

New Supermarket Openings

Good News for Boston's Neighborhoods

In 1992, the closing of four neighborhood supermarkets prompted concern on the part of Boston residents and city officials. Not only did the closings of these stores create inconvenience and expense for those living nearby, but also they seemed to indicate a lack of confidence in the city itself. There were concerns that these closings might initiate a trend that could seriously damage the city's livability and economy.

In fact, the opposite result has occurred. Since 1992, 23 new or expanded supermarkets have opened in Boston's neighborhoods, bringing the total number in the city to 35 with a combined selling space of more than 900,000 square feet. These supermarkets not only provide residents with more convenience and choice, but also their existence displays an increased confidence in the city.

Boston Redevelopment Authority

Clarence J. Jones, *Chairman*

Consuelo Gonzales Thornell, *Treasurer*

Joseph Nigro, Jr., *Co-Vice Chairman*

Michael Taylor, *Co-Vice Chairman*

Christopher J. Supple, *Member*

Harry Collings, *Executive Director/Secretary*

Research Division: Report 597

Report prepared by
Jim Alberque
Cathy Frye
Greg Perkins
Luis Rosero
Jim Vrabel

JULY 2004

INTRODUCTION | Beginning around 1950, Boston, like other American cities, saw a change in the retail food industry. Large supermarkets (defined within the industry as stores occupying more than 10,000 square feet of selling space or with annual sales of more than \$2 million) gradually replaced the smaller "corner store" as the place where residents bought most of their food. By 1990, according to one retail authority, 20 to 30 large supermarkets in Boston had replaced between 500 and 600 of these smaller stores.

1992 AND 1993 CLOSINGS | In 1992 and 1993, however, four of these supermarkets closed their doors. The four stores, totaling more than 85,000 square feet, included a Flanagan's Market and a Stop & Shop, both on Gallivan Boulevard in Dorchester; a Family Foodland on Morton Street in Mattapan, and an A & P on Tremont Street in the South End. These closings sparked concern, because residents had come to depend on their convenience, the wider selection of products, and lower prices these stores offered. City officials wondered if these closings signaled a lack of confidence on the part of the supermarket industry, which, at that time, seemed more interested in expanding in the suburbs, where family income was higher, land was cheaper and sites were more available.

SUPERMARKET OPENINGS 1992 | It turned out, however, that the closing of those supermarkets was only a temporary aberration – because even as those four supermarkets were closing, four new stores – totaling more than 100,000 square feet – more than took their place.

In the Upham's Corner area of Dorchester, an America's Food Basket – supported by expansion to an adjacent city-owned parking lot – opened at 780 Dudley Street. In Brighton, a Bread and Circus, specializing in natural foods, replaced the former Stop & Shop supermarket on Washington Street. But the two largest supermarkets to open that year were both Stop & Shop stores – a 50,000+ square foot facility on Everett Street in Brighton and a 30,000+ square foot facility in the Hyde Square area of Jamaica Plain, a welcome sight to residents there who had been without a supermarket for many years. Rather than leaving the city, Stop & Shop had begun a program of building new, much larger stores throughout Boston.

1993 | In 1993, two more new supermarkets opened in Boston – each very different, but each a kind of trail-blazer in its market. The first was a giant (almost 70,000 square feet) "Super" Stop & Shop that in addition to becoming Boston's largest supermarket served as the "anchor store" for the South Bay Mall, an ambitious – and successful – development at the intersection of Dorchester, South Boston and Roxbury. This store demonstrated just how strong Boston's inner-city retail market actually was. The second was the "88," a much smaller store (just over 15,000 square feet) on Herald Street in the South End that catered to the growing Southeast Asian population in and around Boston.

1994 – 1997 | Responding to Stop & Shop's "discovery" of the buying power in Boston's neighborhoods, Star Market – now in the process of being transformed into Shaw's Supermarkets – began its own expansion in Boston neighborhoods. New Shaw's Markets opened in four Boston neighborhoods – on Commonwealth Avenue in Brighton, in 1994; on Spring Street in West Roxbury in 1995; and on Western Avenue in Allston and on Morrissey Boulevard in Dorchester in 1997. The Shaw's Market on Hyde Park Avenue in Hyde Park was also expanded in 1995.

Over that same period, a Bread & Circus opened in the Fenway; an America's Food Basket took the place formerly occupied by a Flanagan's in Hyde Park, and a new Shaw's opened on Border Street in East Boston.

1998 – 2001 | Over the next four years, two new supermarkets keyed the resurgence of separate neighborhoods. The opening of The Village Market in 1998 was the culmination of years of effort by Roslindale residents and the City of Boston in that community's successful Main Streets program. Three years later, the opening of a Stop & Shop supermarket at the Grove Hall Mecca highlighted the campaign by Roxbury residents and the city to revive that important section of Blue Hill Avenue. During this same period, a Stop & Shop supermarket replaced a Flanagan's market in South Boston. Wollaston's Market closed on Tremont Street after trying to make a go at the old A&P site in the South End.

The largest supermarket to come on line during this period was a nearly 40,000 square feet "Super" 88 market that opened right next door to the "Super" Stop & Shop in the South Bay Mall – dramatic proof of the strength of both the urban and ethnic market in Boston.

2002 – 2004 | The purchasing power of the residents of Boston's neighborhoods and the strength of Boston's economy continued to generate additional demand for supermarkets over the last two years. A third 88 supermarket opened in Brighton in 2003, while a new Roche Brothers – with double the selling area of its predecessor – opened on Centre Street in West Roxbury adjacent to its previous store site, which became a CVS.

In 2003, Shaw's supermarket opened on Huntington Avenue at the Prudential Center replacing the existing Star Market on Boylston Street. A new Shaw's on 4 River Street in the Lower Mills area of Dorchester replaced the Star Market a few blocks away at 90 River Street. Also a new Stop and Shop supermarket was completed on Tremont Street near Brigham Circle on Mission Hill.

TODAY | Currently, there are 35 supermarkets in Boston, totaling over 900,000 square feet of selling space. In addition a new Bread and Circus at the Charles River Plaza site at 181 Cambridge Street is under construction as of the Spring of 2004.

CONCLUSION | Beginning in 1992, Boston experienced the reversal of a brief trend in supermarket closings that had threatened to disrupt the patterns of family life in Boston's neighborhoods. Since that time, 23 supermarkets comprising about 700,000 square feet of selling space have opened or expanded and one is now under construction.

In addition to providing local residents with more convenient shopping and greater choice at lower prices, the new, larger supermarkets in Boston's neighborhoods generate jobs for Boston residents, serve as anchors for their neighborhoods and promote additional commercial development in the neighborhoods. Their emergence is another signal of the stability of Boston's neighborhoods and the strength of the city's economy.

New Supermarket Openings

More Good News for Boston's Neighborhoods

NEIGHBORHOOD	STORE	ADDRESS	YEAR	SELLING SPACE	TYPE
Allston	Shaw's	370 Western Avenue	1997	41,000	new
Back Bay	Shaw's	65 Huntington Avenue	2003	35,000	replacement
Brighton	Bread&Circus	15 Washington Street	1992	20,000	new
Brighton	Shaw's	1075 Commonwealth Avenue	1994	47,000	new
Brighton	Super 88	1095 Commonwealth Avenue	2002	20,000	new
Brighton	Stop&Shop	60 Everett Street	1992	50,800	new
Charlestown	Foodmaster	51 Austin Street	pre -1992	20,000	existing
Chinatown/ SouthEnd	Ming's Supermarket	1102 Washington Street	pre -1992	15,000	existing
Chinatown/ SouthEnd	88 Supermarket	50 Herald Street	1993	12,000	new
Dorchester	America's Food Basket	780 Dudley Street	1992	13,000	new
Dorchester	Capitol	500 Geneva Avenue	pre 1992	14,400	existing
Dorchester	Shaw's	45 Morrissey Blvd.	1997	34,000	new
Dorchester	Shaw's	4 River Street	2003	43,000	new
Dorchester	Stop&Shop	535 Freeport Street	pre 1992	22,050	existing
Dorchester	Super 88	101 All State Rd./South Bay Mall	1999	38,000	new
Dorchester	Super Stop&Shop	8 All State Rd./South Bay Mall	1993	68,150	new
East Boston	Shaw's	246 Border Street	1997	45,000	new
Fenway	Bread&Circus	15 Westland Avenue	1995	11,000	new
Fenway	Shaw's	33 Kilmarnock Street	pre -1992	19,000	existing
Hyde Park	America's Food Basket	942 Hyde Park Avenue	1997	20,000	new
Hyde Park	Shaw's	1377 Hyde Park Avenue	1995	39,000	expansion
Hyde Park	Stop&Shop	1025 Truman Highway	pre -1992	19,700	existing
Jamaica Plain	Hi Lo Foods	413 Centre Street	pre -1992	10,000	existing
Jamaica Plain	Stop&Shop	301 Centre Street	1995	32,600	new
Mattapan	Mars Farmers Market	926 Cummins Highway	pre -1992	12,000	existing
Mission Hill	Stop&Shop	1620 Tremont Street	2003	17,000	new
Roslindale	Save A Lot	650 American Legion Highway	pre -1992	15,000	existing
Roslindale	Stop&Shop	950 American Legion Highway	pre -1992	19,250	existing
Roslindale	The Village Market	26 Corinth Street	1998	15,000	new
Roxbury	Save A Lot	333 MLK Blvd.	pre -1992	17,500	existing
Roxbury	Stop&Shop	460 Blue Hill Avenue/Grove Hall Mecca	2001	24,333	new
South Boston	Stop&Shop	713 East Broadway	2001	15,000	new
West Roxbury	Roche Brothers	1804 Centre Street	2002	42,000	replacement
West Roxbury	Shaw's	75 Spring Street	1995	42,000	new
WestRoxbury	Stop&Shop	1230 VFW Parkway	2004	36,800	existing
UNDER CONSTRUCTION					
West End	Bread&Circus	181 Cambridge Street	pre 1992	20,000	replacement

TOTAL EXISTING	12	Pre -1992	229,200
TOTAL NEW	19	Post -1992	565,783
TOTAL REPLACEMENT OR EXPANSION	4	Post -1992	159,000
GRAND TOTAL	35	2004	953,983

