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Work on Weymouth filmmaking studio nears action

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The long-delayed construction of a Hollywood-style sound stage south of Boston could start this fall. International Studio Group is moving ahead with plans to build a 12-stage motion picture studio at SouthField at the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station.

The \$147 million project will include a 600,000-square-foot campus where movie, television, video games, music videos and commercials can be produced without weather worries.

“Today, there’s only filming in Massachusetts for six months of the year because of weather,” said Allan Kassirer, an ISG principal. “When we’re done, we’ll have 12 weatherized sound stages protected from the elements.”

The 30-acre campus will include supporting office, production and retail space. Construction of the facility will create up to 1,600 temporary jobs; the finished studios will employ about 1,500 people.

Because SouthField is located 12 miles south of Boston and 15 miles from Logan International Airport, ISG executives are convinced they won’t face competition from another Hollywood studio planned in Plymouth.

The Plymouth Rock Studios is preparing construction on a 240-acre site. That studio is projected to open next year.

“We are not watching them,” said Kassirer. “It’s location, location, location and we’re at the goal line.”

Groundbreaking on the project is targeted for the end of 2009 after a review by South Shore TriTown Corp., a joint venture of the towns of Weymouth, Abington and Rockland.