

PROMONTORIO

120 WATER STREET
BOSTON, USA
2017

Boston-based developer Cresset is the proprietor of 120 Water Street (120WS), an old building located one of the oldest streets in Boston in the heart financial district. The existing ensemble is a rough 4-storey plus setback redbrick building with a delicate and contrasting whitewashed neoclassical podium floor dating from 1887. Located almost at the North end of the street, 120WS is bound by a 6-story brick building (112 Water Street), and an 11-story corner building (33 Broad Street). Its Northeast elevation faces a postmodern 390 ft. high-rise (75 State Street) built around a substantial part of the Kilby-State-Broad perimeter block while rising 31 stories from its core.

Working from the As-of-Right premises, which allows a combination between maximum height (150 ft.), number of floors (14) and BUA (Built-Up-Area), the project as been devised to created a volume that echoes both its neighboring and far-off contexts. On Water Street, the façade extension aligns with the street surface while receding just the minimum to cast an outline shadow on neighbouring property walls and distancing itself as much as possible from the NE façade of the 75 State Street high-rise. This above mentioned combination allows the creation of two iconic double-height garden terraces, one of which aligns its datum with the cornice of the adjacent 33 Broad Street corner building, while the other drops 2 floors, bridging its relationship with the even lower building it neighbours (112 Water Street). Given its reduced depth of 29,2', and recessed stairwells, the building mass yields a very slim and elegant silhouette from the pedestrian key vistas, which are Water and Broad street.

Having established the iconic presence of the 2 voids and considering the relationship with the brick-and-plaster podium on top of which the new façade sits, the building is conceived in glazing façade with bronze lintels-and-mullions which encase fully operable sliding windows with transparent glass. The idea being to generate a friendly presence of contemporary domesticity in downtown, as opposed to the inimical imperviousness of tinted or mirror glassed buildings.

Typologically, 120WS aims to readdress the notion of 'living in the city' by endorsing it with exceptional physical and spatial qualities. People have to perceive a trade-off value in terms of space, natural light and amenities, compared to what they they would normally have in suburbia. Therefore, and bearing in mind that space in the city is scarce and expensive, the design proposes a series of generous yet balanced apartment types, from the 6 units of 3-BR (with 1,723 sq. ft. each), to the 2 duplex units of 4-BR (with 2,807 sq. ft. and 2,797 sq. ft.). A common feature to all unit layouts — including offices — is to have the technical areas occupying the NE wall (bath, pantries, kitchens, laundries and closets), thereby releasing the SW façade and its wonderful streetscape views for living, dining and bedrooms. The design proposes an open kitchen principle, considering that both target residents, — empty nests and millennial families — are not using hired staff and prefer a more informal lifestyle.



Location: 120 Water Street, Boston MA

Client: Cresset Group

Project Brief: Residential, offices and ground-floor retail

Gross Construction Area: 14,847 sq. ft

Project Status: 2017 (concept design)

