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ON THE BLOCK

The Boston Globe

## Shades of Green

Sustainable, energy-efficient design from city to suburb, old to new.

By Gail Ravgiala | February 25, 2007

**\$575,000**

341 FRANKLIN STREET, MANSFIELD

**SQUARE FOOTAGE** 2,500

**BEDROOMS** 4

**BATHS** 2 full, 1 half

**2006 TAXES** \$4,500

**LOT SIZE** .75 acre

**LAST SOLD FOR** First time on market

**PROS** From the front, this earth-sheltered house built in 1981 looks like a conventional raised ranch. The sides, back, and roof of the low-maintenance, solid-concrete frame are nestled in a knoll, where the earth has provided enough natural insulation to keep the indoor baseline temperature at a steady 56 degrees. **CONS** The interior could use some updating. The concrete frame means there are no interior load-bearing walls, so an ambitious renovator could gut the house and redesign from scratch. Contact Paul Campisano, 508-261-7024.

**\$950,000**

630 MAIN STREET, ACTON

**SQUARE FOOTAGE** 4,700

**BEDROOMS** 4

**BATHS** 5 full, 1 half

**2007 TAXES** \$15,067

**LOT SIZE** 7.5 acres

**LAST SOLD FOR** \$915,000 in 2000

**PROS** The mailbox is on Route 27, but the property, which abuts conservation land and a golf course, is a long, winding driveway away from the road. Panels on the roof feed an active solar system, the primary source of heat and hot water for the well-insulated house. An oil furnace supplements the system. **CONS** The four levels, each reached by a half flight of stairs, make the layout seem overly complex. Contact Rosina Harlem, Coldwell Banker, Acton, 978-442-5836, [rosinaonline.com](http://rosinaonline.com).

**\$519,000 - \$569,000**

557, 559 EAST SECOND STREET, SOUTH BOSTON

**SQUARE FOOTAGE** 1,147 to 1,334

**BEDROOMS** 2

**BATHS** 1 full, 1 half

**TAXES** Undetermined; projected for 2008: \$4,563 to \$5,000 (estimated)

**CONDO FEE** \$285 to \$290

**LAST SOLD FOR** First time on the market

**PROS** Tucked between Southie's traditional residential structures and acres of commercial property, these eight new town houses are literally on the urban edge. Sustainable design was the mantra when architects Utile Inc. of Boston and developers RCG of Somerville created Energy Star-rated units using blown-in cellulose insulation; double-insulated, argon-filled windows; high-efficiency heating, cooling, and on-demand hot-water systems; and Energy Star-rated appliances. **CONS** Development of the area is certain; what

direction it will take is not. Contact Lawrence Shevick, Otis & Ahearn Seaport, 617-821-0028; [557-559.com](http://557-559.com). ■

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