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## **In Person**

# **Executive Profile - William McQuillan**

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Boylston Properties is not one of the biggest real estate development companies in Boston. But the three-person firm headed by [William McQuillan](#) has been behind a handful of high profile projects in Greater Boston over the last three decades.

From development of Wellesley Gateway, **Harvard Pilgrim Health Care's** headquarters at routes 9 and 128 with The Druker Co. in 2000, to the \$68 million, eight-story, 175-room Marriott Residence Inn slated to open next year on Brookline Avenue near Fenway Park, McQuillan has been in the big leagues of Boston development.

"I have a tiny company," McQuillan said. "But that hasn't stopped me from making deals that make sense for me."

Not bad for the 56-year-old executive who got his start leasing retail space, earning \$12,000 a year, on behalf of [David Mugar](#) and his father Stephen, the founder of Star Market, who owned a series of shopping centers around the Bay State. "I had just graduated Babson, had zero experience and got my start leasing empty stores in the vast inventory of Mugar strip shopping centers in Greater Boston," he said. "When I was close to making a lease deal, I wore a path between my (desk) and my bosses' desks to ask questions like 'What do I say now?'"

In the early 1980s he launched his own firm . McQuillan got his first big deal when he and partner [Paul Faraca](#) won a competition to become the broker for the 50,000 square feet of retail space at the state's Transportation Building in Boston's Park Plaza. At 27, it was his first major contract.

In 1988, on the strength of his retail experience, he and Faraca built the Longwood Galleria at Children's Hospital in a joint venture with the hospital. The Galleria is a collection of shops, boutiques, eateries and services in the Longwood Medical Area. "We didn't have to put up any money, we just got a shadow interest in the deal," he said. "But five years later, the hospital had the option to buy us out and they did."

The Harvard Pilgrim deal was a career changer that McQuillan admits he couldn't have done without the deep pockets of The Druker Co., the Boston developer and the major investor. He and Druker collaborated to build Wellesley Gateway, the 255,000-square-foot corporate campus for the health care insurer at the entrance to Wellesley.

Ronald Druker, president of The Druker Co., said McQuillan is smart, likable and works hard. He said the fact that McQuillan has a small organization makes him agile enough to choose projects that are within his strike zone. "He's not burdened with much overhead," Druker said. "And that gives him lots of freedom."

In 2006, McQuillan joined with Samuels & Associates for construction of Trilogy, the \$200 million mixed-use development near Fenway Park that features 576 luxury apartments and 43,000 square feet of retail. The project was the start of a transformation of the Fenway neighborhood near the intersection of Boylston Street and Brookline Avenue from a series of gas stations and gritty one-story buildings to a vibrant section of the city.

Today, McQuillan is working on a Marriott on Brookline Avenue across from Trilogy. Originally, the city approved Boylston Properties' plan for a 117,000-square-foot office, laboratory and below-grade parking development. "But the changes in tenant demands — office and lab space is down, hotel properties are up — prompted me to change the direction of that project," McQuillan said, "and it's worked out nicely."