

Boston Business Journal

Executive Domains

April 20-26, 2007

BostonBusinessJournal.com

Boston Business Journal 45

Leachmore Point condos: Gateway to South Boston

BY MARY MOORE
SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

For all the tall, glitzy new buildings that have given South Boston's West Broadway an urban feel, the area has been lacking one thing: a gateway welcoming visitors from downtown into the neighborhood.

That's why the pressure has been on **Leachmore Point** to be more than just a run-of-the-mill condominium project.

Slated for the corner of Broadway and Dorchester Avenue, at the foot of the Broadway Bridge and perched above one of the entrances to the Broadway MBTA station, Leachmore Point has received final approvals for 62 units featuring underground parking and first-floor retail.

Designed as a brick and glass eight-story structure, Leachmore Point is the work of **Marc Margulies**, principal of Boston-based **Margulies & Associates**. The building will sit across Dorchester Avenue from the Court Square Press building and the new Macallen Building Condominiums.

Nearby, two other approved projects — 50 West Broadway and 150 Dorchester Ave. — will bring nearly 200 more condo units to the same Broadway



A rendering of Leachmore Point, a 62-unit condo project with first-floor retail planned for the corner of Broadway and Dorchester Avenue in South Boston.

neighborhood. But Leachmore Point sits at the entrance to it all, mixing contemporary design with the traditional features that capture a more typical look for South Boston — bay windows and dormers across the top of the building, for example.

"If you come over the Broadway Bridge, it's the first thing you'll see," said **Paul Mustone**, founder and president of Boston-based **Reflex Lighting Group**. "It really is the missing front tooth of the development going on there. It was a forgotten area, and it's positive to see another neighborhood

spring up with access to downtown, the Mass. Pike and the T."

Mustone predicts that ground will break on the Leachmore Point project next spring, with units ready for market 18 months later. One-, two- and three-bedroom units will range between 850 square feet and 1,400 square feet. Four penthouse condominiums with the best views — downtown, Fort Point Channel and Boston Harbor — could carry \$1 million price tags.

Planned for the roof is a 2,000-square-foot pocket park, creating a green view for the neighbors living in the condominiums carved out of the old St. Peter and Paul's Church, which sits across a small parking lot from Leachmore Point. Other "green" features of the building include cisterns that collect rainwater runoff for irrigating the roof-level vegetation, Zipcars and bicycle racks, as well as LED lighting that uses a photovoltaic energy system.

Mustone's original plan was to build a condominium complex about half the size of the current project. When the **Boston Redevelopment Authority** recognized the site as an entryway to South Boston, the project took on new life and a new look.

"We're trying to create an urban feel but also trying to keep things in scale with the neighborhood," said **David Carlson**, senior architect with the BRA.

For starters, the BRA encouraged Mustone to reach an agreement with the owners of the **Quiet Man Irish Pub**, located between the parcels of land Mustone already owned, to buy the neighborhood watering hole and assemble a larger project. Mustone said he has negotiated a legal option to buy the space.

Then there was the push to include 5,000 square feet of retail on the first floor to keep the street level vibrant. Already, interest from retailers runs the gamut, Mustone said, from bookstores to gourmet food outlets.

Retail on the first floor forced parking underground, a more expensive option than street level. With mechanical car stackers that accommodate two vehicles, Margulies said, Leachmore Point doubled the number of parking spots underground and cut the project's excavation costs.

Leachmore Point also will give a face-lift to the Broadway MBTA station, with a roof over the entrance that seems to embrace the station.