

RESPONSE TO A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Presented to:
The 900 Worcester Street Committee
Town of Wellesley, Massachusetts

Respectfully presented by:



DEVELLIS CONSULTING GROUP

and



October 14, 2014



41 North Road – Suite 100A
Bedford, Massachusetts 01730
tel 781.538-6821 fax 781.538-6831
brian@devellis.net • www.devellis.net

October 14, 2014

Ms. Meghan Jop
Town of Wellesley – 900 Worcester Street Committee
525 Washington Street
Wellesley, MA 02482

Re: Request for Information
Sent via Delivery Receipt to 900WorcesterStRFIResponse@wellesleyma.gov

Dear Ms. Jop,

On behalf of our prospective development team, I respectfully submit this Response to your Request For Information for the 900 Worcester Street parcel issued September 9, 2014.

As requested in the RFI, this submission includes:

- *Development Team Qualifications & Relevant Experience*
- *Anticipated size of the proposed skating facility, parking requirements and any other site requirements;*
- *Proposed months and hours of operation;*
- *The type of assurances that might be given WYH and other stakeholders in terms of future access to ice time;*
- *Key design criteria and sustainability features that would be incorporated into the design of the skating facility; and,*
- *How the quality of the facility's operation might be characterized in terms of the finish level of various spaces, the specification of mechanical systems, air temperature, ice temperature, ice thickness, humidity levels, etc.*
- *Legal Issues*
- *Payment mechanism to the Town of Wellesley*

Upon your review should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

DeVellis Consulting Group

Brian V. DeVellis, Esq.

Development Team Qualifications & Relevant Experience

The development team for The Center @ 900 Worcester Street will comprise of the same core participants that successfully developed and currently operate the Edge Sports Center in Bedford, MA – a state of the art sports facility comprised of 2 regulation sized ice sheets, a strength and conditioning center, a physical therapy center and 2 full size synthetic turf athletic turf fields, one which is enclosed 6 months of the year with an air-supported structure for 12 month use,

Mr. BRIAN DeVellis is the founder and managing partner of **DEVELLIS CONSULTING GROUP** (www.devellis.net), a full service Land Use Development strategy company specializing in Land Use and Environmental Law and Landscape Architecture & Land Use Planning. We bring twenty years of experience to assist clients in the areas of Governmental and Community Relations, Planning & Zoning, and Land Development and Building Expedition. As a licensed Attorney and Landscape Architect, Mr. DeVellis creates projects that provide sensible land use planning and redevelopment along with environmental appreciation.

Mr. DeVellis has been successful in developing the following sports related ventures:

The EDGE Sports Center is a 75,000 SF Indoor Sports Complex with ice and turf, Bedford, MA (www.theedgesportscenter.com) ... developed with the core desire to provide Bedford and the surrounding communities the opportunity to participate in and take advantage of a year round athletic facility that provides state-of-the-art recreational amenities for all ages and abilities.

Mr. DeVellis was responsible for all the site and building design, as well as contracting for legal, survey, engineering, environmental, resource area delineation, and site, building and ice surface contractors. The project began in earnest with design and permitting efforts in January 2007, followed by groundbreaking four months later in May 2007 and operations in October the same year. The ten month design to occupancy timeframe is unprecedented evidence of the cooperative desire by the founders, equity partners, community leaders, lenders and townspeople, without whose overwhelming support and encouragement the project would not have been feasible.

The experience of the Edge Sports Center was recently recognized when it was awarded the Bedford Chamber of Commerce 2010 Business of the Year “in recognition of a highly innovative and successful business that is creatively involved in community activities”.



The EDGE Sports Center Phase II ... The EDGE Sports Center was only months old when the founders first realized that facility expansion was necessary. Founder Brian DeVellis began negotiations with the abutting landowner Massachusetts Port Authority in Spring 2008 leading to Massport releasing a request for Proposals in April 2010. DeVellis responded and was awarded the right to negotiate a 20 year lease with the Authority January 2012. DeVellis designed the expansion of 2 synthetic artificial turf fields along with a fabric dome structure for winter use, making the 2008 existing turf excess and available for a second ice sheet for the ever expanding hockey program. DeVellis reached lease execution April 2012, regulatory approvals shortly thereafter, and design development drawing as well as construction documents. Construction broke ground in June 2012 and opened January 2013.

In developing the Phase II, Mr. DeVellis worked closely with the Town of Bedford Planning, Conservation and Zoning Board of Appeals, the Massachusetts Port Authority as the land owner, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Building, the US Department of Defense / US Navy as an easement holder on the property, and the US Federal Aviation Authority as an abutter and overseeing authority of the Hanscom Air Field with respect to our field lighting and air supported structure, as well as the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Energy for the installation of a 485kW Solar PV Array.



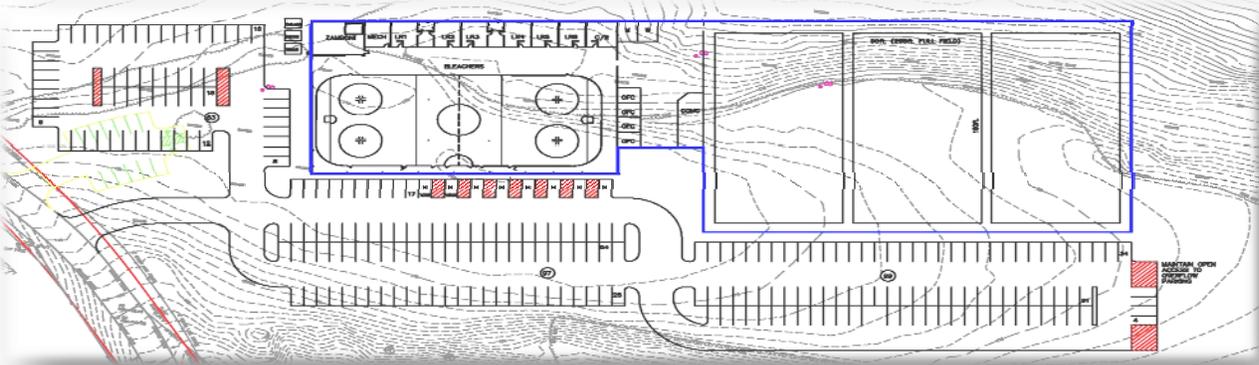
The Golf Club of New England is a 7,200 yard Championship Arnold Palmer Golf Course, Stratham NH. Mr. DeVellis brought the conceptual plan from Arnold Palmer Course Design through engineering design and received permits from two local towns, state & federal agencies, and into construction in less than twelve months from engagement. The project involved greater than ten acres of wetland impact, wetland enhancement and creation, as well as 37 home sites, an 18,000 square foot clubhouse, and two hundred fifty acres of permanent conservation easement.

In developing the GCNE, Mr. DeVellis worked closely with two abutting but very different host towns, the NH Regional Planning Authority, the State of NH Department of Environmental Services Wetland, Waterway and Groundwater authorities, as well as the US Army Corps of Engineers.



The ESSEX Sports Center... Currently under design development, the Essex Sports Center is a proposed 95,000 square foot recreational center to be located adjacent to the state of the art Essex Technical High School in Middleton. The Essex will look to 'partner' with the school to design, construct, and manage a privately owned sports & recreational center that will provide the school much needed ice and indoor turf without the burden of construction, operations, management and maintenance.

In executing the lease with the school, Mr. DeVellis has worked with the Massachusetts House and Senate to obtain approvals to obtain a 25 year no-bid lease – overwhelmingly approved by both parties of the General Court.



As the best laid plans and ideas are only as good as the ability to get them constructed, our financing partners have become a larger component of our projects from concept through completion. The recreational asset class is not a typical Wall Street niche – so having our equity group partner on these projects is essential. To that end, we have joint ventured with one of the finest institutional lenders at APE LLC:

Mr. DOMINIC BOLES is the managing partner of **GetMunicipalFinancing.com**, operated by APE LLC, is the premier and preferred correspondent for an institutionally funded direct lending firm that is actively seeking rated sale-leaseback investments throughout the United States, that are investment grade or better (BBB or better). Our lender provides secondary market financing for municipalities looking for alternatives to bond raises that need to refinance or liquidate their existing assets, need to replace a maturing bond, and/or are looking to finish development and complete construction of new assets. Assets can range from infrastructure projects to student housing to waste water treatment facilities to new development and construction of a primary school located in a country, city, or similar.

Their focus is on deals that have been awarded, lack the financing to proceed forward, and range between \$10,000,000 and \$500,000,000. Since 2012, APE, LLC has closed close to \$200,000,000 in transactions across the United States for student housing, academic buildings, & a campus bookstore. There must be a public entity that is willing to guarantee lease payments in order for the loan to be approved. The sale-leaseback model is a self-amortizing loan that is reverted back to the tenant / owner at the end of the term, which can range from 15 to 40 years. Essentially, we are the third-party that sources and originates the investment deals for our lender by engaging with potential borrowers and performing a first-level due diligence to ensure the project or asset type fits the lender's investment criteria.

Mr. Boles leads a company with over 50+ years of experience in the finance & real estate world, Associated Professional Executives, LLC (APE, LLC), d.b.a. **GetMunicipalFinancing.com** is the premier and preferred third-party marketing arm for a myriad of direct lenders across the United States of America. With our direct, in-house financing partnership with Municipal Acquisitions, LLC located in Washington, DC, APE, LLC has helped facilitate over \$200,000,000 in transactions to universities & municipalities, with over \$1 billion in the pipeline to close in the next several months.

In June of 2012, APE, LLC helped close the first university transaction for Municipal Acquisitions at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. There were three assets financed in this process, the Whitney Center (\$46,935,479), Boulevard Apartments (\$119,674,082), and the University Bookstore (\$14,636,711). A new lease was structured with the university with the same rents as the previous leases but offered compelling benefits that the university did not have under the previous lease(s): a purchase option at declining prices, fixed rent escalation, and the ability to self-manage the properties which offers cost savings. With Municipal Acquisitions, the asset will be gifted back to the university at the end of the thirty year term.

Similarly, in August of 2013, Municipal Acquisitions closed on a to-be-built (\$20,681,091) expansion campus of Broward College, a member of the Florida State College system. This new building will provide Broward with 80,000+ square feet of classroom, laboratory, and academic office space. The building is currently being constructed to the specific requirements of Broward College, FIU, and will achieve LEED certification once complete. Municipal Acquisitions won a competitive RFI and the Board of Trustees of Broward College approved the transaction on July 9th, 2013. Municipal Acquisitions' Broward College transaction has been identified as the first transaction approved following the July 1st, 2013 effective date of the Florida Public Private Partnership (HB-85) statute. Delivery on this new building is slated for October of 2014.

Finally, the constructed facility remains in existence only if it is marketed and operated properly. In the seven years since the Edge doors opened, it has grown from 6 girls youth hockey teams in 2007 to 45 girls, boys and junior teams in 2014 – while doubling its physical facilities. Mr. Scott Fusco, who co-founded the EDGE with Mr. DeVellis, graduated from Harvard University in 1986 where he was a two time All-American hockey player, the career scoring leader, and the 1986 Hobey Baker award winner. Scott was also was a member of the US Olympic Hockey Team in 1984 and 1988. Mr. Fusco is responsible for the day to day management and overall growth plan at the Edge.

For further information on the Development Team, see related articles at the conclusion of this Response.

Anticipated size of the proposed skating facility, parking requirements and any other site requirements;

Upon review of the concept provided, as well as our field visit, we believe it is premature to expect that a program consisting of a sheet and a half of ice, and a turf field and a pool house is feasible. We believe that the maximum that can reasonably be achieved on the site is a sheet and a half of ice and a compromised outdoor turf field. We would anticipate that this program would need to park at a minimum 225 cars. We would be willing to explore, after a discussion with the committee, an expanded program that could terrace the parking and allow for an enclosed winter field similar to what we provide at the Edge.



Proposed months and hours of operation

We would anticipate year round operation of all the program elements, with hours of operation from 6:00am to midnight.

The type of assurances that might be given WYH and other stakeholders in terms of future access to ice time

In both the Edge and Essex we have written into the Zoning Board Special Permit and the Lease, respectively, the minimum hours per sport allotted for that particular stakeholder. In each circumstance, there is a point of contact with the stakeholder that is required to report yearly requests to the facility so that we can arrange it into the surface schedule. To date there have been minimal issues.

Key design criteria and sustainability features that would be incorporated into the design of the skating facility; and, How the quality of the facility's operation might be characterized in terms of the finish level of various spaces, the specification of mechanical systems, air temperature, ice temperature, ice thickness, humidity levels, etc.

We would utilize at the very minimum a PV Solar array on the roof similar to Bedford, as well as work with local utility suppliers to maximize energy savings rebates. We have been on the forefront in Bedford is minimizing our 'footprint' and would expect nothing less here. In Essex, we are working with the local technical high school to partner in the center being an expansion of the classroom and would look for a similar relationship with Wellesley schools and colleges.

In terms of finishes, we would expect that we would continue our proven method to be a utilitarian space that is open, well lit, clean and generally indestructible. We have found that the patrons appreciate clean, well maintained space over finishes that cannot be maintained. We would welcome a tour of our Bedford facility to further detail.

Legal Issues

In both the Bedford land lease with Massport and the Essex land lease with the Commonwealth, our largest issues will be working within the public procurement laws and executing a land lease at least 25 years in length. This is the only way to finance these types of projects – but we are familiar with the obstacles and the various ways to maneuver through them.

Payment mechanism to the Town of Wellesley

We would expect that a land lease would be executed with the Town that would take into consideration:

1. Certain amount of ice and turf time for the public, schools and recreation users, and
2. Account for a Payment of Lieu of Taxes for improvements to the land, and

It would be our expectation that this would be determined through the lease negotiation.

In conclusion, there are no insurmountable issues here that we have not worked through in our normal course of developing these types of developments... however there are indeed issues that will need to be addressed in partnership with the town such as the floodplain, traffic and state curb cuts off Worcester Street, as well as sight lighting and conservation issues. We feel we are a tested team of sports developers that the Town would be well suited to partner with in the venture and look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

DeVellis Consulting Group



Brian V. DeVellis, Esq.

Ice rink, sports facility construction under way

Just six months ago, The Edge Sports Center of Bedford was an idea, well, two ideas, really. Now, the brainchild of Brian DeVellis and Scott Fusco, the gaudy steel skeleton across from Raytheon on Hartwell Road more closely resembles an athletic complex with each passing day.

DeVellis a Bedford resident, and developer by trade, identified the town's need for more field space, specifically indoors. Fusco, a Winchester resident, runs a girls hockey program of selects ages 7 to 19 called the East Coast Wizards, and was looking to secure a rink where his program could play.

The pair joined forces to develop the completely privately funded Edge Sports Center of Bedford, after they were introduced by mutual friends.

They broke ground the third week in April, and thus far, "everything's gone pretty well," said Fusco.

Once complete, The Edge Sports Center's facility will include a pro shop and concession area that will stand between the 200 feet x 85 feet regulation hockey rink and the indoor sports facility, with a total turf area of 225 feet by 95 feet and 10,000-square-foot athletes' training center. The rink will have seating for about 300, the turf will have standing room only. Parking and entrances will be located at both the front and rear of the facility

If the current construction schedule sticks, the rink will be open by Oct. 1, for the start of hockey season, and the turf will follow suit a few weeks later.

DeVellis and Fusco plan on being completely up and running by Nov. 1.

They anticipate the rink will be used for "select" boys and girls hockey (Boston Junior Eagles and East Coast Wizards), local (Bedford-Lexington) youth hockey, two high school hockey programs (Bedford and Lexington) and drop-in hockey, as well as the learn-to-skate program, synchronized skating, figure skating and public skating hours.

Using the sports center as their home ice will benefit Bedford High School because not only will they save money by not bussing the players to and from the rink in West Concord, but the team will be able to practice after school instead of at 5 a.m. Also, there will be a separate locker room reserved for Bedford High School during the hockey season, so they won't have to lug their equipment with them to and from the rink.

Fusco said The Edge Sports Center could result in a "big quality of life improvement" for the families of hockey players. There is a huge, untapped demand for ice time in the area, said Fusco. "We look at our market as a ½ hour radius."

The turf section of the complex will have one big piece of turf and netting can divide the turf into two fields arranged perpendicularly – the larger measuring 160 feet x 95 feet and the smaller being 125 feet x 75 feet – or into three fields.

He anticipates the turf will be used by youth and adult indoor soccer and lacrosse for practices and training. Baseball and football could eventually be played on the turf, which will be made available to high school sports teams as needed. Programs for younger kids, likely run by the Recreation Department, will be offered as well, said Fusco.

"The space is big enough you can pretty much do anything," he said.

Amy Hamilton, director of Bedford Recreation, said the Recreation Department has had several meetings with developers to determine how it makes the most sense to work together – as far as who runs what and so forth.

"We've been talking about various programs specifically, and how it would be best to manage the programs," she said. "We've just been, you know, working together, feeling our way with them to determine what's best for the community.

"They're easy to work with, and they absolutely want to work with the community," said Hamilton. "It's an exciting time for everybody."

Some details still need ironing out, and The Edge Sports Center is looking for potential employees to work in maintenance, marketing and managing retail, as well as zamboni drivers.

More information on the facility is available at www.theedgesportscenter.com

Copyright 2007 Bedford Minuteman. Some rights reserved

New rink gives Bedford an Edge

When they were youth hockey players, Scott Fusco and Mike McGrath both played at the Belle Isle rink on Loomis Street.

They played against each other in prep school, with Fusco, a Burlington native who attended the Belmont Hill School, playing against McGrath, who grew up in Bedford and played for Buckingham, Browne & Nichols.

Now Fusco and McGrath are playing key roles in the facility that will be the first ice rink in Bedford since Belle Isle closed its doors in the early 1970's.

On or around Oct. 15, The Edge Sports Center's rink will open on Hartwell Road, with an indoor artificial turf facility opening in the same building a month later. Fusco, who played at Harvard University and was a member of the U.S. Olympic team in 1984 and 1988, is the general manager. McGrath, who played for Salem State College and was Bedford High's hockey coach from 2000 to 2006, is the facility manager.

After his playing days were over, Fusco worked in business consulting. Eventually, he got into coaching and began coaching in the East Coast Wizzards girls hockey program (Allison Szlosek, a Bedford resident who is on the USA Hockey under-18 national team, plays for the Wizzards). That is one of the reasons he decided to build the rink.

"I was looking for a site for the Wizzards and we needed something along Route 128 because most of our players are from this area," said Fusco, who now lives in Winchester. "I met Brian DeVellis, who said that he was looking for something for Bedford that could be an indoor facility for lacrosse and a place for the high school hockey team and Lexington/Bedford Youth Hockey."

Workers began clearing trees on the site during the April school vacation week.

"We're about 85 percent done," Fusco said. "A lot of the work is site work. We're finishing the building. We need to do the landscaping and the parking lot. We're on schedule."

The facility will feature a regulation-sized rink, five locker rooms and seating for 300 spectators on one side of the rink in a layout that is similar to the one in the main rink at the Nashoba Valley Olympia in Boxborough.

The lobby will have a pro shop and a concession stand, seating, televisions and wireless Internet access.

The indoor turf facility will have two artificial turf fields with the same kind of surface used in outdoor fields at Acton-Boxborough and Lincoln-Sudbury High School. There will also be a mezzanine with a strength and conditioning facility and locker rooms.

The turf fields can be used for games or practices in any field sport such as soccer, lacrosse, field hockey, baseball or softball. Adult and youth leagues can use the facility, which will be managed by Joe Russo. Bedford High and other area high schools can also use the facility when inclement weather makes local grass fields unplayable.

"We've already talked to [Bedford] high school about it," Fusco said. "Early in the spring when there are field issues and bad weather, they'll be able to call and schedule time."

In addition to the East Coast Wizzards, the rink will also host the Junior Eagles boys youth hockey program, Bedford High and Lexington/Bedford Youth Hockey. Lexington High School will also practice at the rink.

Until this coming winter, Bedford played its home games and practiced at Valley Sports in Concord, which was also the home ice for the Buccaneers' arch-rivals, Concord-Carlisle, plus several other high school and youth teams. Bedford often practiced at 5 a.m. at Valley Sports. At The Edge, the Buccaneers will be able to practice at 2:30 p.m. and have their own locker room.

"It's a great opportunity for them," said McGrath, a Chelmsford resident who guided the Bucs to postseason berths in his final two seasons as coach. "They'll get out of school at 2 and they can be on the ice at 2:30. They'll have an extra 15 minutes of practice time and over the course of the season, that will add up."

When he was coaching at Bedford, McGrath always hoped for better fan support. When the Buccaneers played a home game against C-C at Valley, it didn't really feel like a home game.

McGrath is hoping that with a rink in Bedford, more Bedford athletes will get involved in youth hockey and aspire to play for the Bucs and more people will come to the games.

"Now there's no excuse not to have fan support," said McGrath. "We can do all kinds of promotions with them, like youth hockey nights."

For more information about The Edge Sports Center, visit www.theedgesportscenter.com.

Copyright 2007 Bedford Minuteman. Some rights reserved

New sports center has a real EDGE

Hockey games running from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. this past weekend were a welcome sight for Brian DeVellis and Scott Fusco, who had become accustomed to the ongoing construction that has allowed The EDGE Sports Center of Bedford to open in time for high school hockey season.

“You know, it’s just a big relief to finally get the doors open,” said DeVellis. “We had shot for the middle of October, so, given the fact that we were still clearing the site in June, that’s pretty good.” DeVellis and Fusco, the principle partners for the property, started the permitting process in January, according to Fusco. “So, it was a solid ten months, which is great,” he said. “All the town boards were great to work with. They knew we had a tight time frame so they did everything they could to get all the approvals in place,” Fusco said. The sports center, located on Hartwell Road, opened its doors this past Saturday to its Learn To Play Hockey program, which was followed by a weekend filled with skating and hockey. “Everything’s gone great,” said Fusco. “We’ve gotten positive feedback about the games and ice surface. I was happy with the way things went, and I think the people were, as well.

“I think it’s going to be a great deal for the town. For the first time they’re putting a middle school hockey team together,” he said. Around 26 kids tried out for the team, which is “great for town spirit and to build the high school program,” Fusco said.

The EDGE will also open two indoor Field Turf fields later this month.

“People are dying for the turf fields,” said DeVellis. “People are coming in now and requesting birthday times.”

Fusco envisions the turf fields as a place for community recreation, saying, “Really anything that can be done on grass can be done on the turf.”

The EDGE has already gotten calls from people interested in Ultimate Frisbee, football and baseball – even from a dog agility club.

Log onto www.theedgesportscenter.com for more information on programs offered.

Copyright 2007 Bedford Minuteman. Some rights reserved



The first “Learn to Play Hockey” program to take the ice at The EDGE Sports Center took to the ice Saturday morning and runs for the next five months. The EDGE, located on Hartwell Road, opened its ice rink Saturday, and will provide two indoor Field Turf fields for indoor soccer and lacrosse later this month. Log onto www.theedgesportscenter.com for information on programs offered by The EDGE.

BHS varsity hockey now has The Edge

Bedford High School varsity hockey practice began earlier this week, as it has for decades on the first Monday after Thanksgiving. Not much new in that – except this marks the start of a new era for the sport, its players, families and fans, and the greater community.

Do you recall that scene in “The Wizard of Oz” when Dorothy emerges from her house and finds that the world has changed from black-and-white to color? That’s what’s happening on Hartwell Road as hockey players find themselves in their own local Oz – The Edge sports center.

“I’ve been over there a few times, and I’ve just been treated really well,” said BHS Head Coach Peter Marfione last week. “They’re willing to help us as much as they possibly can.” Added Chris Aufiero, director of athletics at the high school, “It’s going to work out great for the kids.” The first home game is scheduled for Dec. 12.

Senior Andy Westerkamp is looking forward to the “health benefits,” as he explained: When the team rented out-of-town ice, “we got up at 3:45 to practice at 5, and that really takes a toll on you after awhile. You’ve got to go to bed early, but sometimes you can’t because you have homework. With this new rink we go to practice every day after school at 2:30. And everything’s right down the street.”

“They used to be on a bus at the high school at 4:20 in the morning,” the coach confirmed. “Sometimes they had a game at eight at night. I don’t think anybody could expect them to be at their best.”

A year ago, there was nothing “down the street” but a wooded lot across from the former Raytheon systems complex. Groundbreaking didn’t take place until January. The developers, Brian DeVellis of Bedford and former Olympic hockey star Scott Fusco, said they were aiming for completion by the end of the year. Yeah, dream on.

Except they did it. The plan sailed through the permitting process, a few neighborhood concerns were addressed, and the project surged through the spring and summer. The rink opened early this month, and work on the indoor turf field and fitness center is nearly complete.

“It’s going to be a good atmosphere over there for the kids,” Marfione asserted. “Youth hockey will grow and hopefully will feed right into the high school.” There are bleachers alongside the rink, and “a couple hundred people can sit over there. Hopefully we’ll develop a following with the youth hockey. It’s going to take a couple of years, but I think the numbers will grow.”

His predecessor as coach, Bedford native Mike McGrath, is the facilities manager at The Edge. He expects the high school program to benefit “just in terms of sheer numbers -- I think a lot of kids didn’t try out to avoid the 5 a.m. practice time.” McGrath, who said his new job is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, said the return of junior varsity hockey would strengthen the sport as athletes strive to move up the ladder and stay there.

Sophomore Cotter Ellis, the team’s goalie, mentioned the discomfort of playing “home” games in the same arena used by archrival Concord-Carlisle. “We had to get the worst times, the worst locker rooms,” he related. Now the ice is only five minutes away, and the team has its own room at The Edge. “We can leave our bags there. We don’t have to lug them around.” Aufiero concurred. “I can’t emphasize enough the value of having a locker room – they don’t have to drag their stuff around and find a place to store it in school.”

Aufiero noted that there will be significant financial savings. Bus transportation to and from Valley Sports Arena in West Concord for practices and games cost \$150 per round trip, from the Monday after Thanksgiving to mid-February, he said. Between practices and games, there were six trips a week.

Westerkamp, who is president of the BHS Class of 2008, is starting his fourth year on the varsity, including a magical 2005-2006 season when the team dressed only 15 athletes but won most of its games and qualified for post-season play. “I think this is going to be a great spot for all the kids in town,” he said. “People are going to start enjoying hockey and going to the games. I’ve been to the free skate a couple of times and a lot of young kids are going to hang out.”

Andy’s mother Cissy, who grew up with nine brothers who played hockey, joined in that open community skating earlier this month. “Having a facility like this will not only benefit the kids but the town overall,” she testified. “It’s going to be an opportunity for families.” Cotter, who has been skating since age four, is certain that the new facilities will inspire more interest and involvement.

Aufiero hopes the relationship with The Edge extends to some conditioning programs and the turf fields, which will come in handy for practice sessions on snowy or rainy spring afternoons.

Charities get an EDGE

The Bedford Boy Scouts Troop 194 held its inaugural Charity Cup Challenge Saturday at The EDGE Sports Center, featuring a hockey game between the Bedford Police, Fire & DPW All-Stars and the Bedford EDGers.

The final score was 7-4, in favor of the EDGers but the real winners are Troop 194's charities: The American Legion Post 221, Toys for Local Children, the Bedford Food Pantry and the Bedford High School Fallen Veterans Memorial Fund.

The game, sponsored by The EDGE Sports Center and the East Coast Wizards Hockey program, who donated the use of their facility and the



Al Filosa of the Bedford Edgers skates across the blueline with the puck during a game against the Bedford Police / Fire / DPW in Troop 194's first annual Charity Cup Challenge this Saturday

ice time, drew more than 125 spectators who not only took in a spirited hockey game, but also took part in a silent auction of sports memorabilia and holiday gift baskets donated by local merchants and the Bedford Cub Scouts Pack 194.

The day's events kicked off with the JROTC Color Guard presenting the Star Spangled Banner, and Boy Scout Steven DeVellis leading the Pledge of Allegiance, culminated in the awarding of the first annual Charity Cup to the winning team, the Bedford EDGers.

Proceeds from the event will ensure the continued growth of scouting in Bedford, and will be donated to the American Legion in appreciation of their sponsorship of Bedford Scouting; along with the Bedford High School JROTC program for the BHS Fallen Veterans Memorial Fund – to be used in the creation of an enduring memorial at the High School to all the brave local men and women who have lost their lives in the US Armed Forces. Additionally, the Troop collected boxes of food for the Bedford Food Pantry for local families this holiday season, and TLC.



Goalie Charlie Nickerson, a Bedford firefighter, makes a save during a game against the Bedford Hockey Edgers for the first Charity Challenge on Saturday.

Barrett Praises Local Support of US Olympic Women's Ice Hockey Team



Massachusetts State Sen. Mike Barrett (D-Lexington) presents a Senate citation to the US women's Olympic hockey team, which trained at The Edge in Bedford. Courtesy image

On a frigid January evening weeks before the Sochi Olympic Games, State Sen. Mike Barrett praised the US women's national hockey team as "role models" and "leaders."

The team, with a roster of top players from across the country, has made their home in the local area for the past several months. The entire squad has been training at The Edge in Bedford, while many players are staying with Concord families.

Inside The Edge, scores of young girls who play for the East Coast Wizards youth teams circled the ice, taking photos and collecting autographs from their heroes.

Barrett — the local State Senator for Bedford, Concord and surrounding towns — presented the national team with an official Senate citation for their time spent in the area. Addressing them at center ice, he said, "You represent the very best of amateur athletics. When you look around today it's clear that so many kids look up to you. You're role models not only for young girls but young boys as well."

Barrett also praised the local support the team has received, in particular host families, who welcomed women they didn't know into their homes, as a way to make the experience convenient and allow them to feel at home. "We're behind you all the way."

The team's training over the past several months has included intense workouts, long practices, film study and exhibition games. But they also found time to visit the cape, go apple picking and explore historic local sites. They travel to Russia in the coming days to play team Finland on February 8th, puck drop at 3am Eastern Time.



Glassboro's Revitalization Moves Forward

By Leo McCabe
Mayor, Borough of Glassboro

Rowan Boulevard is a key component of Glassboro's plan to create the quintessential college town and to revitalize its downtown.

The plan was to create a new corridor, known as Rowan Boulevard, that would link Rowan University with Glassboro's downtown business district. This would create a positive impact on Rowan University enrollments and bring the students' spending power directly through the doors of downtown businesses.

It has become much more than that. Glassboro's revitalization has blossomed into a multifaceted, intergenerational development. It is bringing new life and activity back to our downtown, and making Glassboro a must-visit destination. While the students have been the focal point, we aren't catering solely to them. We are creating a live-work-play environment with new residences and businesses for all ages and interests.

The new, \$300 million Rowan Boulevard revitalization project is entering a new phase of construction in 2010, as the first of five, four-story mixed-use buildings with a total of 40,000 square feet of office space, 185,000 square feet of retail space, and 307,000 square feet of residential space will begin, as well as a new national brand hotel.

Groundbreaking for the A-1 building is expected in July or early August, 2010. The building will include 22,000 square feet of retail space on its ground floor and housing and multipurpose space for Rowan University honors students on its upper floors. Plans for the hotel and conference center with more than 100 rooms and a restaurant/banquet facility also continue, with the design phase now beginning and groundbreaking anticipated by mid-summer. The start of the A-2 and A-3 buildings is planned for the 4th quarter, 2010, with A-2 offering 38,000 square feet of retail space and market rate housing above, and the A-3 building offering 40,000 square feet of retail space plus senior housing. This will bring an intergenerational facet to the boulevard.



Glassboro's new A-1 retail building will include 22,000 sq. ft of retail space and a Rowan University Honors College. It is about to begin construction.

Rowan Boulevard is really taking off. The project's developer, Sora Holdings, LLC, has a list of interested retailers and restaurants waiting for this phase of construction to get underway. The boulevard is destined to be a new retail hub not only for thousands of Rowan University students, but also hundreds of thousands of residents in Glassboro and the surrounding region. As many as 60 new retail stores, including a dozen restaurants, are expected on the new boulevard, boosting the local economy by more than \$48 million annually when completed in 2012. More than 70,000 square feet of retail space already has been reserved in the project, which officially broke ground in March, 2009.

Being developed in public/private partnership between the Borough of Glassboro, Sora Holdings, of Sewell, NJ and Towson, MD, and Rowan University, Glassboro's revitalization is an example of what can be accomplished with a concerted effort, hard work and thorough planning by the members of Borough Council, Sora executives and Rowan officials.

Plans Becoming Bricks and Mortar We're well beyond the initial concept and planning stage. The boulevard's roadway curbing and basecoat are now in place. In August, 2009, construction was completed on Phase I of new Rowan University student housing for 560 students while construction simultaneously began on a 36,000 square foot Barnes & Noble Collegiate Superstore, the boulevard's first major retailer, and Phase II of student housing for another 324 students. Completion of the Phase II student housing is expected in July or early August, and the Barnes & Noble in November, 2010.

Also last August, construction of a new Rt. 322 roundabout was completed, providing a safer roadway link between the university's main campus and Rowan Boulevard. In September, spurred by Rowan Boulevard's development, construction began on the first new business in Glassboro's Arts & Entertainment District, the Let's Dance Studio. The new studio is more than doubling the size of its old facility in a new 14,160 square foot building containing a 2,160 square foot atrium, 11 classrooms and suites, a café and a retail store.



Phase I of Rowan University student housing complex on Rowan Boulevard, for 560 students, is now open. Phase II is under construction

The Rowan Boulevard project is the heart of a downtown revitalization which is forming a new 26-acre, 100-foot wide corridor stretching a third of a mile from the foot of the Rowan University campus to the center of downtown. The new boulevard will feature broad tree-lined sidewalks, dozens of stores, restaurants featuring café-style sidewalk dining, residential condos and town homes, a new student housing campus, a hotel-conference center, pedestrian plazas and a town square. There is approximately \$70 million committed to construction now underway, with many additional project components in various stages of planning and design preceding funding allocations.

Sora Holdings, LLC's private investment in Rowan Boulevard is \$300 million, with an additional \$3 million for roadway construction funded by NJDOT and federal sources and a \$1 million Rowan University grant provided to the Borough of Glassboro for planning and preconstruction expenses. Never losing sight of the best interests of the taxpayers and residents of Glassboro, all Rowan Boulevard property was acquired without the use of eminent domain and 100 percent of all pre-existing annual property taxes (approximately \$260,000) are currently being paid by Sora Holdings to the Borough of Glassboro while

Rowan Boulevard construction is underway. In addition, all bonded financing, including interest (approximately \$20 million) used for property acquisition is being repaid to the borough by Sora. The project has set precedents for successful public/private partnership development.

The Catalyst for Citywide Revitalization Rowan Boulevard is the cornerstone of a much larger revitalization encompassing a total of 81-acres in several adjoining neighborhoods in Glassboro’s downtown. Overall, Glassboro’s entire revitalization, including Rowan Boulevard, is expected to feature more than 125 new retail stores with the potential of infusing the local economy with \$225 million in annual sales when fully completed. The revitalized downtown will offer abundant office space, new restaurants and a public promenade lined with outdoor dining, hundreds of new town home and condo residences, cultural attractions and a new performing arts center offering a year-round repertoire of theater, music, dance, film and comedy performances.

The boulevard’s mix of uses forms distinct, walkable areas, creating a live-work-play environment that will be mutually enjoyed by office workers, shoppers, residents, students and visitors. Each of the adjoining neighborhoods surrounding the boulevard complement one another and offer attractions all their own. It’s an extremely enjoyable environment, one that makes you look forward to being there, and one that offers a very convenient and appealing lifestyle for its residents.

Despite the nation’s continued weak economic climate, Rowan Boulevard is forging ahead on schedule and funding is in hand. The key to its success is strategic development based upon facts that reflect the best, sustainable interests of prospective businesses and the host community. The planning process required eight years and conducting a comprehensive study analyzing Glassboro’s market to determine specific, viable strategies. More than 100 types of retail operations were analyzed, which included surveying residents, businesses, property owners, elected officials and a virtually ignored market of students and staff on the campus of Rowan University, bordering downtown. The study revealed that student discretionary spending was \$18.3 million annually, of which only 18 percent was being captured by Glassboro’s downtown businesses. There was a glaring absence of specific stores and products desired—and needed—by Glassboro’s residential and workforce population base.

Along with the business and cultural facets gained by the revitalization, the increased tax revenues and jobs created by the development are invaluable to the community, especially in this period of national economic decline. Rowan Boulevard is expected to generate \$1.2 million in new property taxes, 400 construction jobs and more than 700 new permanent jobs.

We envisioned the epitome of college towns. We are creating a new community, and establishing a vibrant social and cultural presence with a feeling of identity and interactivity among everyone who lives, works, studies and visits there.

