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LIVE/WORK/PLAY

## State-Of-The Art Office Space At University Station

101 Station Drive Provides Urban Amenities In Suburban Setting

By Dan Perruzzi | Special to Banker & Tradesman | Dec 27, 2015

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Courtesy of Margulies Perruzzi Architects.

The suburbs have seen an uptick in repositioned office buildings, as the urban office market continues to tighten and rents increase. Developers and landlords are taking the opportunity to refresh older office buildings in the suburbs, and provide tenants with the amenities they need to attract new talent. New live/work/play developments are critical to luring companies – and their employees – into the suburbs, and the mixed-use developments with transportation options will do even better.

University Station in Westwood is a perfect example of this new live/work/play destination: a vibrant mixed-use development of retail, residential, restaurant, office and hotel uses, adjacent to the Route 128 Amtrak and MBTA commuter rail train station at the junction of Routes 95 and 128. Popular retail stores and restaurants abound, and the new luxury apartment community is a commuter's dream. With University Station, New England Development, National Development, Eastern Real Estate and Clarion Partners have created a convenient and amenity-rich environment for new office tenants. So it made perfect sense for National Development to reposition and renovate the 101 Station Drive office building adjacent to University Station.



Built in 1984, 101 Station Drive (known then as 105

Rosemont Road) was a single-tenant building, housing State Street Bank before the company vacated it. The building sat vacant for many years, long before the nearby University Station began to take shape. National Development/Charles River Realty Investors, New England Development and Eastern Real Estate purchased the renamed 101 Station Drive building in 2014 and saw an opportunity to design a multitenant office building in walking distance of the shopping and dining amenities of University Station.

However, 101 Station Drive required significant exterior and interior updates to renovate it as an upscale office building with urban amenities. The outdated building had a large electrical transformer in the front, a set-back entrance that confused visitors, and a dark and unwelcoming lobby.

## Two New Tenants

National Development engaged Margulies Perruzzi Architects (MPA) to develop a comprehensive strategy for improvements to the three-floor, 208,000 square-foot office building to meet the demands of today's office tenants. To open the building to more natural light, MPA repositioned the front entrance forward, and redesigned the front façade with a new dynamic glass curtainwall. Providing a more gracious entrance on approach, MPA created a welcoming entrance plaza and front entry featuring a new canopy, landscaping and outdoor gathering places around a central fireplace. These open-air, collaborative spaces help create a comfortable, relaxing and productive work atmosphere. A new parking entrance provides employee access from the west side of the building.

Inside, MPA connected the lobby with the outdoors via a two-story "living wall." The new, brighter lobby features stadium-style seating, as well as a café with Wi-Fi access and a new high-end fitness center. Adding visual impact and color, MPA also created a full wall graphic design in the café area.

National Development has already signed two major tenants, General Dynamics and PI Worldwide, eager to make this new building their home.

University Station and the renovation of 101 Station Drive have transformed the area into a mixed-use, transit-oriented development with state-of-the-art office space. It's a great example of what live/work/play development looks like in the suburbs.

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