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Playing games at Faneuil Hall

By Jill Radsken GLOBE CORRESPONDENT JUNE 20, 2015



The tot-lot-for-grown-ups trend has come to Faneuil Hall Marketplace.

The historic cobblestone promenade now boasts Lounge, a designated outdoor space on the south side of the market with equipment and activities such as billiards, chess, and exercise classes, as well as a reading nook.

“The aim to is to capture those in the group not so excited about the shopping,” said Dan Biederman, founder of Biederman Redevelopment Ventures, which conceived the Lounge for

Faneuil Hall's parent company, Ashkenazy Acquisition Corp. "Some programming will appeal to tourists, but we hope a lot of it will appeal to Bostonians."

Chris Eldrett and Elena Carrion might be his dream demographic. The teaching fellows who live in Allston stopped by the Lounge before visiting the Harbor Islands recently, pausing for a smoothie and a game of chess.

"We did a little shopping," said Eldrett, 33, who likened the chess set-up to the tables in Harvard Square. "It's a nice addition."

But Biederman hopes the space enjoys success similar to another project he spearheaded, New York's Bryant Park. Like the Lounge, Bryant Park began with only a couple hundred pieces of furniture; it now boasts some 5,800 tables and chairs. In Boston, his team repurposed some of the "tombstone" benches into communal tables surrounded by bright chairs. Ashkenazy has also started filling in the cobblestones with grout to stabilize the tables and chairs.

"That is, for us, wildly transformative," said project manager Ted Furst.

There is an art area for children, but Biederman expects more action at the chess and checkers tables, especially when workers stop by at lunch.

"Boston is going to be tweaked in the direction of intellectual activities," he said. "It's a high-reading, high-learning city."