the community.

Channelside’s three buildings include residences and commercial and life science research space. The residential building will include 340 units, 20% of which will be affordable apartments, with three-quarters of those affordable apartments designated as live-work units for artists. A second building will feature 322,000 s/f of commercial space, while a third building will deliver 418,000 s/f of life science research space. The three buildings will contain a mix of ground floor retail, public lobbies and dedicated civic/cultural spaces.

Furthering the connection to the community and equitable access to the watershed, Related Beal will commit \$500,000 over 10 years for free youth environmental, STEM and STEAM programs and events.

“Our overarching goal has been to transform the watershed and the water’s edge into an extraordinary ‘water commons’ with four seasons of multi-generational and multi-cultural events and healthy outdoor activities,” said Chris Mancini, executive director, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay.

“In Channelside’s plans, Related Beal’s design team, community leaders, non-profits, and elected officials and their staffs have been receptive and responsive to community input throughout the process and have succeeded with a project proposal that elevates our shared values of meaningful public access and racial equity and lays a strong foundation for future expansion of public benefits. We’re enthusiastic about this project and the truly inclusive process guided by Related Beal, and to see it continue to strengthen through the Chapter 91 process.”

Public art will play a central role in Channelside’s open space, serving as a catalyst for the newly created Fort Point Arts Neighborhood district. Related Beal will commit \$3.7 million to bolster the Fort Point arts and culture district through permanent sculptures, rotating art, urban infrastructure art, street furniture and performing art, with a minimum of 25% BIPOC and women featured artists. Channelside will also include a fully integrated, ready-to-use, waterfront amphitheater for performing arts with infrastructure for use by performance organizations.

“The waterfront performing arts amphitheater will be transformational for the waterfront,” said Raber Umphnour, a filmmaker and community leader. “The public realm, filled with art, will enrich the lives of everyone who comes to this great neighborhood. The affordable artist housing will support artists to create and perform unique works, in Boston; innovative works that otherwise might not have been

created.”

Designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF) Channelside will emphasize resiliency and sustainability through design techniques incorporating energy efficient features to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change. More than 150 new and healthy trees will be planted in new park spaces throughout the site and along Channelside’s new pedestrian pathways. Related Beal will also create a new elevated berm integrated with an enhanced Harborwalk and park space along the Fort Point Channel to provide protection from future sea level rise.

Related Beal will continue to work with the Commonwealth on the next stage of approvals and plans to break ground next year.

Channelside is expected to create approximately 2,000 construction jobs and more than 3,000 permanent jobs upon stabilization.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540