



# The Real Reporter

A COMPENDIUM OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTY & CAPITAL NEWS

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## THIS WEEK'S ISSUE

State Slate .....	2
Arbor Day .....	3
Triple Net Gains .....	4
Edens Advance .....	12
Wilmington's Legacy .....	13



## THE REAL REPORT

### Door to Door



350 Washington St., Boston MA

BOSTON — Property managers at **CBRE/New England** have a new listing for their growing retail book of business, as **Invesco Realty Advisors** has retained the company to manage **350 Washington St.**, a five-story, 150,000-sf building known to



Mark F. Tassinari

continued on page 15

## \$600M-Plus Exchange Place Trade Jolts Hub's Investment Sales Sector

BY JOE CLEMENTS

**B**OSTON — There appears to be plenty of reasons for officials at Brookfield Properties Corp. to celebrate Thanksgiving this year, as a commitment from UBS Investments to acquire Boston's Exchange Place office tower will produce a bountiful return in excess of \$600 million. As first relayed on Tuesday by therealreporter.com, the trade being negotiated by Eastdil Secured could be completed by year's end and reflects the buyer's willingness



continued on page 17

Exchange Place, Boston MA

## New Life on Tap for Funeral Home

BY JOE CLEMENTS

**B**OSTON — A new future appears imminent for 493-497 Commonwealth Ave., but just exactly what that might be for the erstwhile J.S. Waterman Funeral Home remains clouded following a New York firm's acquisition of the three-building property that sits perched on the edge of Kenmore Square. Boston **Realty Advisors**



continued on page 15

493-497 Commonwealth Ave., Boston MA

## Avison Young Adds New Listings, Staff



WGBH Headquarters, Brighton MA

**B**OSTON — It has been barely a year since Avison Young fused with Essex River Ventures to establish a Boston outpost, and less than four months since veteran broker John "Jack" Kerrigan Jr. and several Grubb & Ellis colleagues including Steve Cook arrived on the scene, but the Canadian-based real estate company led locally by Essex River

continued on page 16

## Funeral Home

continued from page 1

President Jason S. Weissman, whose firm negotiated the landmark asset's sale, referred questions on such matters to the owners who paid \$3.5 million to sell Kimco Realty Corp.

The deal was consummated via two simultaneous transactions, as Epiphany LLC paid \$2.45 million for 493-495 Commonwealth Ave. and Kenundrum LLC



Christopher D. Sower



Jason S. Weissman

spent \$1.05 million on 497 Commonwealth Ave. Collectively, the buildings total 19,500 sf. Both LLCs are run by Bay Management Corp., a New York investor whose principals were unavailable for comment as of press deadline. Weissman also would not discuss the financial elements of what appears to have been an all-cash purchase.

One reason observers are reluctant to predict what might become of the well-appointed property is "flexibility" of the asset, an element touted by BRA principal Christopher D. Sower this summer in a Real Reporter article unveiling his firm's selection to market the site that its prior owner had gutted to shell condition, then mothballed when recessionary woes swept over the nation in 2008. Whereas



Photo: Derek Szabo

Kimco opted to move on despite the rebounding Boston economy, the property generated a wide berth of interest, Weissman says in citing both the base building's quality and its location at a major crossroads where Beacon Street and Commonwealth Avenue intersect in the heart of Kenmore Square. It is also where three subway lines converge, bringing an estimated 200,000 people through the district daily. "It is one of the most important transit hubs in the city," notes Weissman, terming 493-497 Commonwealth Ave. "a special asset" that attracted local suitors as well as those outside New England, as evidenced in the winning bidder.

Multifamily is being handicapped as a strong frontrunner for 493-497 Commonwealth Ave. by some spoken to, with one residential expert insisting the structure would lay out well in that regard. Proximity to Boston University and the Longwood Medical Area could attract office or medical tenants, maintains another, but the prevalence of financing for apartments and even possibly condominiums could be a key determinant, acknowledges the industry veteran. "We'll know soon enough," the source portends, maintaining the buyer is unlikely to land bank the asset for any lengthy period, especially given the white-hot multifamily arena. ■

## The Real Report

continued from page 1

decades of Bostonians as F.W. Woolworth's flagship Downtown Crossing store. Since that multilevel emporium finally succumbed to changing consumer patterns a decade ago, the building has been retrofitted into a multi-tenanted facility whose tenants include youth-oriented retailer H&M, plus a TJ Maxx and Marshall's, while a health club operates on the upper floor. Invesco acquired 350 Washington St. this September, paying an impressive \$128 million in a deal negotiated by CBRE/NE's Capital Markets Group.

"It's a great building," says Mark F. Tassinari, a CBRE/NE principal and head

of the firm's property management juggernaut that today oversees more than 32 million sf of space in New England, making it the largest player of its type in the region.

About 1.5 million sf in the CBRE/NE quill is now retail after picking up the 350 Washington St. listing. Veteran property manager Paul Connolly will be handling the assignment, reports Tassinari, whose firm is conveniently located just steps away from the building at 33 Arch St. Indeed, that seven-year-old tower was grafted onto the back of 350 Washington St. "Very close," understates Tassinari, who is look-



Paul Connolly

ing for retail both near and far across the land, and says the launch of leasing division CBRE/Grossman Retail Advisors has improved his company's chances of pursuing major competitors such as KeyPoint Partners, a prolific provider of leasing and management expertise in the Bay State. CBRE/NE recently secured a listing in Uxbridge, and is vying for other plazas and shopping centers, according to Tassinari, who declined to identify potential prospects. What is clear, he says, is "we want to expand" the retail platform, even as traditional lines including office product are also in a growth mode. "It makes a lot of sense," he says of pursuing that path, with the 350 Washington St. providing a tangible result. ■