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ROXBURY, SOUTH END

## 10-story hotel, supermarket, housing eyed for 3.5 acres of publicly owned land in Roxbury

Posted by Matt Rocheleau March 27, 2012 11:14 AM

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(Boston Redevelopment Authority)

A rendering of the 10-story hotel proposed for Parcel 9 that would include ground-floor commercial, restaurant and community space and 52 housing units.

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

A committee overseeing the development selection process for three-and-a-half acres of vacant, publicly owned land in Roxbury has recommended that the city choose proposals that include a 10-story hotel with more than 150 rooms, a supermarket, and 118 housing units, along with office and retail space.

Last summer, four developers responded to the city's [request for ideas](#) by [submitting proposals](#) for two pieces of land – known as Parcel 9 and Parcel 10 – separated by Melnea Cass Boulevard and abutting Washington Street and Shawmut Ave on either side.

The two tracts are near the neighborhood's border with the South End and surrounded by several other significant development projects in and around the Dudley Square area that have been recently completed, are under construction or are going through the city's public review process.

Early last month, after reviewing the four potential development scenarios, a project review committee chose to recommend that the state's transportation department and the Boston Redevelopment Authority – each of which own portions of the two parcels – choose a different developer for each parcel.

For Parcel 9, the committee recommended an idea from development team Urbanica Design + Development to build a 10-story hotel with between 150 and 162 rooms. That project which is being called “Melnea Hotel & Residences,” would include around 20,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial, restaurant and community space; 52 mixed-income housing units and 139 parking spots.

For Parcel 10, the committee recommended a proposal submitted by a group called Madison Tropical, LLC – a joint venture between Madison Park Community Development Corporation and Tropical Foods International.

That proposal would integrate the parcel with an adjacent building and property now owned by Tropical Foods. The idea calls for a 20,000 square-foot, modern supermarket for Tropical Foods and another 20,000 square feet of

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second-floor warehousing and office space in one building.

A second building would house 36 mixed-income apartments with street level retail and upper floor office space. A third building would be converted into 30 affordable apartments with street level retail. The plans call for grade-level, landscaped parking and pedestrian walkways connected to public sidewalks.

(See details of the Parcel 9 proposal, [here](#). See details of the Parcel 10 proposal, [here](#).)

Members of the city's redevelopment authority said they plan to meet with the two development teams so each can provide city officials with details about their respective project schedules and outline the feasibility of their proposals.

City officials said they will use that input to make recommendations to the redevelopment authority's board for approval to tentatively designate each developer to the respective sites.

"As we are beginning that process there is no specific timeframe for going to the BRA Board," a spokeswoman for the redevelopment authority said in an e-mail in mid-March. "Our first priority is determining project feasibility, we will take the necessary time for that important review."

The city does not have to necessarily select any of the proposals, and it is likely that the current proposals will change, at least slightly, before clearing the subsequent Article 80 public review process, officials have said previously.

Parcel 9, which is just over 1.3 acres, and Parcel 10, which is just over 2 acres, are about a quarter mile from Dudley Square, where city officials [broke ground earlier this month](#) on a \$115-million plan to redevelop the long-abandoned Ferdinand department store and two adjacent buildings.

Steps from the Ferdinand project, a local [developer has proposed](#) constructing new retail and office space in a three-story building on a vacant lot.

A seven-story complex with [57 housing units for low-income seniors](#) and a [new district police station](#) were recently unveiled in Dudley Square. City officials hope to renovate the public library branch in Dudley Square, which has seen other [real-estate related activity](#), including the [potential for a Walmart](#), an idea city leaders have opposed.

And, along a nearby stretch of Tremont Street across from the city's police headquarters, a **new health center facility recently opened** on a long-vacant plot of land that was sub-divided out from the city-owned Parcel 3.

Broad goals for development of the two tracts near the neighborhood's border with the South End are laid out in the proposal request from the city's redevelopment authority and the state transportation department.

Those goals include: implementing the neighborhood's strategic master plan with an emphasis on maximizing economic development and job creation, including for jobs for neighborhood residents; opportunities for community and/or minority equity and ownership, local small business development, and more home ownership opportunities.

The request also recommends developers focus on offering ideas that will: catalyze on economic growth of adjoining parcels and other nearby developments – including Dudley Square's business district; reinforce the physical, social, and economic fabric of Roxbury; leverage the neighborhoods resources; build with sustainability; and have a successful transit-oriented design.

The objectives for developing the land were worked out through a three-year partnership with community members, residents' groups, the city and elected officials to create the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan, which provides a strategic framework for 10 to 20 years of future economic growth.

Two other proposals to develop the Roxbury parcels were submitted to the city but did not receive the oversight committee's recommendation.

A team that calls themselves Washington Crossing Partners, LLC, was the only one of the four developers that submitted proposals to build on both parcels.

There idea, dubbed "Washington Crossing," called for a \$125-million, 365,000 square-foot mixed-use development that would comprise roughly 250 parking spaces to accompany commercial and retail space along with 144 workforce housing units, 14 of which would be townhouses.

Development team Parcel 9 Partners, LLC – a joint venture between New Atlantic Development and Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation – proposed a \$28.5 million project called "Shearwater Green" which focused on job

proposed a \$28.5-million project called "Snowflut Green," which focused solely on Parcel 9.

That idea called for a mix of 78 workforce rental and ownership housing units; 11,000 square feet of destination and locally-owned retail; a 2,000 square-foot entrepreneurship training center and both permanent and rotating public art installations.

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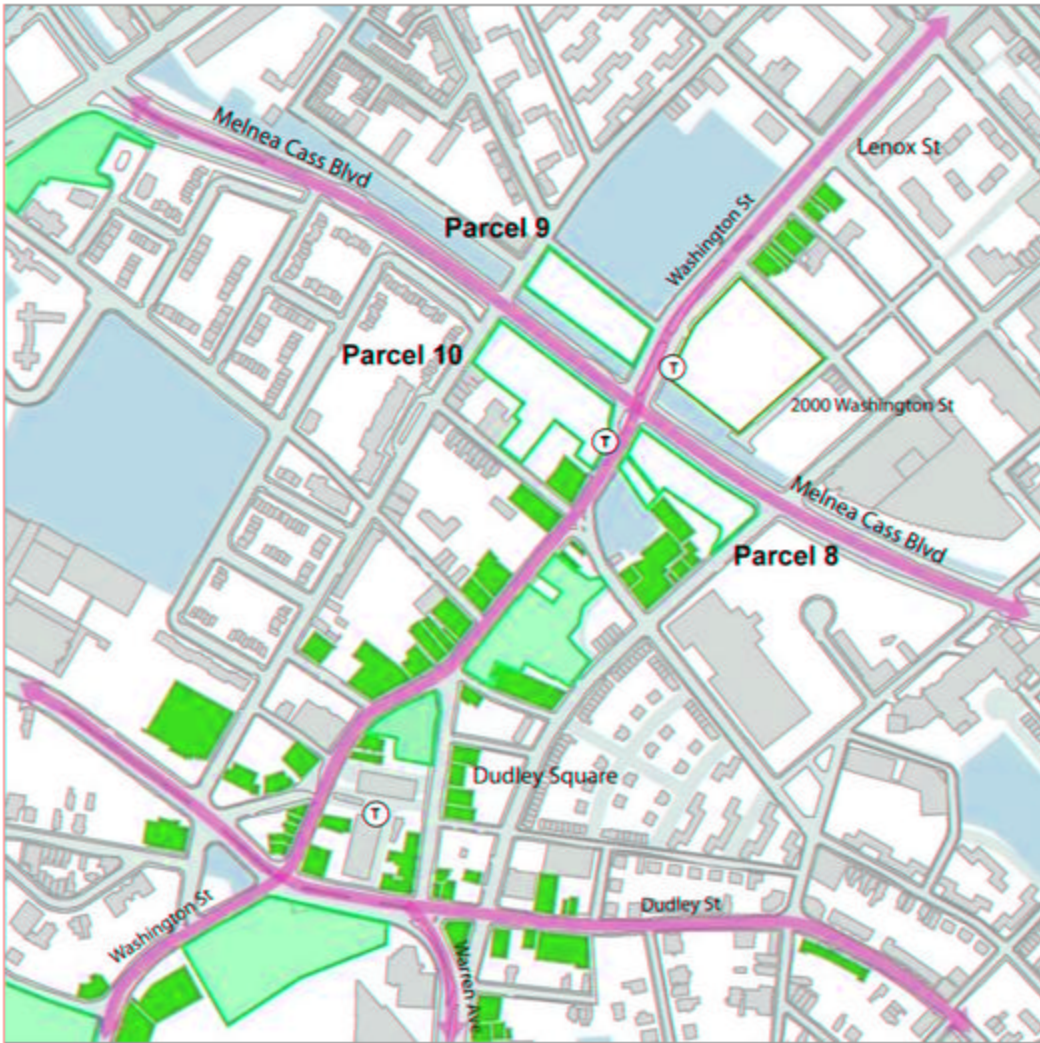
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(Boston Redevelopment Authority)

A rendering of the layout for the project proposed for Parcel 10 that would include a supermarket, warehouse, office and retail space and 66 housing units.



(Boston Redevelopment Authority)

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