

2008 Rotch Preliminary Competition

Fresh Urbanism

An Urban Design Proposal for a Boston Public Market

The conceptual framework

A public institution embedded in an urban infill development

In dense North American cities, new public institutions are often embedded within larger urban development projects. The purpose is to provide required “active ground level uses” and also a development-subsidized public amenity that can serve as a politically acceptable tradeoff for a taller and denser development. This phenomenon has urbanistic and architectonic as well as financial and political implications; the parasitic public institution is relatively small in comparison to the host development but must be clearly legible as a public institution within the dense fabric of an existing city. A specific architectural strategy is required to create a legible hierarchy of uses within a single mixed-use development. At the same time, the organization of the ground level plan needs to accommodate both the public institution and the lobbies, elevator cores, egress paths and service bays necessary for the upper-level functions.



A Public Market for the City of Boston

During the past several years, the Boston Public Market Association (BPMA: <http://www.bostonpublicmarket.org/>) has explored several Downtown sites in the search for a home for a permanent four-season public market hall. In 1998, BPMA commissioned Project for Public Spaces (PPS), a New York based non-profit organization, to study the feasibility of a public market hall in Boston ¹. In 2000, a follow-up study was done for the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture and the City of Boston to understand the feasibility of the concept in terms of consumers and suppliers ². In May 2003, BPMA submitted a proposal to develop Parcel 18, one of several parcels along the Rose Kennedy Greenway slated for public/institutional buildings. The New Center for Arts and Culture won the rights to develop the parcel and that organization is currently working with Daniel Libeskind on an ambitious cultural center (see <http://ncacboston.org/vision.asp>). More recently, BPMA has been exploring several new sites, including Parcel 22, a vacant air rights parcel that faces Dewey Square and South Station and Parcel 7, located adjacent to the Haymarket.

Ken Greenberg, an urban planner based in Toronto and the former Chief Planner of the BRA, has supported the idea of a market district that would extend from Quincy Market to the Haymarket as a way to give a specific permanent identity to the area between the Blackstone Block, Quincy Market and the North End. It is hoped that the activity of an enriched market district will also further enliven the new North End parks on the Greenway that were completed in the fall of 2007. As a result, vacant retail space in the Turnpike Authority-owned parking garage (formerly Parcel 7), Parcel 9 and the underdeveloped parcels along Blackstone Street collectively constitute the ideal urban area to explore the potential for a public market hall as part of a larger urban infill development.



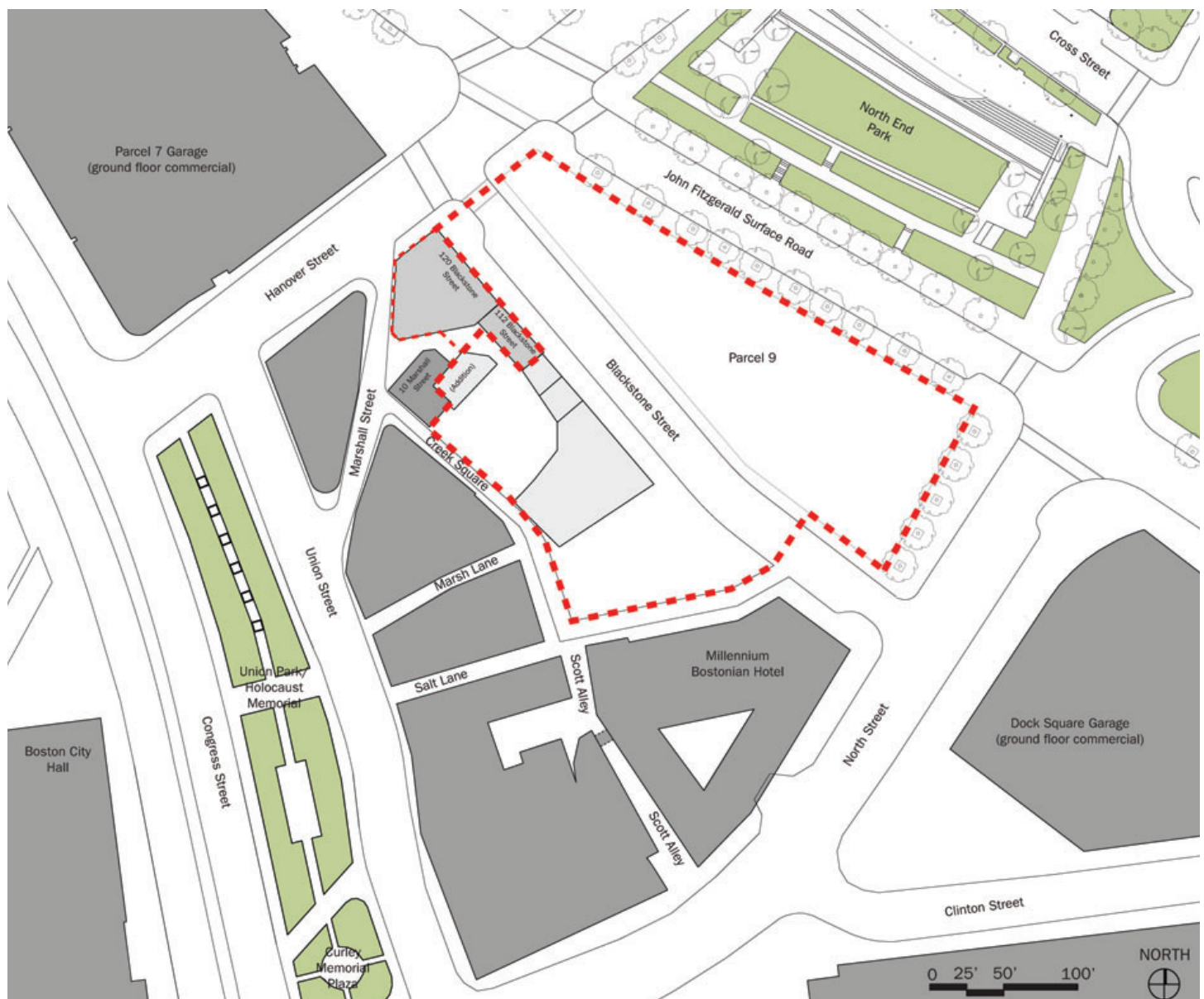
¹ Project for Public Spaces has developed a specific expertise in public markets. Their website is an excellent resource for the competition: <http://www.pps.org/markets/>

² Study of the Feasibility, Development, and Promotion of a Boston Public Market, by SeaReach/CMI, October 26, 2000.

The Site

The proposed project site includes Big Dig Air Rights Parcel 9, the right-of-way of Blackstone Street and several under-developed parcels on the southwest side of Blackstone Street (see site map below). While Blackstone Street is included in the potential site area, and can be eliminated and/or significantly reconfigured, a publicly accessible east-west pedestrian route must be included through the parcel, although not necessarily along the alignment of the existing street. In addition, several small-scale service streets and pedestrian alleys penetrate the historic Blackstone Block including Creek Square, Marsh Lane, Salt Lane and Scott Alley. The function and character of this network of spaces should be carefully considered as part of your proposal.

120 and 112 Blackstone Street are historic buildings that have undergone radical transformations in the 19th and 20th centuries. Design proposals can fully retain one or both buildings, modify the buildings with selective demolition and/or additions, or replace them. In addition, the modern addition at the rear of 10 Marshall Street should be removed; the project site area includes this portion of the existing building.



The Program

This is a two part program in which you must represent both a ground level public market and the related host development. For this competition, you will design a market structure with reasonable architectural specificity while the host development will be a massing proposal with a schematic indication of its surface image.

The ground level public market

- A public four-season market hall with the maximum reasonable number of stalls, but allowing for enough space for building lobbies and vertical circulation to the upper levels of the development
- The height of the ground floor level should be at least 16 feet clear (20 feet floor-to-floor between ground and second floor level), although lower thresholds and taller spaces can be included in the proposal.
- Food stalls at 1000, 500 and 250 square feet (with a mix of approximately 33% of each)
- Aisles between stalls of 12 feet minimum width
- A food bar with a minimum of 90 linear feet of counter space
- Assume that all loading occurs from the adjacent streets, sidewalks and drive aisles; no dedicated loading docks should be provided within the building footprint.

A variety of vendor occupancy types can be considered in addition to leased stalls, including open bays for push carts, day-rate stalls, and store-like spaces with dedicated access to street frontage.

Additional supporting program ideas can be included in the proposal such as food shops, restaurants, and complementary retail.

Some publicly accessible program can be included on the second or upper floors.



The host development

- The proposal should include residential, hotel and/or office development on the upper levels, accessed from one or several lobbies/building cores.
- Development on the second floor and above must total no less than 150,000 gross square feet of area. This is an area approximately equal to three levels of development within the project area but excluding the existing right-of-way (street and sidewalks) of Blackstone Street.
- The new development proposal should be at least 30 feet away from the existing guest room windows in the Millennium Bostonian Hotel along Salt Lane.
- The massing of the upper level development should be configured to allow for natural light to penetrate down to the market level at appropriate places in the plan.
- No component of the project can be taller than 9 stories (including the ground level).

Urban residential and hotel development building wings are typically no wider than 65 feet in plan (for a double-loaded corridor building). Typical floor-to-floor height is 11 feet, but can be taller when loft-style residential development is desired

Urban office building footprints are typically no narrower than 90 feet (to achieve the necessary core-to-leasable space efficiencies). Typical floor-to-floor height is between 12.5 feet and 13.5 feet depending on structural system and spans.



Representational strategies and submission requirements

Urban Design and Architecture

Central to the competition brief is the idea of working at two scales simultaneously, that of the building and of the urban context. Proposals for the overall development proposal should suggest general strategies for massing. Proposals for the market space, however, should convey enough tectonic specificity to convey scale of structural spans, and the quality of the public spaces.

Requirements

The following constitutes the minimum requirements:

Two 24" x 30" vertical format boards containing:

- Location plan or aerial 3-D view
- Detailed ground level plan at 1/32" = 1'-0"
- Diagrammatic typical upper level plans
- Sections that convey architectural specificity
- 3-D representation including at least one eye-level perspective and one axonometric/aerial perspective view of the overall proposal within the urban context

A speculative argument and a concise description of the proposal and your intentions should be included in the form of text and/or diagrams and photographs. No text should be more than 200 words. You may include any supporting research or documentation that helps to convey the attributes of the proposal in a compelling way.

No models or projections from the boards are permitted, although model photographs or drawings may be mounted on boards. The jury has no preference for electronic representations or hand drawings. Finalists should be prepared to provide PDF files of their submitted proposal at a later date. The Rotch Committee reserves the right to use the drawings for publication.

Criteria for Evaluation

- The content and quality of your ideas as expressed in your proposal
- The sophistication of the design proposal
- The quality of the presentation including diagrams, orthographic architectural drawings, three-dimensional renderings, and graphic layout

References

Maps & Aerials

<http://maps.google.com/>
<http://maps.live.com/>

Site address (approximate): **1 Blackstone Street, Boston, MA 02109**

Note: Due to recent construction, aerial photographs and street maps do not always show current conditions accurately. Refer to the site diagrams provided.

3-Dimensional models

3-D models of the existing site context can be found on the website of the Boston Redevelopment Authority:

http://www.cityofboston.gov/bra/BRA_3D_Models/Index.html

Models of the Blackstone block can be found under ‘#4 - Downtown Buildings’. Models of adjacent buildings northeast of the site can be found under ‘#5 - North End Buildings’.

Market precedents

<http://www.boroughmarket.org.uk>
<http://www.pikeplacemarket.org>
<http://www.easternmarketdc.com>
<http://www.massfarmersmarkets.org>



Submission Instructions

Note to all Competitors

To ensure anonymity, each competitor will choose an abstract graphic symbol and place it:

- On the face of each submitted board.
- On the face of a sealed envelope securely fastened to the back of one board.
- • On the Statement of Sole Authorship with the name of the competitor clearly printed, which you place in the sealed envelope.

After the judging on February 14, the envelopes will be opened and competitors will be notified of the results within two weeks.

Note to In-State Competitors

Entries must be received by 10:00 AM, Monday February 4th 2008 at:

Boston Architectural College
320 Newbury Street
Boston, MA 02115



Note to Out-of-State Competitors

Your proposal must be mailed or shipped no later than **10:00 AM, Monday February 4th 2008**. Notify your monitor that you have completed and mailed your proposal by 10:00 AM, Monday February 4th 2008. Mail to:

The Rotch Scholarship
c/o Boston Architectural College
320 Newbury Street
Boston, MA 02115

All boards must be received by 4:00 PM, Tuesday February 5, 2008.

Statement of Sole Authorship

I hereby assure the Rotch Committee that I am the sole author of my submission for the 2008 Rotch Competition. I have not received criticism, suggestions or help of any sort other than through the use of books and other published literature.

Signed _____

Print Name _____

Symbol _____

Note to all Competitors:

The above statement of sole authorship shall be placed in the sealed envelope pasted on the back of the board. Your symbol must appear on the envelope as well as on the face of your submission boards.