BioSquare: Boston's Largest Research Park

by Thomas J. Hamill, Senior Vice President, Jones Lang LaSalle for New England Real Estate Journal

BioSquare is located along Boston's Albany Street corridor, in a city with a deep and intellectual work force, world-class hospitals, many of the world's best research universities, and access to important business and financial support. It is positioned to become the nucleus of Boston's life science activities.

Formerly known as South End Technology Square when the Boston Redevelopment Authority approved the original Master Plan PDA in 1991, the entire BioSquare area now covers 14 acres and a development potential of 1.2 million square feet of research, laboratory and office space. Today the BioSquare complex is a diverse mix of 340,000 square feet of institutional research, private corporations, and incubator space. In addition, Boston University Medical Center (BUMC) plans to establish a National Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases and Biodefense (NCEIDB) through a National Institutes of Health grant.

670 Albany Street To Break Ground

University Associates, a partnership consisting of Boston University and Boston Medical Center, and owner of the land area encompassing BioSquare, recently took a major step forward in advancing BioSquare's development opportunity by selected Spaulding & Slye Colliers as development manager, construction manager, leasing agent and property manager for 670 Albany Street, an 160,000 square foot laboratory facility within the park. The building is scheduled to break ground in the early spring. The building's footprint of 20,000 square feet will comprise 8 stories plus a penthouse that will house the complex mechanical systems necessary for the operation of the laboratory facilities within the building.

Through a concerted and successful effort with the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the proposed building has a more contemporary design compared to much of the surrounding South End Institutional area where brick, dark bronze window frames, and limestone are the predominant materials. 670 Albany Street's facade will have views that align with the new Massachusetts Avenue Connector and the South East Expressway. The building itself will have a highly visible "speed" factor from these important infrastructure corridors, and the design will express the future of the BioSquare's sophisticated medical research environment.

Design Details

The overall design is divided into nine structural bays of approximately twenty-two feet in width. The organization of the building footprint, core area, and bays allow for an ideal lab module of 33' x 22'. This module is both flexible, and is free of columns within the lab research areas.

The facade itself is organized into two sections, a "plinth" and the curtain wall. The base section is approximately two stories in height and is composed of a horizontal section of curtain wall containing the building entrance. The curtain wall is six stories in height and is composed of vision and spandrel glass panels. It consists of a variety of mullion widths and projecting depths. The enclosed penthouse and vertical airshafts on the building ends will be integrated into the buildings facade with an array of stainless steel louvers and metal panel systems.

The air handling capacity of the building will provide approximately 2 CFM a square foot and up to 15 air changes per hour to the lab areas of the building. The main electrical service will provide an overall capacity of up to 30 watts a square foot.

Environmental Program

Recognizing that all lab buildings have significant energy loads and higher impacts on natural resources and the environment, Spaulding & Slye Colliers has initiated an Environmental Design program and will seek LEED Certification through a Core & Shell Pilot Program through the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) while simultaneously working with NStar on a comprehensive utility rebate program. The goal of this program will realize less expensive operating costs for tenants, and increased marketability in attracting tenants.

This combination of robustly established academic and medical research uses, and cutting-edge design will be the next step in bringing the BioSquare Master Plan to fruition.

CROSSTOWN® CENTER