

First store opens at Hingham Shipyard

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HINGHAM — The retail portion of the Hingham Shipyard development is open for business.

A 29,000-square-foot Bed Bath & Beyond is the first tenant to open in the Launch at Hingham Shipyard, a 240,000-square-foot commercial portion of the waterfront redevelopment. Additional tenants will open throughout the summer and next spring.

Marge Reardon of Hingham emerged from the new store Monday afternoon with two bags filled with \$70 worth of household goods.

Reardon said she looks forward to the opening of additional tenants, including restaurants and a Patriot Cinemas theater complex. "It's the best thing that ever happened," Reardon said of the redevelopment. "It's been a long while coming."

The first phase of the shipyard redevelopment, the 235-unit Avalon at Hingham Shipyard apartment complex, opened last summer. The groundbreaking for two condominium communities, the 92-unit Moorings and 150-unit Hewitts Landing, has been delayed by the real estate slump.

In the meantime, construction of additional retail and entertainment space continues at the 130-acre site. A six-screen Patriot Cinemas complex will open by the end of July and Old Navy will open in late summer, said Robin Mosle, executive vice president of leasing for developer Samuels & Associates of Boston.

The rest of the tenants are waiting until next spring, when Greensboro, N.C.-based grocery chain Fresh Market opens and is expected to generate more traffic to the site. Dining options will include Pizzapalooza, which has an original location in Newton, Qdoba and two locally-owned restaurants, Esti's French Bistro and Alma Nove.

About 75 percent of the storefronts are reserved, Mosle said, and developers hope to have 80 percent spoken for by next spring despite a sharp national downturn in demand for retail space.

"This is a very interesting time we're living in, and we're very confident our project is somewhat set aside from the typical shopping center," she said.

Developers also are marketing 30,000 square feet of office space with harbor views.

Shopping at Bed Bath & Beyond on Monday, Gail Collins of Cohasset praised the overall look of the property.

"This is the first time I've been in here, but it's absolutely beautiful," Collins said. "I'm not in favor of development, but this one's very convenient. Now if I have to bring something back, I don't have to go to Braintree."

READ MORE ABOUT THE HINGHAM SHIPYARD

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