

TD Garden will feel the Lovejoy

Waterfront parcel poised to be hot new Boston neighborhood

By Jennifer Athas

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TRANSFORMATION: Lovejoy Wharf, ready for demolition above, will become a gleaming, vibrant new neighborhood.



URBAN PLANNING: An architect's draft shows in detail how the waterfront space is expected to be utilized for public access and neighborhood connectivity. A nonprofit recording studio is also in the mix.



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The TD Garden is getting an eye-popping neighbor.

The home of the Bruins and Celtics will soon have Lovejoy Wharf next door — a 2.1-acre waterfront parcel that is set to become Boston's hottest new neighborhood, linking the North End, the West End and Charlestown.

The condemned structure, purchased by the Related Beal company, about a year ago, will transform over the next 15 months to include a 187,000-square foot office building for Converse's world headquarters, a public wharf with dock space, pavilion, restaurants, retail and eventually residences.

"Lovejoy Wharf will become the epicenter that will connect Charlestown, West End, North End," said Peter Spellios, executive vice president at Related Beal. "The new public wharf

will be about three quarters of an acre, with all new public access creating a neighborhood and connectivity that hasn't been there for the last 50, 60 years".

Originally constructed for commercial purposes in 1909, the wharf has never offered public access in spite of its gateway location. During the past decade it seemed as though 50 or more cars parked on the site during games at the TD Garden. Related Beal tore down the existing private wharf that was in disrepair and is roughly the same size as the new wharf currently being constructed.

"Oftentimes many public wharfs have struggled to create vibrancy and make them real and not just something on paper," Spellios said. However, Lovejoy Wharf will have public access and public amenity space.

Converse bought in very early on in the process in making this public wharf space a dynamic area, especially with its nonprofit arm Rubber Tracks. Rubber Tracks will be a state-of-the-art recording studio located in the pavilion on Lovejoy Wharf. It's designed to provide artists of all genres the opportunity to record their original music in a high quality studio alongside a team of experienced engineers at no cost. Converse has a Rubber Tracks studio in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Lovejoy Wharf will also have a residential component at the 131 Beverly St. entrance.

This project is part of a mini boom of residential space in the area.

In various stages of development in the area around North Station are:

- Equity's 10-story apartment building Archstone Avenier, completed in 2009;
- Simpson Housing's almost-complete 286-unit apartment building named the Victor;
- Boston Properties' planned project named the Merano off the Bulfinch Triangle, with 230 apartments;
- Avalon Bay's proposed 38-story residential project on Nashua Street with 503 units, and Trinity Financials 320 residential units planned at 1 Canal Street to name a few.