

Shipyard land swap completed

By Carol Britton Meyer
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HINGHAM - A land swap between the MBTA and developers that is critical to the redevelopment of the Hingham Shipyard was finalized last week.

The swap, which signals the start of the next phase of the project, changed the configuration of the commuter boat parking lot, allowing the MBTA space closer to the ferry terminal.

During the past two years, the developers – Samuels & Associates, Avalon, Lennar, and SeaChain — which each own a portion of the former commuter parking lot, have been operating under a construction easement to complete promised work on a new 1,700-space MBTA lot, Shipyard Drive, and site infrastructure.

This already completed and more convenient lot — which includes a drop-off and pick-up area — was built by the developers and was officially turned over to the MBTA following the recent land swap. Another 300-space lot owned by SeaChain is also used by commuter boat riders.

“This swap allows the MBTA access to a more useful parking lot location and also maximizes opportunities for a cohesive and successful mixed-use development on the outer edges of the site where the original parking lot was located,” said Leslie Cohen, vice president of development for Samuels & Associates.

MBTA General Manager Daniel Grabauskas called the swap “great news for existing and future commuter boat users. At no cost to the MBTA we’ve been able to relocate the parking facility to a site closer to the docks and to also increase capacity by more than 200 parking spaces,” he said.

The completion of the land swap marks a critical transition in the construction process at the Samuels & Associates developments — The Launch, which includes 240,000 square feet of retail and commercial space, and The Moorings, which features 92 condominiums.

The sales office for The Moorings opened in April and has been receiving a steady stream of inquiries from both current Hingham residents and others who are interested in the “urban-village” lifestyle offered by the mixed-use project, Cohen said.

Bed, Bath & Beyond, The Fresh Market, Old Navy, and Bodyscapes Fitness will open stores at the Shipyard, and discussions with several restaurant operators are underway.

Construction of three Launch retail buildings has begun, including the sites for the future Patriot Cinema and the Bodyscapes fitness center.

Construction of three additional buildings (which will house Old Navy, Bed, Bath & Beyond, and offices) will begin in the next several weeks. Site work is currently underway for The Moorings residential buildings.

Construction on the entire Samuels project is expected to wrap up by next Spring.

Avalon Shipyard, LLC, 51 Sleeper St., Boston, is constructing 91 rental units, dubbed Avalon at Hingham Shipyard. Twenty-five percent of the Avalon units will be rented as affordable housing.

<http://www.wickedlocal.com/hingham/news/x1542094421/Shipyard-land-swap-completed>