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The Chiofaro Co. discusses design plan for Harbor Garage project - connect to Rose Kennedy Greenway

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The Chiofaro Co., one of N.E.'s leading developers and operators of first class commercial space, has begun discussions on the conceptual design plans for the redevelopment of Harbor Garage into an iconic new gateway on the Rose Kennedy Greenway.

The proposal includes the development of two towers, a retail podium, and replacement underground parking. The office tower would include 860,000 s/f of space. The residential tower would include 220,000 s/f of luxury condominium space, and a 300,000 s/f hotel with an additional 50,000 s/f of hotel function space and amenities. The project will be designed with 70,000 s/f of retail facilities such as a gourmet grocer, a high-end personal computing retailer and other premier retail stores.

Designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates of New York, the mixed-use development's foremost characteristic is its slender profile and dramatic arch that will connect the Greenway with the harbor and serve as a canopy to facilitate pedestrian activity.

The project has significant community benefits as well, including \$16 million in tax revenue, and an estimated \$10 million linkage payment. The project will create 4,000 new union construction jobs and, upon completion, will create 3,500 new permanent jobs.

The proposed project is also heavily transit-oriented, adjacent to the MBTA's Blue Line, a short walk to the South Station bus and rail terminal, and walking distance to water taxis and commuter ferries. No specific heights have been determined for the buildings because the design is still conceptual and The Chiofaro Co. remains respectful of the community and government processes already in their early stages, including meetings with abutters and the ongoing Greenway District Study, led by Utile Inc.; the study will, among other things, identify and define height, density, and use guidelines for the area.

A terra cotta frame flanks each tower and contains delicately crafted glass volumes that enclose the occupied space. Each roof will contain a garden, reflecting The Chiofaro Company's commitment to making this the most sustainable new building in Boston.

"This premier location is at the intersection of the Greenway, the Harbor, and The New England Aquarium, an important cultural institution that deserves an improved pedestrian experience, greater site line access and increased vitality in the area," said Donald Chiofaro, President of The Chiofaro Company. "We will work very hard to ensure that the Aquarium - and our other neighbors at Harbor Towers -- benefit from this project."

To that end, using a carefully engineered phasing process, parking for the Aquarium and Harbor Towers residents would not be disrupted during construction. The first phase of the new underground garage would be built before demolishing the balance of the existing garage above ground. This new underground garage will function during tower construction.

In addition, residents at Harbor Towers will be offered a long-term parking solution to accommodate their parking needs as their existing lease is due to expire. The Harbor Towers mechanical equipment, also housed in the garage, could be relocated as part of a new multi-function space that could be built on the Harbor Towers site with amenities for the condominium residents.

John Fowler, executive managing director at Holliday Fenoglio Fowler, said, "This is an innovative redevelopment project and it will certainly serve as an economic driver for the City of Boston."

Chiofaro filed a letter of intent with the city on January 7, and has been meeting with community members and elected officials and other interested parties. The company intends to file its Project Notification Form (PNF) this spring.

"We are pleased to begin discussions with the community and the city and we look forward to working with neighbors and elected officials to bring this design to fruition," Chiofaro said.

William Pedersen, principal at Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates and architect for the project, explained: "We are creating an iconic building that will serve as a gateway to the City of Boston and open up access to Boston Harbor, all the while drawing people toward the New England Aquarium and the Greenway with cafes, stores, and gathering areas, opening the view of the Harbor and creating a more interactive space."

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