

INDEPENDENT BANK CORP
Form S-4/A
July 31, 2012
Table of Contents

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on July 31, 2012.

File No. 333-182508

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, D.C. 20549

AMENDMENT NO. 1
TO
FORM S-4
REGISTRATION STATEMENT
UNDER THE
SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

INDEPENDENT BANK CORP.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Massachusetts

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or organization)

6036

(Primary Standard Industrial Classification Code Number)

04-2870273

(IRS Employer Identification Number)

Office Address: 2036 Washington Street, Hanover, Massachusetts 02339

Mailing Address: 288 Union Street, Rockland, Massachusetts 02370

(781) 878-6100

(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of registrant's principal executive offices)

Edward H. Seksay, Esq.

General Counsel

Independent Bank Corp.

2036 Washington Street, Hanover, Massachusetts 02339

(781) 982-6158

(Name, address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of agent for service)

With copies to:

James A. McDaniel, Esq.

Choate, Hall & Stewart LLP

Two International Place

Boston, MA 02110

(617) 248-5000

Victor L. Cangelosi, Esq.

Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP

Suite 900, 607 14th Street, NW

Washington, DC 20005

(202) 508-5800

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale of the securities to the public: As soon as practicable after the effectiveness of this Registration Statement and the completion of the arrangement as described herein.

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

If the securities being registered on this form are being offered in connection with the formation of a holding company and there is compliance with General Instruction G, check the following box:

If this form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the Securities Act), check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering:

If this form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(d) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering:

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of large accelerated filer, accelerated filer and smaller reporting company in Rule 12b-2 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act). (Check one):

Large accelerated filer

Accelerated filer

Non-accelerated filer (Do not check if a smaller reporting company)

Smaller reporting company

The Registrant hereby amends this Registration Statement on such date or dates as may be necessary to delay its effective date until the Registrant shall file a further amendment that specifically states that this Registration Statement shall thereafter become effective in accordance with Section 8(a) of the Securities Act or until this Registration Statement shall become effective on such date as the Securities and Exchange Commission, acting pursuant to said Section 8(a), may determine.

Table of Contents

The information contained in this joint proxy statement/prospectus is not complete and may be changed. A registration statement relating to these securities has been filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. These securities may not be sold nor may offers to buy be accepted prior to the time the registration statement becomes effective. This joint proxy statement/prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities, and is not soliciting an offer to buy these securities, nor shall there be any sale of these securities, in any jurisdiction where such offer, solicitation or sale is not permitted or would be unlawful prior to registration or qualification under the securities laws of any such jurisdiction.

Dear Central Bancorp, Inc. Shareholders:

You are cordially invited to attend a special meeting of stockholders of Central Bancorp, Inc. (Central) to be held at 11:00 a.m., local time, on , 2012, at Holiday Inn - Somerville, 30 Washington Street, Somerville, Massachusetts 02143. At the special meeting, you will be asked to consider and vote upon a proposal to approve an agreement and plan of merger which provides for Central to merge with and into Independent Bank Corp., a Massachusetts corporation with its principal place of business in Rockland, Massachusetts (Independent).

If the proposed merger is completed, Central s shareholders will receive either (i) \$32.00 in cash or (ii) such number of shares of Independent common stock as determined by an exchange ratio provided for in the merger agreement, all as more fully set forth in the merger agreement and subject to the terms and conditions set forth therein. You will have the opportunity to elect to receive cash or stock for your shares of Central common stock, subject to allocation procedures designed to ensure that 60% of the outstanding shares of Central common stock will be converted into shares of Independent common stock and 40% will be converted into cash. You will receive a separate mailing that will contain instructions for making your election. Independent s and Central s common stock are listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the trading symbols INDB and CEBK, respectively. The closing sales prices of Independent common stock and Central common stock on the last practicable trading day prior to the mailing of this document was \$29.88 and \$31.93. The equivalent value of the stock consideration to be paid in the merger for each share of Central common stock, calculated by multiplying the July 30, 2012 closing price of Independent common stock by an exchange ratio calculated in accordance with the merger agreement, would be \$32.16. The market prices for both Independent common stock and Central common stock will fluctuate prior to the merger. We urge you to obtain current market quotations for both Independent common stock and Central common stock.

Independent and Central cannot complete the proposed merger unless you vote to approve the merger agreement and the merger, at the special meeting. This letter is accompanied by Central s proxy statement, which Central is providing to solicit your proxy to vote for approval of the merger agreement and the merger at the meeting. The accompanying document is also being delivered to Central s shareholders as Independent s prospectus for its offering of Independent common stock to Central s shareholders in the merger.

Central s board of directors has unanimously recommended that you vote FOR approval of the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement, including the merger, at the special meeting.

This proxy statement/prospectus provides you with detailed information about the proposed merger. It also contains or references information about Independent and Central and related matters. You are encouraged to read this document carefully. **In particular, you should read the Risk Factors section beginning on page 13 for a discussion of the risks you should consider in evaluating the proposed merger and how it will affect you.**

Your vote is very important. Whether or not you plan to attend the special meeting, please take the time to vote by completing and mailing the enclosed proxy card. If you do not vote in person or by proxy, the effect will be a vote against the proposal to approve the merger.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities regulator has approved or disapproved the proposed merger, the issuance of Independent common stock to be issued in connection with the merger or the other transactions described in this proxy statement/prospectus, or determined if this proxy statement/prospectus is accurate or adequate. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The shares of Independent common stock are not savings accounts, deposits or other obligations of any bank or savings association and are not insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or by any other federal or state governmental agency.

This proxy statement/prospectus is dated , 2012, and is first being mailed or otherwise delivered to shareholders of Central on or about , 2012.

Sincerely,

John D. Doherty
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

Table of Contents

REFERENCE TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This proxy statement/prospectus incorporates important business and financial information about Independent from other documents that are not included in, or delivered with, this proxy statement/prospectus. This information is available to you without charge upon your written or oral request. We have listed the documents containing this information on page II-2. You can obtain copies of these documents incorporated by reference in this document through the Securities and Exchange Commission's website at <http://www.sec.gov> or by requesting them in writing or by telephone from Independent at the following address:

Independent Bank Corp.

288 Union Street

Rockland, Massachusetts 02370

Attention: Edward H. Seksay, General Counsel

(781) 982-6158

If you would like to request documents, you must do so no later than _____, 2012 in order to receive them before Central's special meeting of shareholders. You will not be charged for any of these documents that you request.

For additional information regarding where you can find information about Independent and Central, please see the section entitled "Where You Can Find More Information" beginning on page 126 of this proxy statement/prospectus. The information contained in this proxy statement/prospectus with respect to Independent and its subsidiaries was provided by Independent and the information contained in this proxy statement/prospectus with respect to Central and its subsidiaries was provided by Central.

For information on submitting your proxy, please refer to the instructions on the enclosed proxy card.

Table of Contents

CENTRAL BANCORP, INC.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING OF SHAREHOLDERS

TO BE HELD ON _____, 2012 AT 11:00 A.M. EASTERN DAYLIGHT TIME

HOLIDAY INN - SOMERVILLE

30 WASHINGTON STREET

SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02143

At the special meeting Central Bancorp, Inc. (Central) will ask you to:

1. approve the Agreement and Plan of Merger, dated as of April 30, 2012 (the merger agreement), by and among Independent Bank Corp. (Independent), Rockland Trust Company, Central and Central Co-operative Bank, and thereby to approve the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement, including the merger of Central with and into Independent (the merger);
2. approve one or more adjournments of the special meeting, if necessary or appropriate, including adjournments to permit further solicitation of proxies in favor of the merger;
3. vote on a non-binding advisory resolution approving certain compensation payable to the named executive officers of Central in connection with the merger; and
4. transact any other business which may properly come before the special meeting or any adjournment or postponement thereof.

You may vote at the special meeting if you were a shareholder of record at the close of business on July 23, 2012.

The affirmative vote of holders of at least two-thirds of the shares of Central common stock outstanding and entitled to vote at the special meeting is required to approve the merger agreement and the merger. For more information please review the accompanying proxy statement/prospectus.

The board of directors of Central unanimously recommends that you vote FOR approval of the merger agreement proposal and FOR the other proposals described above.

Central has concluded shareholders are not entitled to assert appraisal rights under Sections 13.01 to 13.31 of the Massachusetts Business Corporation Act as more fully described in the accompanying proxy statement/prospectus. Any shareholder who nonetheless believes he is or may be entitled to appraisal rights and seeks to assert them in connection with the merger must deliver to Central, before the vote is taken at the special meeting, written notice of his intent to demand payment for his shares in the manner specified in the statute, and must not vote his shares in favor of the merger. A copy of the applicable provisions of the Massachusetts Business Corporation Act is attached as Annex C to the accompanying proxy statement/prospectus.

Please do not send any stock certificates at this time. If the merger is approved, you will be notified of the procedures for exchanging Central stock certificates for cash or certificates of Independent stock.

Your vote is important regardless of how many shares you own. Whether or not you plan to attend the special meeting, please promptly vote your shares. Voting procedures are described in the accompanying proxy statement/prospectus and on the proxy card.

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

By Order of the Board of Directors,

Rhoda K. Astone
Secretary and Clerk

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT VOTING YOUR SHARES, PLEASE CALL PHOENIX ADVISORY PARTNERS AT (877) 478-5038.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<u>QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE MERGER AND THE SPECIAL MEETING OF CENTRAL SHAREHOLDERS</u>	1
<u>SUMMARY</u>	6
<u>RISK FACTORS</u>	13
<u>Risks Related to the Merger</u>	13
<u>Risks Related to Independent s Business</u>	16
<u>FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS</u>	21
<u>SUMMARY HISTORICAL AND UNAUDITED PRO FORMA FINANCIAL INFORMATION</u>	22
<u>Comparative Per Share Market Price Information</u>	22
<u>Comparative Stock Prices and Dividends</u>	22
<u>Historical and Pro Forma Per Share Data</u>	23
<u>Independent Selected Historical Financial and Operating Data</u>	25
<u>Central Selected Historical Consolidated Financial Data</u>	26
<u>THE SPECIAL MEETING OF CENTRAL SHAREHOLDERS</u>	27
<u>Date, Time and Place of the Special Meeting</u>	27
<u>Purpose of the Special Meeting</u>	27
<u>Recommendation of Central s Board of Directors</u>	27
<u>Record Date; Shares Entitled to Vote</u>	27
<u>Quorum; Vote Required</u>	27
<u>Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management</u>	28
<u>Central Voting Agreements</u>	29
<u>Voting of Proxies</u>	30
<u>How to Revoke Your Proxy</u>	30
<u>Voting in Person</u>	31
<u>Abstentions and Broker Non-Votes</u>	31
<u>Proxy Solicitation</u>	32
<u>Dissenters Rights of Appraisal</u>	32
<u>Stock Certificates</u>	33
<u>PROPOSAL TO APPROVE ADJOURNMENT OF THE CENTRAL SPECIAL MEETING</u>	34
<u>ADVISORY VOTE REGARDING CERTAIN EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION</u>	35
<u>THE MERGER</u>	36
<u>General</u>	36
<u>Background of the Merger</u>	37
<u>Recommendation of Central s Board of Directors and Reasons for the Merger</u>	40
<u>Opinion of Central s Financial Adviser</u>	41
<u>Approval of Independent s Board of Directors and Reasons for the Merger</u>	48
<u>Regulatory Approvals Required to Complete the Merger</u>	49
<u>Interests of Central s Executive Officers and Directors in the Merger</u>	50
<u>Litigation Relating to the Merger</u>	53

Table of Contents

	Page
<u>THE MERGER AGREEMENT</u>	54
<u>The Merger</u>	54
<u>Effective Time and Completion of the Merger</u>	54
<u>Board of Directors of Independent</u>	54
<u>Consideration to Be Received in the Merger</u>	54
<u>Exchange of Central Stock Certificates for Independent Stock Certificates</u>	55
<u>Stock Options and Restricted Stock</u>	55
<u>Representations and Warranties</u>	56
<u>Conduct of Business Pending the Merger</u>	58
<u>Shareholder Approval</u>	61
<u>No Solicitation of Alternative Transactions</u>	61
<u>Employee Benefits Matters</u>	63
<u>Additional Covenants</u>	64
<u>Conditions to Complete the Merger</u>	64
<u>Termination of the Merger Agreement</u>	64
<u>Termination Fee and Expense Reimbursement</u>	65
<u>Amendment of the Merger Agreement</u>	67
<u>Fees and Expenses</u>	67
<u>Restrictions on Resales by Affiliates</u>	67
<u>VOTING AGREEMENTS</u>	68
<u>ACCOUNTING TREATMENT</u>	69
<u>MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES OF THE MERGER</u>	70
<u>Tax Consequences of the Merger Generally</u>	71
<u>Reporting Requirements</u>	72
<u>Withholding Requirements</u>	73
<u>THE COMPANIES</u>	74
<u>INDEPENDENT</u>	74
<u>CENTRAL</u>	74
<u>DESCRIPTION OF INDEPENDENT S CAPITAL STOCK</u>	116
<u>Common Stock</u>	116
<u>Preferred Stock</u>	116
<u>Other Provisions</u>	117
<u>Transfer Agent</u>	117
<u>COMPARISON OF RIGHTS OF SHAREHOLDERS OF CENTRAL AND INDEPENDENT</u>	118
<u>Capitalization</u>	118
<u>Preemptive Rights</u>	118
<u>Dividends and Other Stock Rights</u>	119
<u>Right to Call Special Meetings of Shareholders</u>	119
<u>Notice of Shareholder Meetings</u>	120

Table of Contents

	Page
<u>Additional Business Brought by Shareholders at Meetings</u>	120
<u>Board of Directors Number and Term of Office</u>	121
<u>Board of Director Nominations</u>	121
<u>Removal and Resignation of Directors</u>	122
<u>Amendment of Bylaws</u>	122
<u>Amendment of Articles of Organization</u>	123
<u>Indemnification</u>	123
<u>Approval of Business Combinations</u>	124
<u>LEGAL MATTERS</u>	125
<u>EXPERTS</u>	125
<u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u>	126
<u>INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE</u>	127
<u>INDEX TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF CENTRAL</u>	128
<u>ANNEX A AGREEMENT AND PLAN OF MERGER</u>	A-1
<u>ANNEX B FAIRNESS OPINION OF KEEFE, BRUYETTE & WOODS, INC.</u>	B-1
<u>ANNEX C MASSACHUSETTS BUSINESS CORPORATION ACT SECTIONS 13.01 TO 13.31</u>	C-1
<u>PART II</u>	II-1
<u>INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS</u>	II-1
<u>Item 20. Indemnification of Directors and Officers</u>	II-1
<u>Item 21. Exhibits and Financial Schedules</u>	II-2
<u>Item 22. Undertakings</u>	II-2
<u>SIGNATURES</u>	II-4

Table of Contents

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE MERGER AND
THE SPECIAL MEETING OF CENTRAL SHAREHOLDERS**

Q. Why am I receiving this document?

- A. Independent and Central have agreed to the acquisition of Central by Independent under the terms of a merger agreement that is described in this document. A copy of the merger agreement is attached to this document as Annex A. In order to complete the merger, Central's shareholders must vote to approve the merger agreement. Central will hold a special meeting of its shareholders to obtain this approval. This document contains important information about the merger, the cash and the shares of Independent common stock to be issued in connection with the merger, the merger agreement, the special meeting of Central's shareholders, and other related matters, and you should read it carefully. The enclosed voting materials for the Central special meeting allow you to vote your shares of common stock without attending the special meeting.

Q. What will happen to Central as a result of the merger?

- A. If the merger is completed, Central will be acquired by Independent.

Q. What will Central's shareholders receive in the merger?

- A. Central's shareholders will be entitled to receive in the merger for each share of Central common stock they own either (i) \$32.00 in cash or (2) a number of shares of Independent common stock as determined by an exchange ratio that will float linearly upward or downward within a set range to adjust for fluctuations in the price of Independent common stock. The final exchange ratio will be determined within a 12% range (*i.e.*, 6% upward or downward) of a \$28.66 base price for Independent common stock (with a corresponding base exchange ratio of 1.1165) by dividing \$32.00 by the volume weighted average price of Independent common stock for the twenty trading day period ending with the last regulatory approval of the transaction and the expiration of any waiting periods related to such approvals. By way of illustration using the extremes of the possible 12% range as examples: if the volume weighted average price of Independent common stock during the applicable period is \$26.94 (*i.e.* 6% below \$28.66) or less, the exchange ratio will increase to 1.1878; and, if the volume weighted average price of Independent common stock during the applicable period is \$30.38 (*i.e.*, 6% above \$28.66) or higher, then the exchange ratio will decrease to 1.0533. The method for determining the final exchange ratio is more fully described in the section of this document titled "Consideration to be Received in the Merger" on page 54.

Central's shareholders will be able to elect to receive cash, Independent common stock or a combination of cash and Independent common stock for their shares of Central common stock. Regardless of a Central shareholder's choice, however, elections will be limited by the requirement that 60% of Central common stock be converted into Independent common stock and 40% be exchanged for cash. Therefore, the allocation of cash and Independent common stock that a Central shareholder will receive will depend on the elections of other Central shareholders. The allocation of the consideration payable to Central shareholders will not be known until the exchange agent tallies the results of the cash/stock elections made by Central's shareholders. If a Central shareholder does not make an election, the type of consideration such shareholder will receive will depend on the consideration elected by other Central shareholders.

The Independent common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the trading symbol INDB. Independent will not issue fractional shares of its common stock in the merger, but will instead cash out any fractional shares at a price determined by the volume weighted average closing price of Independent common stock on the NASDAQ Global Select Market for the five (5) trading days ending on the fifth (5th) trading day immediately preceding the completion of the merger.

Table of Contents

Each holder of a vested or unvested option to purchase Central common stock will receive, upon consummation of the transaction, a cash payment in settlement of the Central options equal to the product of (i) the number of shares of Central common stock provided for by such option and (ii) the excess, if any, of (a) \$32.00 over (b) the exercise price of the option. All unvested shares of restricted Central common stock will vest in full immediately prior to the effective time of the merger and will be treated as outstanding Central shares for all purposes under the merger agreement, including for purposes of the holders' right to receive the merger consideration.

Q. When will the merger be completed?

A. We expect the merger will be completed when all of the conditions to completion contained in the merger agreement are satisfied or waived, including obtaining required regulatory approvals and the approval of the merger agreement by Central's shareholders at the Central special meeting. We currently expect to complete the merger during the fourth calendar quarter of 2012. However, because fulfillment of some of the conditions to completion of the merger, such as receiving required regulatory approvals, are not entirely within our control, we cannot predict the actual timing.

Q. Who is being asked to approve matters in connection with the merger?

A. Central's shareholders are being asked to vote to approve the merger-related proposals. Under Massachusetts law, the merger cannot be consummated unless Central's shareholders vote to approve the merger agreement and the merger. By this proxy statement/prospectus, Central's board of directors is soliciting proxies of Central's shareholders to provide this approval at the special meeting of Central's shareholders discussed below.

Q. Should Central shareholders send in their stock certificates now?

A. No, Central shareholders should not send in any stock certificates now. If the merger is approved, Independent will send Central's shareholders written instructions on how to exchange their stock certificates for the merger consideration.

Q. Will I be able to trade the shares of Independent common stock that I may receive in the merger?

A. You may freely trade the shares of Independent common stock issued in the merger, unless you are deemed an affiliate of Independent. Independent shares are quoted on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol INDB. Persons who are considered affiliates (generally directors, officers and 10% or greater shareholders) of Independent may resell shares of Independent common stock received in the merger only if the shares are registered for resale under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the Securities Act), or an exemption is available.

Q. What are the material U.S. federal income tax consequences of the merger to me?

A. The tax consequence of the merger to Central shareholders will depend on whether Central shareholders receive only cash, only Independent common stock, or a combination of cash and Independent common stock in exchange for their shares of Central common stock. Central shareholders that exchange their shares solely for Independent common stock should not recognize gain or loss except with respect to any cash they receive instead of receiving a fractional share of Independent common stock. Central shareholders that exchange their shares solely for cash should recognize gain or loss on the exchange. Central shareholders that exchange their shares for a combination of Independent common stock and cash should recognize capital gain on the cash portion of the consideration they receive. Because the allocations of cash and Independent common stock that are received will depend on the elections of other Central shareholders,

Table of Contents

Central shareholders will not know the actual tax consequences of the merger to them until the allocations are completed.

Q. Are there any risks that I should consider in deciding whether to vote for approval of the merger?

A. Yes. You should read and carefully consider the risk factors set forth in the section in this document titled **Risk Factors** beginning on page 13.

Q. When and where will Central's shareholders meet?

A. Central will hold a special meeting of its shareholders on _____, 2012, at 11:00 a.m., Eastern Standard Time, at Holiday Inn - Somerville located at 30 Washington Street, Somerville, Massachusetts 02143.

Q. What matters are Central's shareholders being asked to approve at the Central special meeting pursuant to this proxy statement/prospectus?

A. Central's shareholders are being asked to approve the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement, including the merger. We refer to this proposal as the **Central merger agreement proposal**.
Central's shareholders also are being asked to approve one or more adjournments of the special meeting, if necessary or appropriate, including adjournments to permit further solicitation of proxies in favor of the Central merger agreement proposal, which we refer to as the **Central adjournment proposal**, and to vote on a non-binding advisory resolution approving certain compensation payable to the named executive officers of Central in connection with the merger.

Q. What does Central's board of directors recommend with respect to the three proposals?

A. Central's board of directors has unanimously approved the merger agreement and determined that the merger agreement and the merger are fair to, advisable and in the best interests of Central and its shareholders and unanimously recommends that Central's shareholders vote **FOR** the Central merger agreement proposal.
Central's board of directors also unanimously recommends that Central's shareholders vote **FOR** the Central adjournment proposal and **FOR** the non-binding advisory resolution approving certain compensation payable to the named executive officers of Central in connection with the merger.

Q. Who can vote at the Central special meeting?

A. Holders of record of Central common stock at the close of business on July 23, 2012, which is the record date for the Central special meeting, are entitled to vote at the special meeting.

Q. How many votes must be represented in person or by proxy at the Central special meeting to have a quorum?

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

- A. The holders of a majority of the shares of Central common stock outstanding and entitled to vote at the special meeting, present in person or represented by proxy, will constitute a quorum at the special meeting.

Q. What vote by Central's shareholders is required to approve the Central special meeting proposals?

- A. Assuming a quorum is present at the Central special meeting, approval of the Central merger agreement proposal will require the affirmative vote of the holders of two-thirds of the outstanding shares of Central common stock entitled to vote. Abstentions and broker non-votes will have the same effect as shares voted against the merger agreement proposal.

Assuming a quorum is present at the Central special meeting, approval of the Central adjournment proposal will require the affirmative vote of a majority of the votes cast on the adjournment proposal. Abstentions and broker non-votes will not affect whether the Central adjournment proposal is approved.

Table of Contents

Assuming a quorum is present at the Central special meeting, approval of the non-binding advisory resolution approving certain compensation payable to the named executive officers of Central in connection with the merger will require the affirmative vote of a majority of votes cast on the proposal. Abstentions and broker non-votes will not affect whether such resolution is approved.

As of the record date for the special meeting, directors and executive officers of Central, together with their affiliates, had sole or shared voting power over approximately 25.1% of the Central common stock outstanding and entitled to vote at the special meeting.

Q: What will happen if the stockholders do not approve the advisory vote on certain compensation payable to Central's executive officers at the special meeting?

A: Approval of certain compensation payable to certain of Central's executive officers in connection with the merger is not a condition to completion of the merger. The vote with respect to such compensation is an advisory vote and will not be binding on Central or on Independent. Therefore, if the merger is approved by Central's stockholders and completed, such compensation will still be paid to Central's executive officers if and when due.

Q: Are any Central shareholders already committed to vote in favor of any of the special meeting proposals?

A: Under voting agreements with Independent, Central's directors have agreed to vote all of their shares of Central common stock in favor of the Central merger agreement proposal and have granted to Independent a proxy to vote their shares in favor of the proposal. As of the record date for the Central special meeting, the Central shareholders who are parties to the Central voting agreements collectively owned (with sole or shared voting power) approximately 22.7% of the Central common stock outstanding and entitled to vote at the special meeting.

Q: How may the Central shareholders vote their shares for the special meeting proposals presented in this proxy statement/prospectus?

A: Central's shareholders may submit their proxies by:

signing the enclosed proxy card and mailing it in the enclosed, prepaid and addressed envelope;

calling toll-free 1-877-806-9632 and following the instructions; or

accessing the web page at www.rtcoproxy.com/cebkc and following the on-screen instructions.

Proxies submitted through the Internet or by telephone must be received by 3:00 a.m., Eastern Daylight Time, on _____, 2012.

Q: Will a broker or bank holding shares in street name for a Central shareholder vote those shares for the shareholder at the Central special meeting?

A: A broker or bank will not be able to vote your shares with respect to the Central merger agreement proposal without first receiving instructions from you on how to vote. If your shares are held in street name, you will receive separate voting instructions with your proxy materials. It is therefore important that you provide timely instruction to your broker or bank to ensure that all shares of Central common stock that you own are voted at the special meeting.

Q. Will Central's shareholders be able to vote their shares in person at the Central special meeting?

- A. Yes. Submitting a proxy will not affect the right of any Central shareholder to vote in person at the special meeting. Central will distribute written ballots to any Central shareholder who requests, and is entitled, to vote at the special meeting. If a Central shareholder holds shares in street name, the shareholder must request a proxy from the shareholder's broker or bank in order to vote those shares in person at the special meeting.

Table of Contents

Q. What do Central's shareholders need to do now?

- A. After carefully reading and considering the information contained in this proxy statement/prospectus, Central's shareholders are requested to complete and return their proxies as soon as possible. The proxy card will instruct the persons named on the proxy card to vote the shareholder's Central shares at the special meeting as the shareholder directs. If a shareholder signs and sends in a proxy card and does not indicate how the shareholder wishes to vote, the proxy will be voted **FOR** all three of the special meeting proposals.

Q. May a Central shareholder change the shareholder's vote after submitting a proxy?

- A. Yes. A Central shareholder may change a vote at any time before the shareholder's proxy is voted at the Central special meeting. A proxy submitted through the Internet or by telephone may be revoked by executing a later-dated proxy card, by subsequently submitting a proxy through the Internet or by telephone, or by attending the special meeting and voting in person. A shareholder executing a proxy card also may revoke the proxy at any time before it is voted by giving written notice revoking the proxy to Central's secretary, by subsequently filing another proxy card bearing a later date or by attending the special meeting and voting in person. Attending the special meeting will not automatically revoke a shareholder's prior submission of a proxy (by Internet, telephone or in writing). All written notices of revocation or other communications with respect to revocation of proxies should be addressed to:

Central Bancorp, Inc.

399 Highland Avenue

Somerville, Massachusetts 02144 Attention:

Rhoda K. Astone, Secretary and Clerk

Q. If I am a Central shareholder, who can help answer my questions?

- A. If you have any questions about the merger or the special meeting, or if you need additional copies of this proxy statement/prospectus or the enclosed proxy card, you should contact Central's proxy solicitor, at the following address or phone number:

Phoenix Advisory Partners

110 Wall Street, 27th Floor

New York, New York 10005

1-877-478-5038

Q. Where can I find more information about the companies?

- A. You can find more information about Independent and Central from the various sources described under the section of this document titled **Where You Can Find More Information** beginning on page 126.

Table of Contents

SUMMARY

*This summary highlights selected information from this document and may not contain all of the information that is important to you. You should carefully read this entire document and the other documents to which this document refers to fully understand the merger and the related transactions. See *Where You Can Find More Information* beginning on page 126 of this document. Most items in this summary include a page reference directing you to a more complete description of those items.*

*Unless the context otherwise requires, throughout this document, *Independent* refers to Independent Bank Corp., *Central* refers to Central Bancorp, Inc., *Rockland Trust* refers to Rockland Trust Company; and *we*, *us* and *our* refers to Independent and Central. Also, *we* refer to the merger between Independent and Central as the *merger*, and the Agreement and Plan of Merger, dated as of April 30, 2012, by and among Independent, Rockland Trust, Central and Central Co-operative Bank as the *merger agreement*.*

The Companies (see page 74)

Independent

Through its subsidiary, Rockland Trust, Independent offers a full range of banking services through a network of 68 full-service bank branches in eastern Massachusetts and its commercial lending centers and investment management offices in eastern Massachusetts and Providence, Rhode Island. Rockland Trust provides investment management and trust services to individuals, institutions, small businesses and charitable institutions throughout eastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

At March 31, 2012, Independent had total consolidated assets of approximately \$5.0 billion, net loans of approximately \$3.8 billion, total deposits of approximately \$3.9 billion and total stockholders' equity of approximately \$478.9 million.

Independent Bank Corp.

288 Union Street

Rockland, Massachusetts 02370

(781) 878-6100

Central

Through its subsidiary, Central Co-operative Bank, Central engages in banking activities through a network of nine full service branches located in Middlesex county in Massachusetts.

At March 31, 2012, Central had total consolidated assets of \$523.6 million, net loans of \$444.6 million, total deposits of \$344.5 million and total stockholders' equity of \$45.3 million.

Central Bancorp, Inc.

399 Highland Avenue Somerville, Massachusetts 02144

(617) 628-4000

The Merger and the Merger Agreement (see pages 36 and 54)

The terms and conditions of the merger are contained in the merger agreement, which is attached as Annex A to this proxy statement/prospectus. Please carefully read the merger agreement, as it is the legal document that governs the merger. Under the terms of the merger agreement, Central will merge with and into Independent (the *merger*) and Independent will survive the merger. Upon completion of the merger, each share of Central

Table of Contents

common stock will be converted into the right to receive either (i) \$32.00 in cash or (2) a number of shares of Independent common stock as determined by an exchange ratio that will float linearly upward or downward within a set range to adjust for fluctuations in the price of Independent common stock. The final exchange ratio will be determined within a 12% range (*i.e.*, 6% upward or downward) of a \$28.66 base price for Independent common stock (with a corresponding base exchange ratio of 1.1165) by dividing \$32.00 by the volume weighted average price of Independent common stock for the twenty trading day period ending with the last regulatory approval of the transaction and the expiration of any waiting periods related to such approvals. By way of illustration using the extremes of the possible 12% range as examples: if the volume weighted average price of Independent Stock during the applicable period is \$26.94 (*i.e.*, 6% below \$28.66) or less, the exchange ratio will increase to 1.1878; and, if the volume weighted average price of Independent common stock during the applicable period is \$30.38 (*i.e.*, 6% above \$28.66) or higher, then the exchange ratio will decrease to 1.0533.

Special Meeting of Central Shareholders; Required Vote (see page 1)

Central will hold a special meeting of shareholders at Holiday Inn - Somerville, located at 30 Washington Street, Somerville, Massachusetts 02143 on _____, 2012 at 11:00 a.m., Eastern Daylight Time. Central's shareholders will be asked:

to approve the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby;

to vote upon a proposal to adjourn the special meeting, if necessary, to solicit additional proxies;

vote on a non-binding advisory resolution approving certain compensation payable to the named executive officers of Central in connection with the merger; and

to consider and act upon any other matters as may properly come before the special meeting or any adjournment or postponement thereof.

You can vote at the Central special meeting if you owned Central common stock at the close of business on July 23, 2012. On that date, there were 1,690,951 shares of Central common stock outstanding and entitled to vote, approximately 25.1% of which were owned and entitled to be voted by Central directors and executive officers and their affiliates. You can cast one vote for each share of Central common stock you owned on that date. In order to approve the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby, the holders of at least two-thirds of the outstanding shares of Central common stock entitled to vote must vote in favor of doing so.

What Holders of Central Stock Options and Restricted Stock Will Receive (see page 55)

All outstanding unvested Central stock options and restricted shares of Central common stock will become fully vested immediately prior to the effective time of the merger. Central options will be cancelled upon consummation of the merger, and each option holder will receive a cash payment upon such cancellation in an amount equal to the product of (i) the number of shares of Central common stock provided for by such option and (ii) the excess, if any, of (a) \$32.00 over (b) the exercise price of the option. All shares of accelerated restricted stock will be treated as outstanding Central shares for all purposes under the merger agreement, including for purposes of the holders' right to receive the merger consideration.

Dividend Policy of Independent; Dividends from Central (see page 119)

The holders of Independent common stock receive dividends as and when declared by Independent's board of directors. Independent declared quarterly cash dividends of \$0.20 per share of common stock for the first quarter of 2012, dividends of \$0.19 per share of common stock for each quarter in 2011 and dividends of \$0.18 per share of common stock for each quarter of 2010. Following the completion of the merger, subject to approval and declaration by Independent's board of directors, Independent expects to continue paying quarterly cash dividends on a basis consistent with past practices.

Table of Contents

Prior to completion of the merger, Central's shareholders will continue to receive any regular quarterly dividends declared and paid by Central, at a rate not to exceed \$0.05 per share of Central common stock.

Fairness Opinion Presented to the Central Board of Directors (see page B-1)

Keefe, Bruyette & Woods, Inc. (KBW), has provided an opinion to Central's board of directors, dated as of April 30, 2012, to the effect that, as of that date and based upon and subject to the factors and assumptions set forth in the opinion, the merger consideration was fair, from a financial point of view, to the holders of Central common stock. We have attached to this proxy statement/prospectus as Annex B, the full text of KBW's opinion, which sets forth, among other things, the assumptions made, procedures followed, matters considered and limitations on the review undertaken by KBW in connection with its opinion. We urge you to read the opinion in its entirety. KBW's opinion is addressed to Central's board of directors, is directed only to the fairness, from a financial point of view, of the merger consideration to the holders of Central common stock and does not constitute a recommendation to any shareholder as to how that shareholder should vote on the merger agreement. Pursuant to an engagement letter between Central and KBW, Central has agreed to pay KBW a fee, a substantial portion of which is payable only upon completion of the merger.

Recommendation of Central's Board of Directors and Reasons for the Merger (see page 40)

Central's board of directors has unanimously determined that the merger agreement and the merger are advisable and in the best interests of Central and its shareholders and accordingly unanimously recommends that Central's shareholders vote FOR the proposal to approve the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby.

In determining whether to approve the merger agreement, Central's board of directors consulted with certain of its senior management and with its legal and financial advisers. In arriving at its determination, Central's board of directors also considered the factors described under The Merger Recommendation of Central's Board of Directors and Reasons for the Merger.

Interests of Central's Executive Officers and Directors in the Merger (see page 50)

Some of the directors and executive officers of Central have financial interests in the merger that are different from, or in addition to, the interests of Central's other shareholders generally. These interests include rights of executive officers under their existing employment, change-in-control and supplemental retirement agreements, which rights are being provided through settlement agreements executed in connection with the merger agreement; rights under Central's equity-based benefit programs and awards; rights to continued board service (with respect to John J. Morrissey); and rights to continued indemnification and insurance coverage by Independent after the merger for acts and omissions occurring before the merger.

The boards of directors of Independent and Central were aware of these interests and considered them, among other matters, in approving the merger agreement and related transactions.

Central Directors Have Agreed to Vote in Favor of the Merger Agreement (see page 68)

On July 23, 2012, the directors of Central had sole or shared voting power over 383,297 shares, or approximately 22.7%, of the outstanding shares of Central common stock. These directors have agreed with Independent to vote their shares of Central common stock in favor of the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby.

Table of Contents

Approval by Independent s Board of Directors and Reasons for the Merger (see page 48)

Independent s board of directors has unanimously approved and adopted the merger agreement.

In determining whether to approve the merger agreement, Independent s board of directors consulted with certain of its senior management and with its legal and financial advisers. In arriving at its determination, Independent s board of directors also considered the factors described under The Merger Approval by Independent s Board of Directors and Reasons for the Merger.

Boards of Directors after the Merger (see page 54)

Contingent upon consummation of the merger, John J. Morrissey will be elected to the boards of directors of Independent and Rockland Trust.

Non-Solicitation (see page 61)

Central has agreed that it will not solicit or knowingly encourage any inquiries or proposals regarding any acquisition proposals by third parties. Central may respond to unsolicited proposals in certain circumstances if required by Central s board of directors fiduciary duties. Central must promptly notify Independent if it receives any acquisition proposals.

Conditions to Complete the Merger (see page 64)

Each of Independent s and Central s obligations to complete the merger is subject to the satisfaction or waiver of a number of mutual conditions, including:

the approval of the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement, including the merger, by Central s shareholders at the Central special meeting described in this proxy statement/prospectus;

the receipt and effectiveness of all regulatory approvals, registrations and consents (none of which shall contain a burdensome condition, as defined in the merger agreement), and the expiration of all waiting periods required to complete the merger;

the effectiveness of the registration statement with respect to the Independent common stock to be issued in the merger under the Securities Act, and the absence of any stop order or proceedings initiated or threatened by the Securities and Exchange Commission for that purpose; and

the absence of any statute, regulation, rule, decree, injunction or other order in effect by any court or other governmental entity that prohibits completion of the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement.

Each of Independent s and Central s obligations to complete the merger is also separately subject to the satisfaction or waiver of a number of conditions, including:

the receipt by the party of a legal opinion from its counsel with respect to certain U.S. federal income tax consequences of the merger; and

the other company s representations and warranties in the merger agreement being true and correct, in all material respects, and the performance by the other party in all material respects of its obligations under the merger agreement.

Independent s obligation to complete the merger is further subject to the conditions that the number of outstanding shares of Central common stock shall not exceed 1,690,951, except to the extent increased as a result of the exercise of stock options, and to the receipt of a non-competition and non-solicitation agreement from John D. Doherty and a consulting, non-competition and non-solicitation agreement from

William P. Morrissey.

Table of Contents

Termination of the Merger Agreement (see page 64)

Independent and Central may mutually agree at any time to terminate the merger agreement without completing the merger, even if Central's shareholders have approved the merger transactions. Also, either Independent or Central can terminate the merger agreement in various circumstances, including the following:

if any regulatory approval necessary for consummation of the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement is not obtained;

if the merger is not completed by March 31, 2013;

if the other party breaches the merger agreement in a way that would entitle the party seeking to terminate the merger agreement not to consummate the merger, subject to the right of the breaching party to cure the breach by the earlier of 30 days following written notice or two business days before March 31, 2013 (unless it is not possible due to the nature or timing of the breach for the breaching party to cure the breach); or

if Central's shareholders do not approve the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby.

Additionally, Independent may terminate the merger agreement if:

Central has materially breached its non-solicitation obligations described under The Merger Agreement No Solicitation of Alternative Transactions beginning on page 61;

Central's board fails to recommend in this proxy statement/prospectus the approval of the merger agreement;

Central's board of directors recommends, proposes or publicly announces its intention to recommend or propose, to engage in an Acquisition Transaction with any party other than Independent or a subsidiary of Independent; or

Central breaches its obligation to call, give notice of, convene and hold a meeting of shareholders for the purpose of approving the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby.

Additionally, Central may terminate the merger agreement if:

it enters into a Superior Proposal as described under The Merger Agreement No Solicitation of Alternative Transactions, so long as it pays a termination fee of \$2.2 million to Independent; or

pursuant to a walk away right that is subject to a top up option, if (a) the twenty day volume-weighted average price of Independent's common stock as of a measurement date prior to closing is 20% below both (i) the ten day volume-weighted average price of Independent's common stock as of April 30, 2012 and (ii) the twenty day volume-weighted average price of the Nasdaq Bank Stock Index, (b) Central elects to terminate the agreement by a majority vote of Central's directors, and (c) following notice of such election Independent does not exercise its top up option under the merger agreement to increase the exchange ratio to a number that would compensate Central's shareholders for the extent of the drop in Independent's common stock price below the prices specified in (a)(i) and (ii) above. If Independent does exercise its top up option, then no termination will occur.

Termination Fee (see page 65)

Central has agreed to pay a termination fee of \$2.2 million to Independent if the merger agreement is terminated under any of the circumstances described in The Merger Agreement Termination Fee and Expense Reimbursement beginning on page 65.

Table of Contents

Advisory Vote on Named Executive Officer Compensation (see page 35)

Central's shareholders are being asked to vote on a non-binding advisory resolution approving certain compensation payable to the named executive officers of Central in connection with the merger. Assuming a quorum is present at the Central special meeting, approval of the non-binding advisory resolution approving certain compensation payable to the named executive officers of Central in connection with the merger will require the affirmative vote of a majority of the votes cast with respect to the proposal. Abstentions and broker non-votes will not affect whether such resolution is approved. Approval of this resolution is not a condition to completion of the merger. The vote with respect to certain compensation payable to the named executive officers of Central in connection with the merger is an advisory vote and will not be binding on Central or on Independent. Therefore, if the merger is approved by Central's stockholders and completed, such compensation will still be paid to Central's named executive officers if and when due.

Regulatory Approvals Required for the Merger (see page 49)

Completion of the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement is subject to various regulatory approvals, including approval from the Federal Reserve Board, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Board of Bank Incorporation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Commissioner of Banks. Independent and Central have completed, or will complete, filing all of the required applications and notices with regulatory authorities. Although we do not know of any reason why we would not be able to obtain the necessary regulatory approvals in a timely manner, we cannot be certain when or if we will receive them.

Rights of Independent Shareholders Differ from Those of Central Shareholders (see page 118)

When the merger is completed, Central's shareholders who receive Independent common stock as consideration in the merger will automatically become Independent's shareholders. The rights of Independent's shareholders differ from the rights of Central's shareholders in important ways. Many of these differences relate to provisions in Independent's articles of organization and bylaws that differ from those of Central. See Comparison of Rights of Shareholders of Central and Independent beginning on page 118 for a summary of the material differences between the respective rights of Central and Independent shareholders.

Tax Consequences of the Merger (see page 70)

The federal tax consequences of the merger to shareholders of Central will depend primarily on whether they exchange their Central common stock solely for Independent common stock, solely for cash or for a combination of Independent common stock and cash. Central shareholders who exchange their shares solely for Independent common stock should not recognize gain or loss except with respect to any cash they receive instead of receiving a fractional share of Independent common stock. Central shareholders who exchange their shares solely for cash should recognize gain or loss on the exchange. Central shareholders who exchange their shares for a combination of Independent common stock and cash should recognize capital gain on the cash portion of the consideration they receive. The actual federal income tax consequences to Central shareholders of electing to receive cash, Independent common stock or a combination of cash and stock will not be ascertainable at the time Central shareholders make their election because it will not be known at that time how, or to what extent, the allocation and proration procedures will apply.

This tax treatment may not apply to all Central shareholders. Determining the actual tax consequences of the merger to Central shareholders can be complicated. Central shareholders should consult their own tax advisor for a full understanding of the merger's tax consequences that are particular to each shareholder.

To review the tax consequences of the merger to Central shareholders in greater detail, please see the section Material U.S. Federal Income Tax Consequences of the Merger beginning on page 70.

Table of Contents**Dissenters Rights of Appraisal (see page 32)**

Central has concluded that shareholders are not entitled to assert appraisal rights under Sections 13.01 to 13.31 of the Massachusetts Business Corporation Act. Any shareholder who believes he is or may be entitled to appraisal rights and seeks to assert them in connection with the merger must deliver to Central, before the vote is taken at the special meeting, written notice of his intent to demand payment for his shares in the manner specified in the statute, and must not vote his shares in favor of the merger. A copy of the applicable Massachusetts Business Corporation Act provisions is attached as Annex C to this proxy statement/prospectus.

Comparative Per Share Market Price Information (see page 22)

Independent common stock trades on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol INDB and Central common stock trades on the NASDAQ Global Market under the symbol CEBK. The following presents the closing sale prices of Independent common stock and Central common stock on April 30, 2012, the last trading day before we announced the merger agreement, and July 30, 2012 the last practicable trading day prior to mailing this document. The table also represents the equivalent value of the stock consideration to be paid in the merger per share of Central common stock on those dates, calculated by multiplying the closing price of Independent common stock on those dates by an exchange ratio calculated in accordance with the merger agreement based on the volume weighted average price of Independent common stock for the respective twenty trading day period ending on such dates, which represents number of shares of Independent common stock that Central's shareholders would receive in the merger for each share of Central common stock using such exchange ratio.

Date	Independent Closing Price	Central Closing Price	Exchange Ratio	Equivalent Per Share Value
April 30, 2012	\$ 28.07	\$ 18.05	1.1372	\$ 31.92
July 30, 2012	\$ 29.88	\$ 31.93	1.0764	\$ 32.16

The market prices of both Independent common stock and Central's common stock will fluctuate prior to the merger. You should obtain current stock price quotations for Independent common stock and Central common stock.

Litigation Relating to the Merger (see page 53)

A putative stockholder class action lawsuit was filed in connection with the merger agreement on July 17, 2012 in Superior Court in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, against Central, each of Central's directors, and Independent, captioned *Rational Strategies Fund v. John D. Doherty et al, Civil Action No. 12-2682*. The lawsuit alleges that Central and Central's directors breached their fiduciary duties owed to Central's shareholders in connection with the approval and disclosure of the proposed merger with Independent and that Independent aided and abetted the alleged breaches of fiduciary duty. Central, Central's directors and Independent believe the factual allegations in the complaint are without merit and intend to defend vigorously against the allegations in the complaint.

Table of Contents**RISK FACTORS**

In addition to the other information included in this proxy statement/prospectus, including the matters addressed under Forward-Looking Information, Central's shareholders should carefully consider the following risks before deciding whether to vote for approval of the merger agreement. In addition, shareholders of Central should read and consider the risks associated with each of the businesses of Independent and Central because these risks will relate to the combined company. Certain of these risks can be found in Independent's annual report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2011, and quarterly report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2012, which reports are incorporated by reference into this proxy statement/prospectus, and in Central's annual report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2012. You should also consider the other information in this proxy statement/prospectus and the other documents incorporated by reference into this proxy statement/prospectus. See Where You Can Find More Information and Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference beginning on page 126.

Risks Related to the Merger

While the exchange ratio that will be used to calculate how many shares of Independent common stock Central's shareholders that receive stock consideration will receive in the merger will fluctuate based on fluctuations in the price of Independent common stock, absent an exercise by Central of its walk away right and a subsequent top up election by Independent, there is a maximum exchange ratio of 1.1878 regardless of how significant the changes in the market value of Central common stock or Independent common stock might be before the completion of the merger.

Upon completion of the merger, each share of Central common stock will be converted into the right to receive either (i) \$32.00 in cash or (2) a number of shares of Independent common stock as determined by an exchange ratio that will float linearly upward or downward within a set range to adjust for fluctuations in the price of Independent common stock. The final exchange ratio will be determined within a 12% range (*i.e.*, 6% upward or downward) of a \$28.66 base price for Independent common stock (with a corresponding base exchange ratio of 1.1165) by dividing \$32.00 by the volume weighted average price of Independent common stock for the twenty trading day period ending with the last regulatory approval of the transaction and the expiration of any waiting periods related to such approvals. By way of illustration using the extreme low of the possible 12% range, if the volume weighted average price of Independent Stock during the applicable period is \$26.94 (*i.e.*, 6% below \$28.66) or less, the exchange ratio will increase to 1.1878, but will not increase further regardless of how far below \$26.94 the volume weighted average price falls, except in the event Central exercises its walk away right and Independent subsequently exercises its right to top up the stock consideration to void the walk away right. The method for determining the final exchange ratio is more fully described in the section of this document titled Consideration to be Received in the Merger on page 54. The market values of Independent common stock and Central common stock have varied since Independent and Central entered into the merger agreement and will continue to vary in the future due to changes in the business, operations or prospects of Independent and Central, market assessments of the merger, regulatory considerations, market and economic considerations, and other factors both within and beyond the control of Independent and Central.

Central shareholders may receive a form of consideration different from what they elect.

The consideration to be received by Central shareholders in the merger is subject to the requirement that 60% of the shares of Central common stock be exchanged for Independent common stock and 40% be exchanged for cash. The merger agreement contains proration and allocation procedures to achieve this desired result. If you elect all cash and the available cash is oversubscribed, then you will receive a portion of the merger consideration in Independent common stock. If you elect all stock and the available stock is oversubscribed, then you will receive a portion of the merger consideration in cash. The type of consideration you receive may also be affected by the requirement that the value of the stock portion of the merger consideration be equal to at least 40% of the total value of the merger consideration.

Table of Contents

Central will be subject to business uncertainties and contractual restrictions while the merger is pending.

Uncertainty about the effect of the merger on employees and customers may have an adverse effect on Central and consequently on Independent. These uncertainties may impair Central's ability to attract, retain and motivate key personnel until the merger is consummated, and could cause customers and others that deal with Central to seek to change existing business relationships with Central. Retention of certain employees may be challenging during the pendency of the merger, as certain employees may experience uncertainty about their future roles with Independent. If key employees depart because of issues relating to the uncertainty and difficulty of integration or a desire not to remain with Independent, Independent's business following the merger could be harmed. In addition, the merger agreement restricts Central from making certain acquisitions and taking other specified actions until the merger occurs without the consent of Independent. These restrictions may prevent Central from pursuing attractive business opportunities that may arise prior to the completion of the merger. Please see the section entitled "The Merger Agreement - Conduct of Business Pending the Merger" of this proxy statement/prospectus for a description of the restrictive covenants to which Central is subject.

Independent may fail to realize all of the anticipated benefits of the merger, particularly if the integration of Independent's and Central's businesses is more difficult than expected.

The success of the merger will depend, in part, on our ability to successfully combine the businesses of Independent and Central. Independent may fail to realize some or all of the anticipated benefits of the transaction if the integration process takes longer than expected or is more costly than expected. Furthermore, any number of unanticipated adverse occurrences for either the business of Central or Independent may cause us to fail to realize some or all of the expected benefits. The integration process could result in the loss of key employees, the disruption of each company's ongoing businesses or inconsistencies in standards, controls, procedures and policies that adversely affect our ability to maintain relationships with clients, customers, depositors and employees or to achieve the anticipated benefits of the merger. Each of these issues might adversely affect either Independent, Central, or both during the transition period, resulting in adverse effects on Independent following the merger. As a result, revenues may be lower than expected or prices may be higher than expected and the overall benefits of the merger may not be as great as anticipated.

The market price of Independent common stock after the merger may be affected by factors different from those affecting Independent common stock or Central common stock currently.

The business of Independent and Central differ in some respect and, accordingly, the results of operations of the combined company and the market price of Independent's shares of common stock after the merger may be affected by factors different from those currently affecting the independent results of operations of each of Independent or Central. For a discussion of the businesses of Independent and Central and of certain factors to consider in connection with those businesses, see the documents incorporated by reference into this proxy statement/prospectus and referred to under "Where You Can Find More Information" and "Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference" beginning on page 126 and the information regarding Central set forth under "The Companies - Central" beginning on page 74.

Some of the directors and executive officers of Central may have interests and arrangements that may have influenced their decisions to support or recommend that you approve the merger.

The interests of some of the directors and executive officers of Central may be different from those of Central's shareholders, and certain directors and officers of Central may be participants in arrangements that are different from, or are in addition to, those of Central shareholders, including the acceleration of awards under equity plans, agreements in settlement of obligations to such directors and officers under pre-existing employment agreements, salary continuation agreements, executive health plan insurance agreements and severance agreements, and agreements under which certain of such directors and officers are entitled to payments in consideration of consulting services and/or non-competition and non-solicitation covenants. These interests are

Table of Contents

described in more detail in the section of this proxy statement/prospectus entitled "The Merger - Interests of Central's Executive Officers and Directors in the Merger" of this proxy statement/prospectus beginning on page 50.

The merger agreement limits Central's ability to pursue alternatives to the merger.

The merger agreement contains provisions that limit Central's ability to solicit, initiate, encourage or take any actions to facilitate competing third-party proposals to acquire all or substantially all of Central. These provisions, which include a \$2.2 million termination fee payable under certain circumstances, might discourage a potential competing acquiror that might have an interest in acquiring all or substantially all of Central from considering or proposing that acquisition even if it were prepared to pay consideration with a higher per share market price than that proposed in the merger, or might result in a potential competing acquiror proposing to pay a lower per share price to acquire Central than it might otherwise have proposed to pay.

Regulatory approvals may not be received, may take longer than expected or impose conditions that are not presently anticipated.

Before the merger may be completed, certain approvals or consents must be obtained from the various bank regulatory and other authorities in the United States and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. These governmental entities, including the Federal Reserve Board, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Board of Bank Incorporation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Division of Banks, may impose conditions on the completion of the merger or require changes to the terms of the merger. While Independent and Central do not currently expect that any such conditions or changes would be imposed, there can be no assurance that they will not be, and such conditions or changes could have the effect of delaying completion of the merger or imposing additional costs on or limiting the revenues of Independent following the merger, any of which might have a material adverse effect on Independent following the merger. Independent is not obligated to complete the merger if the regulatory approvals received in connection with the completion of the merger include any conditions or restrictions that would constitute a "Burdensome Condition" as defined in the merger agreement.

There can be no assurance as to whether the regulatory approvals will be received or the timing of the approvals. For more information, see the section entitled "The Merger - Regulatory Approvals Required to Complete the Merger" of this proxy statement/prospectus beginning on page 49.

Central shareholders who make elections may be unable to sell their shares in the market pending the merger.

Central shareholders may elect to receive cash, stock or mixed consideration in the merger by completing an election form that will be sent under separate cover. Making an election will require that shareholders turn in their Central stock certificates. This means that during the time between when the election is made and the date the merger is completed, Central shareholders will be unable to sell their Central common stock. If the merger is unexpectedly delayed, this period could extend for a significant period of time. Central shareholders can shorten the period during which they cannot sell their shares by delivering their election shortly before the election deadline. However, elections received after the election deadline will not be accepted or honored.

If the merger is not consummated by March 31, 2013, either Independent or Central may choose not to proceed with the merger.

Either Independent or Central may terminate the merger agreement if the merger has not been completed by March 31, 2013, unless the failure of the merger to be completed has resulted from the failure of the party seeking to terminate the merger agreement to perform its obligations.

Table of Contents

The shares of Independent common stock to be received by Central shareholders as a result of the merger will have different rights from the shares of Central common stock.

The rights associated with Central common stock are different from the rights associated with Independent common stock. See the section of this proxy statement/prospectus entitled "Comparison of Rights of Shareholders of Central and Independent" beginning on page 118 for a discussion of the different rights associated with Independent common stock.

Risks Related to Independent's Business

Changes in interest rates could adversely impact Independent's financial condition and results of operations.

Independent's ability to make a profit, like that of most financial institutions, substantially depends upon its net interest income, which is the difference between the interest income earned on interest earning assets, such as loans and investment securities, and the interest expense paid on interest-bearing liabilities, such as deposits and borrowings. However, certain assets and liabilities may react differently to changes in market interest rates. Further, interest rates on some types of assets and liabilities may fluctuate prior to changes in broader market interest rates, while rates on other types of assets may lag behind. Additionally, some assets such as adjustable-rate mortgages have features, such as rate caps and floors, which restrict changes in their interest rates.

Factors such as inflation, recession, unemployment, money supply, global disorder, instability in domestic and foreign financial markets, and other factors beyond Independent's control, may affect interest rates. Changes in market interest rates will also affect the level of voluntary prepayments on loans and the receipt of payments on mortgage-backed securities, resulting in the receipt of proceeds that may have to be reinvested at a lower rate than the loan or mortgage-backed security being prepaid.

The state of the financial and credit markets, and potential sovereign debt defaults may severely impact the global and domestic economies and may lead to a significantly tighter environment in terms of liquidity and availability of credit. Economic growth may slow down and the national economy may experience additional recession periods. Market disruption, government and central bank policy actions intended to counteract the effects of recession, changes in investor expectations regarding compensation for market risk, credit risk and liquidity risk and changing economic data could continue to have dramatic effects on both the volatility of and the magnitude of the directional movements of interest rates. Although Independent pursues an asset/liability management strategy designed to control its risk from changes in interest rates, changes in market interest rates can have a material adverse effect on Independent's profitability.

A further deterioration of the credit rating for U.S. long-term sovereign debt could adversely impact Independent.

On August 5, 2011, Standard and Poor's downgraded the U.S. long-term sovereign debt from AAA, the highest rating, to AA+, the second highest rating. This downgrade does not directly impact the immediate current financial position or outlook for Independent, but a further downgrade could result in a re-evaluation of the risk-free rate used in many accounting models, other-than-temporary-impairment of securities and/or impairment of goodwill and other intangibles.

If Independent has higher than anticipated loan losses than it has modeled, its earnings could materially decrease.

Independent's loan customers may not repay loans according to their terms, and the collateral securing the payment of loans may be insufficient to assure repayment. Independent may therefore experience significant credit losses which could have a material adverse effect on its operating results and capital ratios. Independent makes various assumptions and judgments about the collectability of its loan portfolio, including the creditworthiness of borrowers and the value of the real estate and other assets serving as collateral for the

Table of Contents

repayment of loans. In determining the amount of the allowance for loan losses, Independent relies on its experience and its evaluation of economic conditions. If its assumptions prove to be incorrect, its current allowance for loan losses may not be sufficient to cover losses inherent in its loan portfolio and an adjustment may be necessary to allow for different economic conditions or adverse developments in its loan portfolio. Consequently, a problem with one or more loans could require Independent to significantly increase the level of its provision for loan losses. In addition, federal and state regulators periodically review Independent's allowance for loan losses and may require it to increase its provision for loan losses or recognize further loan charge-offs. Material additions to the allowance would materially decrease Independent's net income.

A significant amount of Independent's loans are concentrated in Rockland Trust's geographic footprint and adverse conditions in this area could negatively impact its operations.

Substantially all of the loans Independent originates are secured by properties located in, or are made to businesses which operate in Massachusetts, and to a lesser extent Rhode Island. Because of the current concentration of Independent's loan origination activities in its geographic footprint, in the event of continued adverse economic conditions, including, but not limited to, increased unemployment, continued downward pressure on the value of residential and commercial real estate, political or business developments, that may affect the ability of property owners and businesses to make payments of principal and interest on the underlying loans in Rockland Trust's geographic footprint. Independent would likely experience higher rates of loss and delinquency on its loans than if its loans were more geographically diversified, which could have an adverse effect on its results of operations or financial condition.

Independent operates in a highly regulated environment and may be adversely impacted by changes in law, regulations, and accounting policies.

Independent is subject to extensive regulation, supervision and examination. Any change in the laws or regulations and failure by Independent to comply with applicable law and regulation, or a change in regulators' supervisory policies or examination procedures, whether by the Massachusetts Commissioner of Banks, the FDIC, the Federal Reserve Board, other state or federal regulators, the United States Congress, or the Massachusetts legislature could have a material adverse effect on Independent's business, financial condition, results of operations, and cash flows. Changes in accounting policies, practices and standards, as may be adopted by the regulatory agencies as well as the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board, the Financial Accounting Standards Board, and other accounting standard setters, could also negatively impact Independent's financial results.

The Dodd-Frank Act will have a significant impact on the regulatory structure of the financial markets and will impose additional costs on Independent.

The Dodd-Frank Act, among other things, establishes a new Financial Stability Oversight Council to monitor systemic risk posed by financial institutions, restricts proprietary trading and private fund investment activities by banking institutions, creates a new framework for the regulation of derivatives and revises the FDIC's assessment base for deposit insurance. Provisions in the Dodd-Frank Act may also restrict the flexibility of financial institutions to compensate their employees. In addition, provisions in the Dodd-Frank Act may require changes to existing capital rules or affect their interpretations by institutions or regulators, which could have an adverse effect on Independent's business operations, capital structure, capital ratios or financial performance. The final effects of the Dodd-Frank Act on Independent's business will depend largely on the implementation of the Dodd-Frank Act by regulatory bodies and the exercise of discretion by these regulatory bodies.

Independent has strong competition within its market area which may limit Independent's growth and profitability.

Independent faces significant competition both in attracting deposits and in the origination of loans. Commercial banks, credit unions, savings banks, savings and loan associations operating in Independent's primary market area have historically provided most of its competition for deposits. Competition for the

Table of Contents

origination of real estate and other loans come from other commercial banks, thrift institutions, credit unions, insurance companies, finance companies, other institutional lenders and mortgage companies.

The success of Independent is dependent on hiring and retaining certain key personnel.

Independent's performance is largely dependent on the talents and efforts of highly skilled individuals. Independent relies on key personnel to manage and operate its business, including major revenue generating functions such as loan and deposit generation. The loss of key staff may adversely affect Independent's ability to maintain and manage these functions effectively, which could negatively affect Independent's revenues. In addition, loss of key personnel could result in increased recruiting and hiring expenses, which could cause a decrease in Independent's net income. Independent's continued ability to compete effectively depends on its ability to attract new employees and to retain and motivate its existing employees.

Independent's business strategy of growth in part through acquisitions could have an impact on its earnings and results of operations that may negatively impact the value of Independent's stock.

In recent years, Independent has focused, in part, on growth through acquisitions. From time to time in the ordinary course of business, Independent engages in preliminary discussions with potential acquisition targets. The consummation of any future acquisitions may dilute stockholder value. Although Independent's business strategy emphasizes organic expansion combined with acquisitions, there can be no assurance that, in the future, Independent will successfully identify suitable acquisition candidates, complete acquisitions and successfully integrate acquired operations into our existing operations or expand into new markets. There can be no assurance that acquisitions will not have an adverse effect upon Independent's operating results while the operations of the acquired business are being integrated into Independent's operations. In addition, once integrated, acquired operations may not achieve levels of profitability comparable to those achieved by Independent's existing operations, or otherwise perform as expected. Further, transaction-related expenses may adversely affect Independent's earnings. These adverse effects on Independent's earnings and results of operations may have a negative impact on the value of Independent's stock.

Difficult market conditions have adversely affected the industry in which Independent operates.

Dramatic declines in the housing market over the past several years, with falling real estate values and increasing foreclosures, unemployment, and under-employment have negatively impacted the credit performance of mortgage loans and resulted in significant write-downs of asset values by financial institutions, including government-sponsored entities as well as major commercial and investment banks. These write-downs, initially of mortgage-backed securities but spreading to credit default swaps and other derivative and cash securities, in turn, have caused many financial institutions to seek additional capital, to merge with larger and stronger institutions and, in some cases to fail. Reflecting concern about the stability of the financial markets generally and the strength of counterparties, many lenders and institutional investors have reduced or ceased providing funding to borrowers, including to other financial institutions. This market turmoil and tightening of credit have led to an increased level of commercial and consumer delinquencies, lack of consumer confidence, increased market volatility and widespread reduction of business activity generally. The resulting economic pressure on consumers and lack of confidence in the financial markets could materially affect Independent's business, financial condition and results of operations. A worsening of these conditions would likely exacerbate the adverse effects of these difficult market conditions on Independent and others in the financial services industry. In particular, Independent may face the following risks in connection with these events:

Independent may expect to face increased regulation of its industry. Compliance with such regulation may increase its costs and limit its ability to pursue business opportunities.

Market developments may affect customer confidence levels and may cause increases in loan delinquencies and default rates, which Independent expects could impact its loan charge-offs and provision for loan losses.

Table of Contents

Deterioration or defaults made by issuers of the underlying collateral of Independent's investment securities may cause additional credit related other-than-temporary impairment charges to Independent's income statement.

Independent's ability to borrow from other financial institutions or to access the debt or equity capital markets on favorable terms or at all could be adversely affected by further disruptions in the capital markets or other events, including actions by rating agencies and deteriorating investor expectations.

Competition in the industry could intensify as a result of the increasing consolidation of financial services companies in connection with current market conditions.

Independent may be required to pay significantly higher FDIC premiums because market developments could significantly deplete the insurance fund of the FDIC and reduce the ratio of reserves to insured deposits.

It may become necessary or advisable for Independent, due to changes in regulatory requirements, change in market conditions, or for other reasons, to hold more capital or to alter the forms of capital it currently maintains.

Independent's securities portfolio performance in difficult market conditions could have adverse effects on Independent's results of operations.

Under U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, Independent is required to review Independent's investment portfolio periodically for the presence of other-than-temporary impairment of its securities, taking into consideration current market conditions, the extent and nature of changes in fair value, issuer rating changes and trends, volatility of earnings, current analysts' evaluations, Independent's ability and intent to hold investments until a recovery of fair value, as well as other factors. Adverse developments with respect to one or more of the foregoing factors may require Independent to deem particular securities to be other-than-temporarily impaired, with the credit related portion of the reduction in the value recognized as a charge to Independent's earnings. Recent market volatility has made it extremely difficult to value certain of Independent's securities. Subsequent valuations, in light of factors prevailing at that time, may result in significant changes in the values of these securities in future periods. Any of these factors could require Independent to recognize further impairments in the value of Independent's securities portfolio, which may have an adverse effect on Independent's results of operations in future periods.

Impairment of goodwill and/or intangible assets could require charges to earnings, which could result in a negative impact on our results of operations.

Goodwill arises when a business is purchased for an amount greater than the net fair value of its assets. Rockland Trust has recognized goodwill as an asset on the balance sheet in connection with several recent acquisitions. When an intangible asset is determined to have an indefinite useful life, it is not amortized, and instead is evaluated for impairment. Goodwill is subject to impairment tests annually, or more frequently if necessary, and is evaluated using a two step impairment approach. A significant and sustained decline in Independent's stock price and market capitalization, a significant decline in Independent's expected future cash flows, a significant adverse change in the business climate, slower growth rates or other factors could result in impairment of goodwill or other intangible assets. If Independent were to conclude that a future write-down of the goodwill or intangible assets is necessary, then Independent would record the appropriate charge to earnings, which could be materially adverse to the results of operations and financial position.

Deterioration in the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) of Boston's capital might restrict the FHLB of Boston's ability to meet the funding needs of its members, cause a suspension of its dividend, and cause its stock to be determined to be impaired.

Significant components of Rockland Trust's liquidity needs are met through its access to funding pursuant to its membership in the FHLB of Boston. The FHLB is a cooperative that provides services to its member banking institutions. The primary reason for joining the FHLB is to obtain funding from the FHLB of Boston.

Table of Contents

The purchase of stock in the FHLB is a requirement for a member to gain access to funding. Any deterioration in the FHLB's performance may affect Independent's access to funding and/or require Independent to deem the required investment in FHLB stock to be impaired.

Reductions in the value of Independent's deferred tax assets could affect earnings adversely.

A deferred tax asset is created by the tax effect of the differences between an asset's book value and its tax basis. Independent assesses the deferred tax assets periodically to determine the likelihood of Independent's ability to realize their benefits. These assessments consider the performance of the associated business and its ability to generate future taxable income. If the information available to Independent at the time of assessment indicates there is a greater than 50% chance that Independent will not realize the deferred tax asset benefit, Independent is required to establish a valuation allowance for it and reduce its future tax assets to the amount Independent believes could be realized in future tax returns. Recording such a valuation allowance could have a material adverse effect on the results of operations or financial position. Additionally the deferred tax asset is measured using enacted tax rates expected to apply to taxable income in the years in which the temporary differences are expected to be recovered or settled. Accordingly a change in enacted tax rates may result in a decrease/increase to Independent's deferred tax asset.

Independent will need to keep pace with evolving information technology and guard against and react to increased cyber security risks and electronic fraud.

The potential need to adapt to changes in information technology could adversely impact Independent's operations and require increased capital spending. The risk of electronic fraudulent activity within the financial services industry, especially in the commercial banking sector due to cyber criminals targeting bank accounts and other customer information, could adversely impact Independent's operations, damage its reputation and require increased capital spending.

Independent's business depends on maintaining the trust and confidence of customers and other market participants, and the resulting good reputation is critical to its business.

Independent's ability to originate and maintain accounts is highly dependent upon the perceptions of consumer and commercial borrowers and deposit holders and other external perceptions of Independent's business practices or financial health. Independent's reputation is vulnerable to many threats that can be difficult or impossible to control, and costly or impossible to remediate. Regulatory inquiries, employee misconduct and rumors, among other things, can substantially damage Independent's reputation, even if they are baseless or satisfactorily addressed. Adverse perceptions regarding Independent's reputation in the consumer, commercial and funding markets could lead to difficulties in generating and maintaining accounts as well as in financing them and to decreases in the levels of deposits that consumer and commercial customers and potential customers choose to maintain with Independent, any of which could have a material adverse effect on Independent's business and financial results.

If Independent's risk management framework does not effectively identify or mitigate Independent's risks, Independent could suffer unexpected losses and could be materially adversely affected.

Independent's risk management framework seeks to mitigate risk and appropriately balance risk and return. Independent has established processes and procedures intended to identify, measure, monitor and report the types of risk to which its subject, including credit risk, operations risk, compliance risk, reputation risk, strategic risk, market risk and liquidity risk. Independent seeks to monitor and control its risk exposure through a framework of policies, procedures and reporting requirements. Management of Independent's risks in some cases depends upon the use of analytical and/or forecasting models. If the models used to mitigate these risks are inadequate, Independent may incur losses. In addition, there may be risks that exist, or that develop in the future, that Independent has not appropriately anticipated, identified or mitigated. If Independent's risk management framework does not effectively identify or mitigate its risks, Independent could suffer unexpected losses and could be materially adversely affected.

Table of Contents

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This document contains or incorporates by reference a number of forward-looking statements regarding the financial condition, results of operations, earnings outlook, and business prospects of Independent, Central and the potential combined company and may include statements for the period following the completion of the merger. You can find many of these statements by looking for words such as expects, projects, anticipates, believes, intends, estimates, strategy, plan, potential, possible and other similar expressions.

The forward-looking statements involve certain assumptions, risks and uncertainties. In particular, the ability of either Independent or Central to predict results or actual effects of its plans and strategies, or those of the combined company, is inherently uncertain. Accordingly, actual results may differ materially from those expressed in, or implied by, the forward-looking statements. You therefore are cautioned not to place undue reliance on these statements, which speak only as of the date of this document or the date of any document incorporated by reference in this document. Some of the factors that may cause actual results or earnings to differ materially from those contemplated by the forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, those discussed elsewhere in this proxy statement/prospectus under Risk Factors and those discussed in the filings of each of Independent that are incorporated herein by reference, as well as the following:

those risks and uncertainties Independent and Central discuss or identify in their public filings with the SEC;

the risk that the businesses of Independent and Central will not be integrated successfully or such integration may be more difficult, time-consuming or costly than expected;

revenues following the merger may be lower than expected;

competitive pressure among financial services companies may increase significantly;

general economic or business conditions, either nationally, regionally, or in the markets in which Independent and Central do business, may be less favorable than expected;

changes in the interest rate environment may reduce interest margins and impact funding sources;

changes in both companies' businesses during the period between now and the completion of the merger may have adverse impacts on the combined company;

changes in market rates and prices may adversely impact the value of financial products and assets;

deterioration in the credit markets may adversely impact either company or its business;

legislation or regulatory environments, requirements, or changes, including changes in accounting methods, may adversely affect businesses in which either company is engaged;

litigation liabilities, including costs, expenses, settlements and judgments, may adversely affect either company or its businesses;

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

deposit attrition, operating costs, customer loss and business disruption following the merger, including difficulties in maintaining relationships with employees, may be greater than expected; and

the ability to obtain timely governmental approvals of the merger without the imposition of any conditions that would adversely affect the potential combined company.

These forward-looking statements are subject to assumptions, risks and uncertainties, and actual results may differ materially from those expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements.

All subsequent written and oral forward-looking statements concerning the merger or other matters addressed in this document and attributable to Independent or Central or any person acting on their behalf are expressly qualified in their entirety by the cautionary statements contained or referred to in this section. Except to the extent required by applicable law or regulation, Independent and Central undertake no obligation to update these forward-looking statements to reflect events or circumstances after the date of this document or to reflect the occurrence of unanticipated events.

Table of Contents**SUMMARY HISTORICAL AND UNAUDITED PRO FORMA FINANCIAL INFORMATION****Comparative Per Share Market Price Information**

Independent common stock trades on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol INDB and Central common stock trades on the NASDAQ Global Market under the symbol CEBK. The following presents the closing sale prices of Independent common stock and Central common stock on April 30, 2012, the last trading day before we announced the merger agreement, and July 30, 2012, the last practicable trading day prior to mailing this document. The table also represents the equivalent value of the stock consideration to be paid in the merger per share of Central common stock on those dates, calculated by multiplying the closing price of Independent common stock on those dates by an exchange ratio calculated in accordance with the merger agreement based on the volume weighted average price of Independent common stock for the respective twenty trading day period ending on such dates, which represents number of shares of Independent common stock that Central's shareholders would receive in the merger for each share of Central common stock using such exchange ratio.

Date	Independent Closing Price	Central Closing Price	Exchange Ratio	Equivalent Per Share Value
April 30, 2012	\$ 28.07	\$ 18.05	1.1372	\$ 31.92
July 30, 2012	\$ 29.88	\$ 31.93	1.0764	\$ 32.16

The above table shows only historical comparisons. These comparisons may not provide meaningful information to Central shareholders in determining whether to approve the merger agreement. Central shareholders are urged to obtain current market quotations for Independent and Central common stock and to review carefully the other information contained in this proxy statement/prospectus or incorporated by reference into this proxy statement/prospectus in considering whether to approve the merger agreement. See the section entitled "Where You Can Find More Information" beginning on page 126 of this proxy statement/prospectus.

Comparative Stock Prices and Dividends

The following table sets forth, for the periods indicated, the high and low sale prices per share of Independent common stock as reported by the NASDAQ Global Select Market and the high and low sale prices per share of Central common stock as reported by the NASDAQ Global Market. The table also provides information as to dividends paid per share of Independent common stock and Central common stock. As of July 23, 2012, there were 21,639,373 shares of Independent common stock issued and outstanding and approximately 2,595 shareholders of record and 1,690,951 shares of Central common stock issued and outstanding and approximately 194 shareholders of record.

	Independent Sales Prices			Central Sales Prices		
	High	Low	Dividend per Share	High	Low	Dividend per Share
2010						
Quarter Ended March 31,	\$ 26.76	\$ 21.00	\$ 0.18	\$ 10.09	\$ 8.11	\$ 0.05
Quarter Ended June 30,	28.09	23.21	0.18	11.51	8.56	0.05
Quarter Ended September 30,	25.55	20.91	0.18	14.17	9.80	0.05
Quarter Ended December 31,	28.09	22.35	0.18	15.30	12.43	0.05
2011						
Quarter Ended March 31,	\$ 28.83	\$ 25.48	\$ 0.19	\$ 20.00	\$ 13.50	\$ 0.05
Quarter Ended June 30,	29.98	25.95	0.19	20.88	17.11	0.05
Quarter Ended September 30,	27.91	20.86	0.19	20.85	16.02	0.05
Quarter Ended December 31,	27.95	20.42	0.19	19.45	16.05	0.05
2012						
Quarter Ended March 31,	\$ 29.27	\$ 26.46	\$ 0.21	\$ 18.83	\$ 17.20	\$ 0.05
Quarter Ended June 30,	29.35	26.07	0.21	31.72	18.00	\$ 0.05

Table of Contents

The annualized dividend payout ratio on a share of Independent common stock as of June 30, 2012 is 51.2%. After completion of this offering, subject to approval and declaration by the Independent board of directors, Independent anticipates that it will continue to declare quarterly cash dividends on shares of its common stock consistent with past practices.

Central expects to continue to declare quarterly cash dividends on Central common stock until the merger is completed, subject to terms and conditions of the merger agreement. Holders of Central common stock will stop receiving cash dividends with respect to shares of Central common stock upon completion of the merger, when the separate corporate existence of Central will cease.

Historical and Pro Forma Per Share Data

We have summarized below historical earnings, dividend and book value per share information for Independent and Central and additional similar information as if the companies had been combined for the periods shown, which we refer to as pro forma information. The pro forma combined and pro forma equivalent per share information gives effect to the merger as if the transaction had been effective at the year or quarter end dates presented, in the case of book value data, and as if the transaction had been effective at the beginning of each period presented, in the case of the earnings and dividend data.

The pro forma combined and pro forma equivalent per share information below is based on the historical consolidated financial statements of Independent and Central. Pro forma information is based upon Independent's closing price of \$28.73 and \$27.29 on March 30, 2012 and December 31, 2011, respectively. Pro forma equivalent per share amounts for Central are based on multiplying the pro forma combined amounts by the base exchange ratio of 1.1165.

We expect that both Independent and Central will incur merger and integration costs as a result of the merger. We also anticipate that the merger will provide the combined company with financial benefits that may include reduced operating expenses. The information set forth below, while helpful in illustrating the financial characteristics of the combined company under one set of assumptions, may not reflect all of these anticipated financial expenses and does not reflect any of these anticipated financial benefits and, accordingly, does not attempt to predict or suggest future results. It also does not necessarily reflect what the historical results of the combined company would have been had our companies been combined during the periods presented.

Table of Contents

The information in the following table is based on, and you should read it together with, the historical financial information and the notes thereto for Independent and Central contained in this proxy statement/prospectus.

	For the Year Ended December 31, 2011	For the Quarter Ended March 31, 2012
Book value per share:		
Independent Bank historical	\$ 21.82	\$ 22.16
Central Bancorp historical	20.72	20.92
Pro forma combined	22.10	22.49
Central Bancorp pro forma equivalent	24.67	25.11
Tangible book value per share:		
Independent Bank historical	\$ 15.27	\$ 15.67
Central Bancorp historical	19.40	19.60
Pro forma combined	14.55	14.98
Central Bancorp pro forma equivalent	16.25	16.73
Cash dividends declared per share:		
Independent Bank historical	\$ 0.76	\$ 0.21
Central Bancorp historical	0.20	0.05
Pro forma combined	0.76	0.21
Central Bancorp pro forma equivalent	0.84	0.23
Basic net income per share:		
Independent Bank historical	\$ 2.12	\$ 0.57
Central Bancorp historical	0.10	(0.05)
Pro forma combined	2.02	0.53
Central Bancorp pro forma equivalent	2.26	0.59
Diluted net income per share:		
Independent Bank historical	\$ 2.12	\$ 0.56
Central Bancorp historical	0.09	(0.05)
Pro forma combined	2.01	0.53
Central Bancorp pro forma equivalent	2.24	0.59

Table of Contents**Independent Selected Historical Financial and Operating Data**

The following table provides summary historical consolidated financial data for Independent as of the end of and for each of the fiscal years in the five-year period ended December 31, 2011, as of the end of and for the three months ended March 31, 2012 and March 31, 2011. The historical consolidated financial data as of the end of and for each of the fiscal years in the five-year period ended December 31, 2011 have been derived in part from Independent's audited financial statements and related notes incorporated by reference into this document. The historical consolidated financial data as of the end of and for the three months ended March 31, 2012 and March 31, 2011 have been derived from Independent's unaudited financial statements and related notes incorporated by reference into this document. The following information is only a summary and you should read it in conjunction with Independent's financial statements and related notes incorporated by reference into this document.

	At or for the Three Months Ended March 31,			At or for the Year Ended December 31,			
	2012	2011	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
	<i>(Dollars in Thousands, Except Per Share Data)</i>						
FINANCIAL CONDITION DATA:							
Securities available for sale	\$ 362,109	\$ 341,362	\$ 305,332	\$ 377,457	\$ 508,650	\$ 575,688	\$ 427,998
Securities held to maturity	200,921	239,305	204,956	202,732	93,410	32,789	45,265
Loans	3,869,756	3,628,374	3,794,390	3,555,679	3,395,515	2,652,536	2,031,824
Allowance for loan losses	48,340	46,444	48,260	46,255	42,361	37,049	26,831
Goodwill and core deposit intangibles	140,323	141,951	140,722	141,956	143,730	125,710	60,411
Total assets	4,985,739	4,645,783	4,970,240	4,695,738	4,482,021	3,628,469	2,768,413
Total deposits	3,945,713	3,584,926	3,876,829	3,627,783	3,375,294	2,579,080	2,026,610
Total borrowings	484,115	556,718	537,686	565,434	647,397	695,317	504,344
Stockholders' equity	478,863	447,985	469,057	436,472	412,649	305,274	220,465
Nonperforming loans	31,646	23,397	28,953	23,108	36,183	26,933	7,644
Nonperforming assets	40,736	33,856	37,149	31,493	41,245	29,883	8,325
Shares outstanding	21,608,285	21,407,211	21,499,768	21,220,801	20,935,421	16,285,455	13,746,711
OPERATING DATA:							
Interest income	\$ 47,796	\$ 48,958	\$ 195,751	\$ 202,724	\$ 202,689	\$ 175,440	\$ 158,524
Interest expense	5,943	7,485	28,672	38,763	51,995	58,926	63,555
Net interest income	41,853	41,473	167,079	163,961	150,694	116,514	94,969
Provision for loan losses	1,600	2,200	11,482	18,655	17,335	10,888	3,130
Noninterest income	13,909	12,598	52,700	46,906	38,192	29,032	33,265
Noninterest expenses	37,358	36,482	145,713	139,745	141,815	104,143	87,932
Net income	12,183	11,188	45,436	40,240	22,989	23,964	28,381
Preferred stock dividend					5,698		
Net income available to the common shareholder	12,183	11,188	45,436	40,240	17,291	23,964	28,381
PER SHARE DATA:							
Net income-basic	\$ 0.57	\$ 0.53	\$ 2.12	\$ 1.90	\$ 0.88	\$ 1.53	\$ 2.02
Net income-diluted	0.56	0.52	2.12	1.90	0.88	1.52	2.00
Cash dividends declared	0.21	0.19	0.76	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.68
Book value	22.16	20.93	21.82	20.57	19.58	18.75	16.04
OPERATING RATIOS:							
Return on average assets	1.00%	0.98%	0.96%	0.88%	0.40%	0.73%	1.05%
Return on average common equity	10.31%	10.24%	9.93%	9.46%	4.29%	8.20%	12.93%
Net interest margin (on a fully tax equivalent basis)	3.82%	4.02%	3.90%	3.95%	3.89%	3.95%	3.90%
Equity to assets	9.60%	9.64%	9.44%	9.30%	9.21%	8.41%	7.96%
Dividend payout ratio	37.26%	36.33%	35.88%	37.93%	82.79%	48.95%	33.41%
ASSET QUALITY RATIOS:							
Nonperforming loans as a percent of gross loans	0.82%	0.64%	0.76%	0.65%	1.07%	1.02%	0.38%

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

Nonperforming assets as a percent of total assets	0.82%	0.73%	0.75%	0.67%	0.92%	0.82%	0.30%
Allowance for loan losses as a percent of total loans	1.25%	1.28%	1.27%	1.30%	1.25%	1.40%	1.32%
Allowance for loan losses as a percent of nonperforming loans	152.75%	198.50%	166.68%	200.17%	117.07%	137.56%	351.01%
CAPITAL RATIOS:							
Tier 1 leverage capital ratio	8.77%	8.48%	8.61%	8.19%	7.87%	7.55%	8.02%
Tier 1 risk-based capital ratio	10.71%	10.48%	10.74%	10.28%	9.83%	9.50%	10.27%
Total risk-based capital ratio	12.73%	12.55%	12.78%	12.37%	11.92%	11.85%	11.52%

Table of Contents**Central Selected Historical Consolidated Financial Data**

The following table provides summary historical consolidated financial data for Central as of the end of and for each of the fiscal years in the five-year period ended March 31, 2012. The historical consolidated financial data as of the end of and for each of the fiscal years in the five-year period ended March 31, 2012 have been derived in part from Central's audited financial statements and related notes that appear beginning on page 26 of this document. The following information is only a summary and you should read it in conjunction with Central's financial statements and related notes that appear beginning on page 26 of this document.

	2012	At or for the Year Ended March 31,			2008
		2011	2010	2009	
		<i>(Dollars in Thousands, Except Per Share Data)</i>			
FINANCIAL CONDITION DATA:					
Securities available for sale	\$ 39,060	\$ 25,185	\$ 34,368	\$ 35,215	\$ 52,960
Loans	448,886	394,217	461,510	460,670	474,942
Allowance for loan losses	4,272	3,892	3,038	3,191	3,613
Goodwill	2,232	2,232	2,232	2,232	2,232
Total assets	523,572	487,625	542,444	575,827	571,245
Total deposits	344,534	309,077	339,169	375,074	361,089
Total borrowings	128,569	128,692	154,810	156,938	168,173
Stockholders' equity	45,346	47,121	45,113	40,239	38,816
Nonperforming loans	9,048	9,581	6,246	4,767	9,606
Nonperforming assets	9,181	9,713	6,306	7,753	9,606
Shares outstanding	1,690,951	1,681,071	1,667,151	1,639,951	1,639,951
OPERATING DATA:					
Interest income	\$ 22,720	\$ 25,305	\$ 28,357	\$ 30,291	\$ 32,083
Interest expense	6,617	7,923	11,524	14,429	18,487
Net interest income	16,103	17,382	17,013	15,862	13,596
Provision for loan losses	1,400	1,100	600	2,125	(70)
Net gain (loss) from sales and write-downs of Investment securities	541	136	(465)	(9,796)	645
Gain on sale of loans	143	251	329	111	158
Other noninterest income	1,642	1,671	1,547	1,640	1,429
Noninterest expenses	16,087	15,669	15,146	15,159	13,859
Net income (loss)	851	1,725	1,993	(6,205)	1,447
Net income available to common shareholders	(15)	1,105	1,380	(6,403)	1,447
PER SHARE DATA:					
Net income (loss)-basic	\$ (0.01)	\$ 0.74	\$ 0.95	\$ (4.58)	\$ 1.07
Net income (loss)-diluted	(0.01)	0.68	0.92	(4.58)	1.07
Cash dividends declared	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.72	0.72
Book value	20.92	22.26	21.31	18.76	23.67
Tangible book value per common share	19.60	20.93	19.97	17.40	22.31
OPERATING RATIOS:					
Return on average assets	0.17%	0.33%	0.36%	-1.12%	0.26%
Return on average stockholder's equity	1.84%	3.74%	4.66%	-16.68%	3.76%
Net interest margin (on a fully tax equivalent basis)	3.34%	3.50%	3.21%	2.96%	2.51%
Equity to assets	8.66%	9.66%	8.32%	6.99%	6.79%
Dividend payout ratio	n/a	29.41%	21.74%	n/a	67.29%
ASSET QUALITY RATIOS:					
Nonperforming loans as a percent of gross loans	2.02%	2.43%	1.35%	1.03%	2.02%
Nonperforming assets as a percent of total assets	1.75%	1.99%	1.16%	1.35%	1.68%
Allowance for loan losses as a percent of total loans	0.95%	0.99%	0.66%	0.69%	0.76%
Allowance for loan losses as a percent of nonperforming loans	47.21%	40.62%	48.64%	66.94%	37.61%
CAPITAL RATIOS:					
Tier 1 leverage capital ratio	9.83%	10.66%	9.22%	7.77%	8.49%
Tier 1 risk-based capital ratio	15.09%	17.22%	14.24%	11.56%	10.63%
Total risk-based capital ratio	16.39%	18.53%	15.12%	12.41%	11.44%
N/a means either not applicable or not meaningful.					

Table of Contents

THE SPECIAL MEETING OF CENTRAL SHAREHOLDERS

Date, Time and Place of the Special Meeting

The special meeting of shareholders of Central will be held at Holiday Inn - Somerville, located at 30 Washington Street, Somerville, Massachusetts 02143 on _____, 2012 at 11:00 a.m., Eastern Daylight Time.

Purpose of the Special Meeting

At the special meeting, holders of Central common stock will be asked to:

1. approve the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement, including the merger (the Central merger agreement proposal);
2. approve one or more adjournments of the special meeting, if necessary or appropriate, including adjournments to permit further solicitation of proxies in favor of the Central merger agreement proposal (the Central adjournment proposal);
3. vote on a non-binding advisory resolution approving certain compensation payable to the named executive officers of Central in connection with the merger; and
4. transact any other business which may properly come before the special meeting or any adjournment or postponement thereof.

Recommendation of Central's Board of Directors

The Central board of directors has determined that the merger agreement is advisable and in the best interests of Central and its shareholders and unanimously recommends that shareholders vote FOR approval of the Central merger agreement proposal, FOR the Central adjournment proposal and FOR the non-binding advisory resolution approving certain compensation payable to the named executive officers of Central in connection with the merger.

Record Date; Shares Entitled to Vote

Only holders of record of Central common stock at the close of business on the record date of July 23, 2012, are entitled to notice of and to vote at the Central special meeting. As of the record date, there were 1,690,951 shares of Central common stock outstanding, held of record by approximately 194 holders of record. Each holder of Central common stock is entitled to one vote for each share of Central common stock he, she or it owned as of the record date.

A list of Central's shareholders as of the record date will be available for review by any Central shareholder entitled to vote at the Central special meeting, the shareholder's agent or attorney at Central's principal executive offices during regular business hours beginning two business days after notice of the Central special meeting is given and continuing through the meeting.

Quorum; Vote Required

A quorum of Central shareholders is necessary to hold a valid meeting. If the holders of at least a majority of the total number of outstanding shares of Central common stock entitled to vote are represented in person or by proxy at the special meeting, a quorum will exist. Central will include proxies marked as abstentions in determining the number of shares present at the special meeting.

The affirmative vote of the holders of at least two-thirds of the outstanding shares of Central common stock entitled to vote as of the record date is required to approve the Central merger agreement proposal. If you do not vote, either in person or by proxy, it will have the same effect as voting against approval of the Central merger agreement proposal.

Table of Contents

A majority of the votes cast is required to approve each of the Central adjournment proposal and the non-binding resolution regarding certain compensation of Central's named executive officers in connection with the merger.

Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management

Persons and groups beneficially owning in excess of five percent (5%) of the Central's common stock are required to file certain reports regarding such ownership pursuant to the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the Exchange Act). The following table sets forth certain information as to those persons who Central believes were the beneficial owners of more than 5% of the Company's outstanding shares of Common Stock as of July 23, 2012.

Name and Address of Beneficial Owner	Amount and Nature Beneficial Ownership (1)	Percent of Shares of Common Stock Outstanding (2)
Central Co-operative Bank Employee Stock Ownership Plan Trust 399 Highland Avenue Somerville, Massachusetts 02144 John D. Doherty 399 Highland Avenue Somerville, Massachusetts 02144	365,922(3)	21.6%
PRB Investors, L.P. PRB Advisors, L.L.C. Stephen J. Paluszek Andrew P. Bergman 245 Park Avenue, 24th Floor New York, New York 10167	308,739(4)	18.3
	111,903(5)	6.6

- (1) In accordance with Rule 13d-3 under the Exchange Act, a person is deemed to be the beneficial owner, for purposes of this table, of any shares of Central's common stock as to which he has sole or shared voting or investment power, or has a right to acquire beneficial ownership of at any time within 60 days of July 23, 2012. As used herein, "voting power" is the power to vote or direct the voting of shares and "investment power" is the power to dispose or direct the disposition of shares. Unless otherwise indicated, the listed persons have direct ownership and sole voting and dispositive power.
- (2) For purposes of calculating percentage ownership, the number of shares of Central's common stock outstanding includes any shares which the beneficial owner has the right to acquire within 60 days of July 23, 2012. Based on 1,690,951 shares outstanding as of July 23, 2012.
- (3) Of the shares beneficially owned by the Central Co-operative Bank Employee Stock Ownership Plan Trust (ESOP) as of July 23, 2012, 224,192 shares have been allocated to participating employees over which shares the trustees of the ESOP (the ESOP Trustees) and 141,730 shares have not been allocated, as to which shares the ESOP Trustees generally would vote in the same proportion as voting directions received from voting ESOP participants. The ESOP Trustees disclaim any beneficial ownership interest in the shares held by the ESOP.
- (4) Includes 24,897 shares of Central's common stock allocated to the account of John D. Doherty in the ESOP, 10,049 shares of unvested restricted stock awarded under the Central Bancorp, Inc. 2006 Long-Term Incentive Plan and 11,561 shares subject to stock options granted under the Central Bancorp, Inc. 1999 Stock Option and Incentive Plan which Mr. Doherty may acquire within 60 days of July 23,

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

2012.

- (5) Based on the Schedule 13G/A filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on February 14, 2012 by PRB Investors, L.P. and PRB Advisors, L.L.C., the sole general partner of PRB Investors, L.P., each of which may be deemed to beneficially own 111,903 shares of Central's common stock. In addition, Stephen J. Paluszek and Andrew P. Bergman, both controlling persons of PRB Advisors, L.L.C., may be deemed to beneficially own 111,903 shares. PRB Investors, L.P., PRB Advisors, L.L.C. and Messrs. Paluszek and Bergman share voting power and dispositive power with respect to the reported shares.

Table of Contents

The following table sets forth, as of July 23, 2012, the beneficial ownership of Central's common stock by each of Central's directors and named executive officers, and by all directors and executive officers as a group.

Name	Beneficial Ownership	
	Number of Shares	Percentage of Shares Outstanding (1)
John D. Doherty	308,739(2)	18.3%
Robert J. Hardiman	11,000	*
Raymond Mannos	2,500	*
Albert J. Mercuri, Jr.	3,990(3)	*
John J. Morrissey	2,777(3)	*
William P. Morrissey	66,571(4)	3.9
Gerald T. Mulligan	12,000(5)	*
Edward F. Sweeney, Jr.	301	*
Paul S. Feeley	17,259(6)	1.0
All directors and executive officers as a group (14 persons)	464,327(7)	26.8%

- (1) In calculating percentage ownership for a given individual or group of individuals, the number of shares of Central's common stock outstanding includes unissued shares subject to options exercisable within 60 days of July 23, 2012 held by that individual or group. Based on 1,690,951 shares outstanding as of July 23, 2012.
 - (2) Includes 24,897 shares of Central's common stock allocated to his account in the ESOP, 10,049 shares of unvested restricted stock and 11,561 shares which he has the right to acquire pursuant to options exercisable within 60 days of July 23, 2012.
 - (3) Includes shares credited to their accounts in the Deferred Compensation Plan for Non-Employee Directors as follows: Director Mercuri, 3,784 shares and Director John J. Morrissey, 2,648 shares.
 - (4) Includes 15,180 shares allocated to Mr. Morrissey's account in the ESOP and 12,520 shares which he has the right to acquire pursuant to options exercisable within 60 days of July 23, 2012.
 - (5) Includes 1,300 shares held by Mr. Mulligan's spouse.
 - (6) Includes 8,464 shares allocated to Mr. Feeley's ESOP account, 1,800 shares of unvested restricted stock and 3,995 shares of Central's common stock which he has the right to acquire pursuant to options exercisable within 60 days of July 23, 2012.
 - (7) Includes the 12,375 shares of Central's common stock which may be acquired by executive officers who are not named executive officers pursuant to stock options exercisable within 60 days of July 23, 2012, 4,080 shares of unvested restricted stock for executive officers who are not named executive officers and 16,378 shares allocated to the ESOP accounts of executive officers who are not named executive officers.
- * Represents less than 1% of the Central's outstanding common stock.

Central Voting Agreements

Under voting agreements with Independent, Central's directors have agreed to vote all of their shares of Central common stock in favor of the Central merger agreement proposal and have granted to Independent a proxy to vote their shares in favor of the proposal if they fail to do so. As of the record date for the Central special meeting, the Central shareholders who are parties to the Central voting agreements collectively had sole or shared voting power over 383,797 shares, or approximately 22.7%, of the Central common stock outstanding and entitled to vote at the special meeting. For more information about the Central voting agreements, see [Voting Agreements](#).

Table of Contents

Voting of Proxies

Central's board of directors requests that you submit the proxy card accompanying this document for use at the Central special meeting. Please complete, date and sign the proxy card and promptly return it in the enclosed pre-paid envelope. In addition, you may vote your shares through the Internet or by telephone by following the instructions included on the enclosed proxy card. If you vote your shares through the Internet or by telephone, please do not return the proxy card. Please see the proxy card for information regarding the deadline for voting through the Internet or by telephone.

All properly signed proxies received prior to the Central special meeting and not revoked before the vote at the special meeting will be voted at the special meeting according to the instructions indicated on the proxies or, if no instructions are given, the shares will be voted FOR approval of the Central merger agreement proposal and FOR the Central adjournment proposal, if necessary to solicit additional proxies, FOR the non-binding advisory resolution approving certain compensation payable to the named executive officers of Central in connection with the merger, and in the proxies' discretion with respect to any other matters as may properly come before the Central special meeting or any adjournment or postponement thereof.

We do not expect that any matters other than those set forth in the notice for the Central special meeting will be brought before the meeting. If other matters are properly presented and are within the purpose of the Central special meeting, however, the persons named as proxies will vote on those matters in such manner as shall be determined by a majority of Central's board of directors.

If you hold your shares of Central common stock in street name, meaning in the name of a bank, broker or other nominee who is the record holder, you must either direct the record holder of your shares of Central common stock how to vote your shares or obtain a proxy from the record holder to vote your shares in person at the special meeting.

If you have questions or need assistance in completing or submitting your proxy card, please contact Phoenix Advisory Partners at (877) 478-5038.

How to Revoke Your Proxy

You may revoke your proxy at any time by taking any of the following actions before your proxy is voted at the Central special meeting:

delivering a written notice bearing a date later than the date of your proxy card to the clerk/secretary of Central, stating that you revoke your proxy;

signing and delivering to the clerk/secretary of Central a new proxy card relating to the same shares and bearing a later date;

properly casting a new vote through the Internet or by telephone at any time before the closure of the Internet voting facilities and the telephone voting facilities; or

attending the Central special meeting and voting in person, but you also must file a written revocation with the clerk/secretary of the special meeting prior to the voting.

You should send any notice of revocation or your completed new proxy card, as the case may be, to Central at the following address:

Central Bancorp, Inc.

399 Highland Avenue

Somerville, Massachusetts 02144

Attention: Rhoda K. Astone, Secretary and Clerk

Table of Contents

If you have instructed a bank, broker or other nominee to vote your shares, you must follow the directions you receive from your bank, broker or other nominee to change your vote.

Voting in Person

If you plan to attend the Central special meeting and wish to vote in person, you will be given a ballot at the meeting. Please note, however, that if your shares are held of record by a broker, bank or other nominee and you wish to vote at the Central special meeting, you must bring additional documentation from the broker, bank or other nominee in order to vote your shares. Whether or not you plan to attend the Central special meeting, Central requests that you complete, sign, date and return the enclosed proxy card as soon as possible in the enclosed postage-paid envelope, or submit a proxy through the Internet or by telephone as described on the enclosed proxy card. This will not prevent you from voting in person at the Central special meeting but will assure that your vote is counted if you are unable to attend.

Participants in the Central Co-operative Bank Employee Stock Ownership Plan

If you are a participant in the Central Co-operative Bank Employee Stock Ownership Plan (the ESOP), you will receive a voting instruction form that reflects all shares you may vote under the ESOP. Under the terms of the ESOP, all shares held by the ESOP are voted by the ESOP trustees, but each participant in the ESOP may direct the trustees on how to vote the shares of Common Stock allocated to his or her account. Unallocated shares and allocated shares for which no timely voting instructions are received will be voted by the ESOP trustees in the same proportion as the shares for which the trustees have received timely voting instructions, provided that in the absence of any voting directions as to allocated stock, the Board of Directors of the Bank will direct the ESOP trustees as to the voting of all shares of stock in the ESOP. The deadline for returning your voting instruction form to the ESOP trustees is _____, 2012.

Abstentions and Broker Non-Votes

Only shares affirmatively voted for approval of the Central merger agreement proposal, including shares represented by properly executed proxies that do not contain voting instructions, will be counted as votes FOR the merger agreement proposal and the transactions contemplated thereby.

Brokers who hold shares of Central common stock in street name for a customer who is the beneficial owner of those shares may not exercise voting authority on the customer's shares with respect to the actions proposed in this document without specific instructions from the customer. Proxies submitted by a broker that do not exercise this voting authority are referred to as broker non-votes. If your broker holds your shares of Central common stock in street name, your broker will vote your shares only if you provide instructions on how to vote by filling out the voter instruction form sent to you by your broker with this document.

Accordingly, you are urged to mark and return the enclosed proxy card to indicate your vote, submit a proxy through the Internet or by telephone by following the instructions included on the enclosed proxy card, or fill out the voter instruction form, if applicable.

Abstentions will be included in determining the presence of a quorum at the Central special meeting, and abstentions and broker non-votes will have the same effect as voting against approval of the Central merger agreement proposal. Abstentions and broker non-votes will have no effect on the outcome of the Central adjournment proposal or the vote on the non-binding advisory resolution approving certain compensation payable to the named executive officers of Central in connection with the merger.

Table of Contents

Proxy Solicitation

Central will pay the costs of soliciting proxies from Central's shareholders for the Central special meeting. In addition to solicitation by mail, directors, officers and employees acting on behalf of Central may solicit proxies for the special meeting in person or by telephone, facsimile or other means of communication. Central will not pay any additional compensation to these directors, officers or employees for these activities, but may reimburse them for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses. Central will make arrangements with brokerage houses, custodians, nominees and fiduciaries for forwarding of proxy solicitation materials to beneficial owners of shares held of record by these brokerage houses, custodians, nominees and fiduciaries, and Central will reimburse these brokerage houses, custodians, nominees and fiduciaries for their reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the solicitation. Central has also engaged Phoenix Advisory Partners, a proxy soliciting firm, to assist in the solicitation of proxies for a fee of \$5,000 plus per item and out-of-pocket expenses.

Dissenters' Rights of Appraisal

Section 13.02(a)(1) of the Massachusetts Business Corporation Act generally provides that shareholders of Massachusetts corporations are entitled to assert appraisal rights in the event of a merger. Exemptions set forth in Section 13.02(a)(1) and (2) of the Massachusetts Business Corporation Act provide that shareholders are not entitled to appraisal rights in transactions that result in shareholders receiving either cash or marketable securities of the surviving corporation in exchange for marketable securities held by them. Central believes that this exemption applies because the merger is structured as a direct merger of Central into Independent, with Central shareholders entitled to either cash or marketable shares of Independent for their shares of Central common stock.

Section 13.20 of the Massachusetts Business Corporation Act requires Central to report to shareholders its conclusion as to whether shareholders are, are not, or may be entitled to assert appraisal rights. Central has concluded that shareholders are not entitled to assert appraisal rights in connection with the merger.

If you believe that you are entitled to appraisal rights, you should do the following pursuant to Part 13 of the Massachusetts Business Corporation Act:

deliver written notice of your intent to demand payment for your shares of Central common stock to Rhoda K. Astone, Secretary and Clerk, Central Bancorp, Inc., 399 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 01244 before the vote on the approval of the merger agreement is taken;

NOT vote for the approval of the merger agreement; and

comply with other procedures as are required by Part 13 of the Massachusetts Business Corporation Act.

As long as you do not vote for the approval of the merger agreement, failure to vote against the approval of the merger agreement does not constitute a waiver of any appraisal rights that might apply. However, in order to exercise any appraisal rights you may have, you must comply with the procedures as required by Part 13 of the Massachusetts Business Corporation Act.

Part 13 of the Massachusetts Business Corporation Act requires that Central deliver, within 10 days after the effective date of the merger, a written appraisal notice and forms containing certain information to all shareholders who have properly demanded appraisal rights. If appraisal rights are available in connection with the merger:

each shareholder that has properly perfected his appraisal rights will be entitled to a cash payment of the estimated fair value of the shares, plus interest but subject to any applicable withholding taxes, within 30 days of the written appraisal notice and forms due date;

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

a shareholder that fails to execute and return the forms, and comply with the terms stated therein, will not be entitled to such a payment; and

if dissatisfied with the payment or offer, shareholders may demand further payment.

Table of Contents

The foregoing summary is not intended to be a complete statement of the procedures for exercising appraisal rights under Part 13. Any shareholder who believes he or she is entitled to appraisal rights and who wishes to preserve those rights should carefully review Sections 13.01 through 13.31 of Part 13 of the Massachusetts Business Corporation Act, attached as Annex C to this proxy statement/prospectus, which sets forth the procedures to be complied with in perfecting any such rights. In light of the complexity of Part 13 (and in particular, Section 13.02) of the Massachusetts Business Corporation Act, those shareholders who may wish to dissent from the merger and pursue appraisal rights should consult their legal advisors, as failure to strictly comply with the procedures specified in Part 13 would result in the loss of any appraisal rights to which such shareholder may be entitled. Shareholders should also consult their tax advisors with regard to the particular federal, state, local, foreign and other tax consequences to them of exercising their appraisal rights under Massachusetts law.

Stock Certificates

You should not send in any certificates representing Central common stock at this time. If the merger is approved, you will receive separate instructions for the exchange of your certificates representing Central common stock. For more information regarding these instructions, please see the section in this document titled "The Merger Agreement Exchange of Central Stock Certificate for Independent Certificates" beginning on page 55 of this document.

Table of Contents

PROPOSAL TO APPROVE ADJOURNMENT OF THE CENTRAL SPECIAL MEETING

Central is submitting a proposal for consideration at the Central special meeting to authorize the named proxies to approve one or more adjournments of the Central special meeting if there are not sufficient votes to approve the Central merger agreement proposal at the time of the meeting. Even though a quorum may be present at the Central special meeting, it is possible that Central may not have received sufficient votes to approve the Central merger agreement proposal by the time of the meeting. In that event, Central would need to adjourn the Central special meeting in order to solicit additional proxies. The adjournment proposal relates only to an adjournment of the Central special meeting for purposes of soliciting additional proxies to obtain the requisite shareholder vote to approve the Central merger agreement proposal. Any other adjournment of the Central special meeting (e.g., an adjournment required because of the absence of a quorum) would be voted upon pursuant to the discretionary authority granted by the proxy. If the Central special meeting is adjourned for less than 30 days, Central is not required to give notice of the time and place of the adjourned meeting if the new time and place is announced at the meeting before adjournment, unless the board of directors fixes a new record date for the Central special meeting.

The Central adjournment proposal relates only to an adjournment of the Central special meeting occurring for purposes of soliciting additional proxies for approval of the Central merger agreement proposal in the event that there are insufficient votes to approve that proposal. Each of the Central board of directors and the presiding officer of the Central special meeting retains full authority to the extent set forth in Central's bylaws and under Massachusetts law to adjourn the Central special meeting for any other purpose, or to postpone the Central special meeting before it is convened, without the consent of any Central shareholders.

Table of Contents

ADVISORY VOTE REGARDING CERTAIN EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

In accordance with the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010, or the Dodd-Frank Act, and pursuant to Section 14A of the Exchange Act, Central is providing its shareholders with an opportunity to cast an advisory vote to approve certain compensation payable to its named executive officers, Messrs. Doherty, Morrissey and Feeley, in connection with the proposed merger payable pursuant to arrangements entered into with Central or Independent and as disclosed in this proxy statement. We are asking our stockholders to adopt the following resolution at the special meeting:

RESOLVED, that the shareholders of Central approve, on an advisory basis, the compensation that will or may become payable by Central to its named executive officers as disclosed pursuant to Item 402(t) of Regulation S-K in The Merger Interests of Central s Executive Officers and Directors in the Merger.

This resolution will be considered approved if it receives the affirmative vote of the majority of the votes cast on the matter by holders of shares of the Central common stock. Abstentions and broker non-votes will have no effect.

The descriptions of the payments contained in the section entitled The Merger Interests of Central s Executive Officers and Directors in the Merger including in the table entitled Compensation of Central s Named Executive Officers in Connection with the Merger is intended to comply with Item 402(t) of Regulation S-K, which requires disclosure of information about compensation of each Central named executive officer in connection with the merger and that will or may become payable to the named executive officer either by Central or by Independent. Central is asking its stockholders to approve, on a non-binding advisory basis, such compensation to the extent that it is payable by Central. Consistent with SEC rules, the amounts representing payments to be made by Independent under non-competition and consulting agreements are not subject to the advisory vote.

Vote Required and Board of Directors Recommendation

The vote on this proposal is a vote separate and apart from the vote to approve the merger agreement or to approve adjournments of the special meeting. You may vote to approve those proposals and vote not to approve this proposal on executive compensation and vice versa. Because the vote is advisory in nature only, it will not be binding on either Central or Independent regardless of whether the proposed merger is completed. Accordingly, as the compensation to be paid in connection with the proposed merger is contractual with respect to the named executive officers, regardless of the outcome of this advisory vote, such compensation will be payable, subject only to the conditions applicable thereto, if the proposed merger is completed. The vote required to approve this proposal is the affirmative vote of a majority of the votes cast on the proposal. Abstentions and broker non-votes will have no effect.

Central s Board unanimously recommends a vote FOR the advisory resolution on the compensation that will or may be received by Central s named executive officers in connection with the proposed merger.

Table of Contents

THE MERGER

The discussion in this proxy statement/prospectus of the merger and the principal terms of the merger agreement are subject to, and are qualified in their entirety by reference to, the merger agreement, a copy of which is attached to this proxy statement/prospectus as Annex A and is incorporated into this proxy statement/prospectus by reference.

General

The merger is structured as a 60% stock and 40% cash transaction. Under the terms and conditions set forth in the merger agreement, Central will merge with and into Independent, with Independent surviving the merger. At the effective time of the merger, each share of Central common stock outstanding immediately prior to the effective time will, by virtue of the merger and without any action on the part of the shareholder, be converted into the right to receive either (i) \$32.00 in cash or (2) a number of shares of Independent common stock as determined by an exchange ratio that will float linearly upward or downward within a set range to adjust for fluctuations in the price of Independent common stock. The final exchange ratio will be determined within a 12% range (*i.e.*, 6% upward or downward) of a \$28.66 base price for Independent common stock (with a corresponding base exchange ratio of 1.1165) by dividing \$32.00 by the volume weighted average price of Independent common stock for the twenty trading day period ending with the last regulatory approval of the transaction and the expiration of any waiting periods related to such approvals. The exchange ratio may additionally be adjusted to reflect the effect of any stock split, split-up, reverse stock split, stock dividend, reorganization, recapitalization, reclassification, or other similar change with respect to the common stock of Independent or Central that occurs before the merger. Independent will not issue any fractional shares of its common stock in the merger, but will instead pay cash (determined on the basis of the average closing prices of Independent's common stock during a twenty-five day measurement period ending five days before the closing of the merger) for any fractional share a Central shareholder would otherwise receive after aggregating all of his or her shares.

Central's shareholders will be able to elect to receive cash, Independent common stock or a combination of cash and Independent common stock for their shares of Central common stock. Regardless of a Central shareholder's choice, however, elections will be limited by the requirement that 60% of Central common stock be converted into Independent common stock and 40% be exchanged for cash. Therefore, the allocation of cash and Independent common stock that a Central shareholder will receive will depend on the elections of other Central shareholders. The allocation of the consideration payable to Central shareholders will not be known until the exchange agent tallies the results of the cash/stock elections made by Central's shareholders. If a Central shareholder does not make an election, the type of consideration such shareholder will receive will depend on the consideration elected by other Central shareholders.

All outstanding unvested Central stock options and unvested shares of restricted Central common stock will become fully vested immediately prior to the effective time of the merger. Central options will be cancelled upon consummation of the merger, and each option holder will receive a cash payment upon such cancellation in an amount equal to the product of (i) the number of shares of Central common stock provided for by such option and (ii) the excess, if any, of (a) \$32.00 over (b) the exercise price of the option. All of shares of accelerated restricted stock will be treated as outstanding Central shares for all purposes under the merger agreement, including for purposes of the holders' right to receive the merger consideration.

Based on the number of shares of Central common stock outstanding on April 30, 2012, it is expected that approximately 1,132,768 shares of Independent common stock will be issued to Central shareholders in connection with the merger, which would represent approximately 5.2% of the outstanding Independent common stock (based on the number of shares of Independent common stock outstanding as of April 30, 2012). The merger agreement provides that the exercise of options to purchase Central common stock may result in the issuance of additional shares of Independent common stock. As of April 30, 2012, if all outstanding Central options were exercised prior to the closing of the merger, approximately 73,589 additional Independent shares would be issuable to former Central option holders, assuming satisfaction as of that date of the applicable

Table of Contents

vesting, exercise price payment and other conditions to which the exercises of such options are subject. If all of these additional Independent shares were issued, former Central shareholders would own approximately 5.5% of Independent's common stock outstanding immediately after the merger.

Effective upon the consummation of the merger, the Central tax-qualified employee stock ownership plan (the ESOP) will terminate immediately. As of July 23, 2012, there were 365,922 shares held by the ESOP. At the consummation of the merger, each share held by the ESOP will be converted into the right to receive merger consideration.

Background of the Merger

On January 10, 2012, Central Chairman and CEO John D. Doherty and Central President and COO William P. Morrissey met with representatives of KBW to discuss informally the concept of strategic alternatives exploration and the procedures involved with it should the Central board of directors determine to explore Central's strategic alternatives, including a potential merger transaction.

At the regular meeting of Central's board of directors held on January 19, 2012, Messrs. Doherty and Morrissey reported on their informal meeting with representatives of KBW. It was the consensus of the board of directors to continue to discuss the concept of exploring Central's strategic alternatives. At this meeting, Mr. Doherty advised the directors and executive officers of Central that were present of the confidential nature of the subject matter under discussion and that each of them was prohibited from discussing the matter with any other person and from trading in Central's stock. Following this meeting, Messrs. Doherty and Morrissey consulted with Central's special legal counsel on several occasions regarding the legal issues associated with a decision to embark on a process to explore strategic alternatives and had further discussions with KBW regarding the role that they would play if retained to assist in such an undertaking.

At a special meeting of Central's board of directors held on February 16, 2012, the board of directors continued to discuss the concept of strategic alternative exploration and whether Central should retain KBW to assist in that process. Among other matters, the board of directors discussed and took note of the pricing metrics of recently announced transactions involving other banking institutions in New England and, based on this data, generally discussed the potential range of value that Central's shareholders may potentially realize in a business combination transaction. Following such discussion and deliberation, the board of directors authorized Messrs. Doherty and Morrissey to negotiate an engagement letter between Central and KBW, subject to approval by the full board of directors. At this meeting, the board of directors also instituted a formal blackout period under Central's Special Trading Procedures Policy to last for as long as Central continued to engage in nonpublic discussions regarding its evaluation of strategic alternatives.

On February 24, 2012, Central formally engaged KBW as its financial advisor. Over the ensuing days, KBW identified, in consultation with Central, 19 financial institutions as likely candidates to have an interest in engaging in a potential business combination transaction with Central and contacted, on behalf of Central, those institutions regarding their interest level. KBW contacted Independent regarding a possible transaction with Central on February 29, 2012. Independent and 13 other institutions executed confidentiality agreements with Central. Independent executed a confidentiality agreement on March 1, 2012.

On March 5, 2012, Independent engaged Sandler O'Neill + Partners, L.P. (Sandler) as its investment banking advisor regarding a possible transaction with Central.

On March 15, 2012, Central's board of directors held a special meeting. Present were representatives of KBW and of Central's special legal counsel. The board of directors received and considered a presentation from KBW regarding an overview of the process and timetable for soliciting indications of interest from potential acquirors, a corporate overview of the 19 financial institutions that KBW had contacted or will contact on behalf Central, an overview of the current mergers and acquisitions environment for community banks, both nationwide and in New England, and the pricing metrics for recently announced whole-bank non-assisted transactions. Special legal counsel discussed with the board of directors its fiduciary duties in the context of a change in

Table of Contents

control or other business combination transaction. Following discussion and deliberation, it was the consensus of the board of directors that it would be in the best interests of Central, its stockholders and other constituencies to solicit indications of interest from potential interested parties to engage in a business combination with Central. The board of directors ratified and approved the engagement letter with KBW and the initial contacts that KBW had made with potential interested parties, authorized KBW to contact the remaining identified interested parties and seek to obtain signed confidentiality agreements from them, and directed KBW to instruct the interested parties to submit their preliminary indications of interest by April 2, 2012. The board of directors also authorized granting Independent and the interested parties that sign confidentiality agreements access to Central preliminary due diligence materials through a secure on-line data room. Access to the on-line data room was provided during the period from on or about March 15, 2012 to April 2, 2012.

On March 23, 2012, representatives of Central and of Independent met at the law offices of John Morrissey, a director of Central, to discuss a potential business combination. Present were Messrs. Doherty, William Morrissey and John Morrissey, Christopher Oddleifson, Independent's President and Chief Executive Officer, Denis K. Sheahan, Independent's Chief Financial Officer, and Gerard Nadeau, Independent's Chief Loan Officer. At this meeting, the parties present primarily discussed, in general terms, Central's loan portfolio, as well as its market area and business operations. Proposed pricing was not discussed at this meeting.

On April 2, 2012, Independent sent a preliminary written indication of interest for the acquisition of Central to KBW. In its letter, Independent proposed a mixed consideration transaction (50% cash/50% stock) at an indicated price of \$32.00 per share based on an exchange ratio of 1.1088 shares of Independent stock per share of Central stock and indicated a willingness to discuss a stock collar to offer a degree of price protection against fluctuations in Independent's stock price.

On April 3, 2012, Central's board of directors held a special meeting. Present were representatives of KBW. A representative of Central's special legal counsel participated by conference call. The board of directors reviewed and discussed the three preliminary indications of interest that had been received, from Independent, as described above, and from Company B and Company C. Company B proposed an all-cash transaction at \$31.00 per share. Company C proposed an all-cash transaction at a to-be-determined price within a range of \$22.00 and \$27.00 per share. Based on the proposed pricing terms, the board of directors determined to pursue the indications of interest submitted by Independent and by Company B, authorizing both companies to perform due diligence on Central so that they may submit their final indications of interest by April 19, 2012.

On April 6, 2012, Central, aware that in certain prior acquisitions Independent had offered a board seat to a member of the target's board of directors, asked Independent to consider adding John Morrissey, a director of Central, to Independent's board of directors upon the closing of the proposed transaction. Central asked for this consideration so that the former shareholders of Central who become shareholders of the combined company would have representation on the board of directors of the combined company. Mr. Morrissey serves as Chairman of the Security Committee of the Central Bank board of directors, which oversees Central Bank's real estate loan portfolio.

On April 12, 2012, Independent held a regular meeting of its board of directors, at which the potential transaction with Central, and the potential addition of John Morrissey to the Independent board of directors upon the closing of the proposed transaction, were discussed. It was the consensus of the Independent board of directors to have a personal meeting with John Morrissey before offering him a board seat.

On April 16, 2012, representatives of Company B contacted KBW to inform KBW that Company B was withdrawing from consideration and would not be submitting a final indication of interest for consideration by Central's board of directors. KBW communicated this information to Central the same day.

On April 18, 2012 six members of Independent's board of directors (including Chris Oddleifson, Independent's President and Chief Executive Officer), and Independent's General Counsel, met with John Morrissey at the executive offices of Independent.

Table of Contents

On April 18, 2012, Independent sent a final written indication of interest for the acquisition of Central to KBW. Except for providing for an increase in the exchange ratio from 1.1088 to 1.1165, outlining the mechanics of the stock collar and providing for a seat on Independent's board for John Morrissey, the terms of Independent's final indication of interest did not vary materially from the terms of the preliminary indication of interest.

On April 19, 2012, Central's board of directors held a special meeting. Present were representatives of KBW and of Central's special legal counsel. The board of directors reviewed and discussed the sole final indication of interest that had been received, from Independent. Following discussion and deliberation, which included a discussion of the estimated pro forma capital position of the combined company (which indicated well-capitalized status under current regulations) and a discussion of Independent's ability to raise additional capital should that be warranted or required in order to consummate the proposed transaction, the board of directors determined to negotiate exclusively with Independent the terms a definitive merger agreement based on the terms outlined in the final indication of interest and authorized management to conduct a due diligence review of Independent. Central and Independent also entered into an exclusivity agreement, providing exclusive negotiations through April 30, 2012.

Over the following days, Central and Independent negotiated the terms of the merger agreement and the ancillary documents appearing as exhibits to the merger agreement and Central conducted a due diligence review of Independent. On or about April 20, 2012, Independent granted Central access to a secure on-line electronic data room containing Independent due diligence materials. Central conducted an on-site due diligence review of Independent on April 26, 2012.

During the week of April 23, 2012, Mr. Oddleifson contacted Messrs. Doherty and Morrissey to request that the proposed mix of merger consideration be modified from 50% cash/50% stock to 60% stock/40% cash. Soon thereafter Independent and Central agreed upon a 60% stock/40% cash mix for merger consideration.

During the afternoon of April 30, 2012, Central's board of directors held a special meeting to consider the definitive merger agreement and the ancillary documents that the parties to such documents had negotiated. Present were representatives of KBW and of Central's special legal counsel. KBW reviewed in detail with the board of directors the financial aspects of the proposed transaction and delivered its opinion that the merger consideration was fair to Central's stockholders from a financial point-of-view. The board of directors considered this opinion carefully as well as KBW's experience, qualifications and interest in the proposed transaction, namely that KBW's compensation is contingent upon the closing of the proposed transaction, as is customary. In addition, special legal counsel reviewed in detail with the board of directors the definitive merger agreement and all related documents, copies of which were delivered to each director before the date of the meeting. Following extensive review and discussion, the board of directors unanimously approved the merger agreement and authorized and directed management to execute and deliver the merger agreement and the ancillary documents, subject to confirmation that Independent's board of directors, which was to meet later that afternoon, had also adopted the merger agreement and authorized the execution and delivery of the merger agreement and the ancillary documents.

Also during the afternoon of April 30, 2012, Independent's board of directors held a special meeting to consider the definitive merger agreement and the ancillary documents that the parties to such documents had negotiated. Present were representatives of Sandler and of Independent's special legal counsel. Sandler reviewed in detail with the board of directors the financial aspects of the proposed transaction and delivered its opinion that the proposed transaction was fair to Independent's shareholders from a financial point-of-view. The board of directors considered this opinion carefully as well as Sandler's experience, qualifications and interest in the proposed transaction. In addition, Independent's general counsel reviewed in detail with the board of directors the definitive merger agreement and all related documents, copies of which were delivered to each director before the date of the meeting. Following extensive review and discussion, Independent's board of directors unanimously approved the merger agreement and authorized and directed management to execute and deliver the merger agreement and the ancillary documents.

Table of Contents

Before the opening of the trading markets on May 1, 2012, Central and Independent issued a joint press release announcing the approval, adoption and execution of the merger agreement.

Recommendation of Central's Board of Directors and Reasons for the Merger

Central's board of directors has unanimously approved the merger agreement and unanimously recommends that Central's shareholders vote FOR the approval of the merger agreement and the merger.

In approving the merger agreement, Central's board of directors consulted with KBW regarding the financial aspects and the fairness of the transaction from a financial point-of-view and with Central's legal counsel as to the board of directors' fiduciary duties and the terms of the merger agreement. In arriving at its decision to approve the merger agreement, the board of directors also considered a number of factors, including:

The value of the merger consideration offered by Independent is commensurate with the prices paid in recent comparable transactions and, at \$32.00 per share, represented a 70.7% premium over the closing market price of Central's common stock on April 27, 2012, the last trading day before the date of the merger agreement.

Central stockholders will have the opportunity to elect to receive Independent common stock in exchange for their shares of Central common stock, enabling them to participate in any growth opportunities of the combined company.

Independent currently pays an annual cash dividend of \$0.84 per share (or an implied annual dividend of approximately \$0.94 per share based on an exchange ratio of 1.1161 Independent shares for each Central share), compared to Central's current annual cash dividend of \$0.20 per share.

The results that Central could expect to obtain by continuing to operate independently and the likely benefits of continued independent operation to Central's shareholders, compared to the value of the merger consideration offered by Independent.

The perceived risks to shareholder value presented by continued independent operations, including risks relating to the inherent uncertainties about future growth, performance and economic conditions.

Information concerning the business, earnings, operations, financial condition and prospects of Central and Independent, both individually and as a combined company, and the likelihood of the transaction receiving the requisite regulatory approvals in a timely manner and without imposition of burdensome conditions.

Independent's proven track record of successfully completing acquisition transactions and integrating the operations of the acquired companies.

The opinion rendered by KBW, as of April 30, 2012, that the merger consideration is fair, from a financial point-of-view, to Central's stockholders.

The terms of the merger agreement and the structure of the merger, including that the merger is intended to qualify as a transaction of a type that is generally tax-free for U.S. federal income tax purposes.

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

That a member of Central's board of directors will be appointed to the Independent's board of directors.

The interests of certain executive officers and directors of Central, which are different from, or in addition to, the interests of Central's shareholders generally.

The effect of the merger on Central Co-operative Bank's depositors, customers and the communities served by Central Co-operative Bank, as well as its effect on Central Co-operative Bank's employees. Central deems the merger with Independent to be an opportunity to provide depositors, customers and the communities served by Central Co-operative Bank with increased financial services and increased access to those services

Table of Contents

through more branch offices. Central also considered the opportunities for career advancement in a larger organization that would be available to Central employees who continue employment with the combined company after the merger and the severance benefits provided for in the merger agreement for any Central employees who do not continue employment with the combined company. Central's board of directors also considered potential risks associated with the merger in connection with its decision to approve the merger agreement, including that other parties that might be interested in proposing a transaction with Central could be discouraged from doing so given the terms of the merger agreement generally prohibiting Central from soliciting, engaging in discussions or providing information regarding an alternative transaction, requiring Central to pay a termination fee to Independent under certain circumstances, and requiring Central's directors to execute agreements requiring them to vote in favor of the merger with Independent, all of which Independent required in order that it agree to enter into the merger agreement.

The foregoing discussion of the information and factors considered by Central's board of directors is not exhaustive, but includes the material factors that the board of directors considered and discussed in approving and recommending the merger. In view of the wide variety of factors considered and discussed by Central's board of directors in connection with its evaluation of the merger and the complexity of these factors, the board of directors did not quantify, rank or assign any relative or specific weight to the foregoing factors, rather it considered all of the factors as a whole. The board of directors discussed the foregoing factors, including asking questions of Central's management and legal and financial advisors, and reached general consensus that the merger was in the best interests of Central and its shareholders. In considering the foregoing factors, individual directors may have assigned different weights to different factors. The board of directors did not undertake to make any specific determination as to whether any factor, or particular aspect of any factor, supported or did not support its ultimate decision to approve the merger agreement and the merger. The foregoing explanation of the reasoning of Central's board of directors and all other information presented in this section is forward-looking in nature and, therefore, should be read in light of the cautionary statements set forth in Forward-Looking Statements on page 21.

Opinion of Central's Financial Adviser

On February 24, 2012, Central engaged KBW to render financial advisory and investment banking services to Central. KBW agreed to assist Central in assessing the fairness, from a financial point of view, of the merger consideration in the proposed merger with Independent, to the shareholders of Central. Central engaged KBW because KBW is a nationally recognized investment banking firm with substantial experience in transactions similar to the merger and is familiar with Central and its business. As part of its investment banking business, KBW is continually engaged in the valuation of financial services companies and their securities in connection with mergers and acquisitions.

As part of its engagement, representatives of KBW attended the meeting of the Central board held on April 30, 2012, at which the Central board evaluated the proposed merger with Independent. At this meeting, KBW reviewed the financial aspects of the proposed merger and rendered an opinion that, as of such date, the merger consideration offered to Central shareholders in the merger was fair, from a financial point of view. The Central board approved the merger agreement at this meeting.

The full text of KBW's written opinion is attached as Appendix B to this document and is incorporated herein by reference. Central shareholders are urged to read the opinion in its entirety for a description of the procedures followed, assumptions made, matters considered, and qualifications and limitations on the review undertaken by KBW. The description of the opinion set forth herein is qualified in its entirety by reference to the full text of such opinion.

KBW's opinion speaks only as of the date of the opinion. The opinion is directed to the Central board and addresses only the fairness, from a financial point of view, of the consideration offered to the Central

Table of Contents

shareholders. It does not address the underlying business decision to proceed with the merger and does not constitute a recommendation to any Central shareholder as to how the shareholder should vote at the Central special meeting on the merger or any related matter.

In rendering its opinion, KBW:

reviewed, among other things,

the merger agreement;

Annual Reports to Stockholders and Annual Reports on Form 10-K for the three years ended March 31, 2011 of Central and Annual Reports on Form 10-K for the three years ended December 31, 2011 of Independent;

certain interim reports to stockholders and Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q of Central and Independent and certain other communications from Central and Independent to their respective stockholders; and

other financial information concerning the businesses and operations of Central and Independent furnished to KBW by Central and Independent for purposes of KBW's analysis.

In addition, KBW held discussions with members of senior management of Central and Independent regarding past and current business operations, regulatory relations, financial condition, future prospects of their respective companies, and other matters KBW deemed relevant.

In addition, KBW compared certain financial and stock market information for Central and Independent with similar information for certain other companies the securities of which are publicly traded, reviewed the financial terms of certain recent business combinations in the banking industry, and performed other studies and analyses that it considered appropriate.

In conducting its review and arriving at its opinion, KBW relied upon the accuracy and completeness of all of the financial and other information provided to it or otherwise publicly available. KBW did not independently verify the accuracy or completeness of any such information or assume any responsibility for such verification or accuracy. KBW relied upon the management of Central and Independent as to the reasonableness and achievability of the financial and operating forecasts and projections (and the assumptions and bases therefore) provided to KBW and assumed that such forecasts and projections reflected the best currently available estimates and judgments of such managements and that such forecasts and projections will be realized in the amounts and in the time periods estimated by such managements. KBW assumed, without independent verification, that the aggregate allowance for loan and lease losses for Central and Independent are adequate to cover those losses. KBW did not make or obtain any evaluations or appraisals of the property, assets or liabilities of Central or Independent, nor did it examine any individual credit files.

The projections furnished to KBW and used by it in certain of its analyses were prepared by Central's and Independent's senior management teams. Central and Independent do not typically publicly disclose internal management projections of the type provided to KBW in connection with its review of the merger. As a result, such projections were not prepared with a view towards public disclosure. The projections were based on numerous variables and assumptions, which are inherently uncertain, including factors related to general economic and competitive conditions. Accordingly, actual results could vary significantly from those set forth in the projections.

For purposes of rendering its opinion, KBW assumed that, in all respects material to its analyses:

the merger will be completed substantially in accordance with the terms set forth in the merger agreement with no additional payments or adjustments to the merger consideration;

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

the representations and warranties of each party in the merger agreement and in all related documents and instruments referred to in the merger agreement are true and correct;

Table of Contents

each party to the merger agreement and all related documents will perform all of the covenants and agreements required to be performed by such party under such documents;

all conditions to the completion of the merger will be satisfied without any waivers; and

in the course of obtaining the necessary regulatory, contractual, or other consents or approvals for the merger, no restrictions, including any divestiture requirements, termination or other payments or amendments or modifications, will be imposed that will have a material adverse effect on the future results of operations or financial condition of the combined entity or the contemplated benefits of the merger, including the cost savings, revenue enhancements and related expenses expected to result from the merger.

KBW further assumed that the merger will be accounted for using the acquisition method under generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), and that the merger will qualify as a tax-free reorganization for United States federal income tax purposes. KBW's opinion is not an expression of an opinion as to the prices at which shares of Central common stock or shares of Independent common stock will trade following the announcement of the merger or the actual value of the shares of common stock of the combined company when issued pursuant to the merger, or the prices at which the shares of common stock of the combined company will trade following the completion of the merger.

In performing its analyses, KBW made numerous assumptions with respect to industry performance, general business, economic, market and financial conditions and other matters, which are beyond the control of KBW, Central and Independent. Any estimates contained in the analyses performed by KBW are not necessarily indicative of actual values or future results, which may be significantly more or less favorable than suggested by these analyses. Additionally, estimates of the value of businesses or securities do not purport to be appraisals or to reflect the prices at which such businesses or securities might actually be sold. Accordingly, these analyses and estimates are inherently subject to substantial uncertainty. In addition, the KBW opinion was among several factors taken into consideration by the Central board in making its determination to approve the merger agreement and the merger. Consequently, the analyses described below should not be viewed as determinative of the decision of the Central board with respect to the fairness of the consideration or its approval of the merger agreement and the merger.

The following is a summary of the material analyses performed and presented by KBW to the Central board on April 30, 2012, in connection with its fairness opinion. The summary is not a complete description of the analyses underlying the KBW opinion or the presentation made by KBW to the Central board, but summarizes the material analyses performed and presented in connection with such opinion. The preparation of a fairness opinion is a complex analytic process involving various determinations as to the most appropriate and relevant methods of financial analysis and the application of those methods to the particular circumstances. Therefore, a fairness opinion is not readily susceptible to partial analysis or summary description. In arriving at its opinion, KBW did not attribute any particular weight to any analysis or factor that it considered, but rather made qualitative judgments as to the significance and relevance of each analysis and factor. The financial analyses summarized below include information presented in tabular format. Accordingly, KBW believes that its analyses and the summary of its analyses must be considered as a whole and that selecting portions of its analyses and factors or focusing on the information presented below in tabular format, without considering all analyses and factors or the full narrative description of the financial analyses, including the methodologies and assumptions underlying the analyses, could create a misleading or incomplete view of the process underlying its analyses and opinion. The tables alone do not constitute a complete description of the financial analyses.

Summary of Proposal. Pursuant to the terms of the merger agreement, each outstanding share of common stock, par value \$1.00 per share, of Central not owned by Central or Independent or by any of their respective wholly-owned subsidiaries, other than shares owned in a fiduciary capacity or as a result of debts previously contracted, will be cancelled and retired and converted into the right to receive cash in the amount of \$32.00 or shares of common stock of Independent, par value \$0.01 per share, based on the exchange ratio provided for the

Table of Contents

merger agreement. Based on Independent's closing price on April 27, 2012, of \$28.67, the exchange ratio represented merger consideration equivalent to a price of \$32.00 per share to Central's shareholders.

Selected Companies Analysis. Using publicly available information, KBW compared the financial performance, financial condition and market performance of Central to the following publicly traded banks and thrifts headquartered in New England with total assets between \$250 million and \$1.0 billion. The companies included in this group were:

SI Financial Group, Inc.	Naugatuck Valley Financial Corporation
New England Bancshares, Inc.	Hampden Bancorp, Inc.
BSB Bancorp, Inc.	Union Bankshares, Inc.
Patriot National Bancorp, Inc.	Peoples Federal Bancshares, Inc.
Chicopee Bancorp, Inc.	PSB Holdings, Inc. (MHC)
Salisbury Bancorp, Inc.	Newport Bancorp, Inc.
Northeast Bancorp	Wellesley Bancorp, Inc.

Using publicly available information, KBW compared the financial performance, financial condition, and market performance of Independent to the following publicly traded banks and thrifts headquartered in New England with total assets between \$2.0 billion and \$30.0 billion. The companies included in this group were:

People's United Financial, Inc.	Berkshire Hills Bancorp, Inc.
Webster Financial Corporation	Washington Trust Bancorp, Inc.
Boston Private Financial Holdings, Inc.	Century Bancorp, Inc.
Brookline Bancorp, Inc.	Camden National Corporation

To perform this analysis, KBW used financial information as of the three month period ended March 31, 2012 or the three month period ended December 31, 2011 based on the most recent available. Market price information was as of April 27, 2012. Earnings estimates for 2012 and 2013 were taken from a nationally recognized earnings estimate consolidator for selected companies. Certain financial data prepared by KBW, and as referenced in the tables presented below, may not correspond to the data presented in Central's and Independent's historical financial statements as a result of the different periods, assumptions and methods used by KBW to compute the financial data presented.

Table of Contents

KBW's analysis showed the following concerning Central's and Independent's respective financial condition and results of operations:

	Central	Central Group Minimum	Central Group Maximum
Core Return on Average Assets (1)	0.31%	0.09%	0.87%
Core Return on Average Equity (1)	3.5%	0.8%	11.9%
Net Interest Margin	3.35%	2.44%	4.26%
Efficiency Ratio	81.8%	62.7%	118.9%

	Independent	Independent Group Minimum	Independent Group Maximum
Core Return on Average Assets (1)	1.00%	0.53%	1.13%
Core Return on Average Equity (1)	10.3%	4.5%	12.1%
Net Interest Margin	3.77%	2.18%	4.00%
Efficiency Ratio	65.9%	53.4%	75.0%

	Central	Central Group Minimum	Central Group Maximum
Tangible Common Equity / Tangible Assets	6.28%	6.66%	20.73%
Total Capital Ratio	16.92%	11.91%	29.37%
Loan Loss Reserve / Loans	0.97%	0.21%	1.84%
Nonperforming Assets / Loans + OREO	3.41%	0.78%	7.69%
Net Charge-Offs / Average Loans	0.36%	(0.00)%	1.11%

	Independent	Independent Group Minimum	Independent Group Maximum
Tangible Common Equity / Tangible Assets	6.99%	5.72%	11.75%
Total Capital Ratio	12.89%	11.29%	17.05%
Loan Loss Reserve / Loans	1.25%	0.87%	2.02%
Nonperforming Assets / Loans + OREO	2.00%	0.54%	4.96%
Net Charge-Offs / Average Loans	0.16%	0.05%	0.96%

(1) Core income excludes extraordinary items, non-recurring items and gains/losses on sale of securities.

Table of Contents

KBW's analysis showed the following concerning Central's and Independent's market performance:

	Central	Central Group Minimum	Central Group Maximum
Stock Price / Book Value per Share (1)	0.90x	0.60x	2.08x
Stock Price / Tangible Book Value per Share (1)	0.97x	0.63x	2.29x
Stock Price / Last Twelve Months EPS (1)	208.3x	12.1x	51.8x
Dividend Yield	1.1%	0.0%	5.3%
Last Twelve Months Dividend Payout Ratio	222.2%	0.0%	100.0%

	Independent	Independent Group Minimum	Independent Group Maximum
Stock Price / Book Value per Share (1)	1.29x	0.84x	1.47x
Stock Price / Tangible Book Value per Share (1)	1.83x	0.95x	2.03x
Stock Price / 2012 EPS (2)	13.3x	12.0x	15.8x
Stock Price / 2013 EPS (2)	12.5x	10.8x	13.7x
Dividend Yield	2.9%	0.4%	5.2%
2012 Dividend Payout Ratio	38.9%	6.2%	81.7%

(1) Based on Independent's closing price of \$28.67 on April 27, 2012

(2) Estimates per First Call consensus

Recent Transactions Analysis. KBW reviewed publicly available information related to selected acquisitions of banks and bank holding companies as well as thrifts and thrift holding companies headquartered in New England that were announced after January 1, 2010, with announced deal values. The transactions included in the groups were:

Acquiror

Commerce Bancshares Corp.
NBT Bancorp Inc.
Berkshire Hills Bancorp, Inc.
Brookline Bancorp, Inc.
People's United Financial, Inc.
Berkshire Hills Bancorp, Inc.
Brookline Bancorp, Inc.
First Niagara Financial Group, Inc.
Liberty Bank
People's United Financial, Inc.
Eastern Bank Corporation

Acquiree

Mercantile Capital Corp
Hampshire First Bank
Connecticut Bank and Trust Company
Bancorp Rhode Island, Inc.
Danvers Bancorp, Inc.
Legacy Bancorp, Inc.
First Ipswich Bancorp
NewAlliance Bancshares, Inc.
Connecticut River Community Bank
LSB Corporation
Wainwright Bank & Trust Company

Transaction multiples for the merger were derived from an offer price of \$32.00 per share for Central. For each transaction referred to above, KBW derived and compared, among other things, the implied ratio of price per common share paid for the acquired company to:

tangible book value per share of the acquired company based on the latest publicly available financial statements of the company available prior to the announcement of the acquisition.

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

tangible equity premium to core deposits (total deposits less time deposits greater than \$100,000) based on the latest publicly available financial statements of the company available prior to the announcement of the acquisition.

market premium based on the closing price 1-day prior to the announcement of the acquisition.

Table of Contents

The results of the analysis are set forth in the following table:

Transaction Price to:	Independent / Central Merger	Recent Transactions Minimum	Recent Transactions Maximum
Tangible Book Value	165%	111%	200%
Core Deposit Premium	8.2%	1.9%	14.1%
Market Premium (1)	70.7%	24.9%	260.0%

(1) Based on Central closing price of \$18.75 on April 27, 2012

No company or transaction used as a comparison in the above analysis is identical to Central, Independent or the merger. Accordingly, an analysis of these results is not mathematical. Rather, it involves complex considerations and judgments concerning differences in financial and operating characteristics of the companies.

Contribution Analysis. KBW analyzed the relative contribution of Independent and Central to the pro forma balance sheet and income statement items of the combined entity, including assets, gross loans held for investment, deposits, tangible common equity, 2013 estimated GAAP net income, and pre-transaction market capitalization. KBW compared the relative contribution of balance sheet for the period ended March 31, 2012 for Independent and December 31, 2011 for Central, which did not include any estimated purchase accounting adjustments, and income statement items with the estimated pro forma ownership for Central based on 60% of Central shares exchanged for 1.1878 Independent shares and 40% of Central shares exchanged for \$32.00 in cash. The results of KBW's analysis are set forth in the following table:

	Independent	Central
Assets	91%	9%
Gross Loans Held for Investment	90%	10%
Deposits	92%	8%
Tangible Common Equity	91%	9%
2013 Estimated GAAP Net Income (1)	97%	3%
Market Capitalization	95%	5%
Ownership at 60% stock / 40% cash	95%	5%

(1) Independent 2013 EPS estimate per First Call; Central 2013 EPS estimate per Independent

Financial Impact Analysis. KBW performed pro forma merger analyses that combined projected income statement and balance sheet information of Central and Independent. In its analysis, KBW assumed that the merger would be accounted for under the purchase method, that fair value adjustments would amount to (\$10.5) million, on a net basis, that a core deposit intangible of \$3.9 million would be created and would be amortized using sum-of-years digits method over 10 years and that cost savings would amount to 39.0% of Central's estimated stand-alone expenses. Based on First Call (a nationally recognized earnings estimate consolidator) median estimates, KBW assumed that Independent's stand-alone per share net income would be \$2.30 in 2013, and that, based on estimates, Central's stand-alone per share net income would be \$1.08 in 2013. This analysis indicated that the merger is expected to be accretive to Independent's estimated earnings per share in 2013, with such estimated earnings per share accretion amounting to \$0.20 in 2013. KBW's analysis further indicated that the merger would be dilutive to Independent's estimated December 31, 2012 book value per share and tangible book value per share by 0.1% and 6.5%, respectively, and that Independent would maintain capital ratios in excess of those required for Independent to be considered well-capitalized under existing regulations. For all of the above analyses, the actual results achieved by Independent following the merger will vary from the projected results, and the variations may be material.

Discounted Cash Flow Analysis. KBW performed a discounted cash flow analysis to estimate a range of the present values of after-tax cash flows that Central could provide to equity holders through 2017 on a stand-alone basis. In performing this analysis, KBW used management's estimates for Central of \$0.21, \$0.77 and \$1.03 for

Table of Contents

2012, 2013 and 2014, respectively, and applied a growth rate of 15.0% thereafter, from Central management, and applied discount rates ranging from 10.0% to 16.0%. To determine the range of discount rates to utilize, KBW used the capital asset pricing model implied cost of capital (CAPM) as a focal point. The CAPM includes an expected market risk premium (as provided by Ibbotson Associates, a nationally recognized provider of this data) of 6.6%, which is then multiplied by Central's raw beta of 0.2%, resulting in an equity risk premium of 1.4%. The CAPM formula then adds the risk free rate of the 10 year treasury of 2.0% and a micro-cap size premium (in excess of CAPM) of 6.1% (as provided again by Ibbotson Associates) to result in a CAPM Implied Cost of Equity Capital of 9.5%. When using the raw beta of the NASDAQ Bank Index, the CAPM Implied Cost of Equity Capital resulted in 16.2%. The range of values was determined by adding (1) the present value of projected cash flows to Central, shareholders from 2012 to 2017 and (2) the present value of the terminal value of Central's common stock. In determining cash flows available to shareholders, KBW assumed management's balance sheet growth for Central for 2012-2014 and assumed a growth rate of 5.0% per year thereafter, from Central management, and that Central would maintain a tangible common equity/tangible asset ratio of 7.00% and would retain sufficient earnings to maintain that level. Any earnings in excess of what would need to be retained represented dividendable cash flows for Central. In calculating the terminal value of Central, KBW applied multiples ranging from 12.0 times to 16.0 times 2017 forecasted earnings. This range of multiples was determined using historical industry accepted values. This resulted in a range of values of Central from \$7.02 to \$14.18 per share. The discounted cash flow present value analysis is a widely used valuation methodology that relies on numerous assumptions, including asset and earnings growth rates, terminal values and discount rates. The analysis did not purport to be indicative of the actual values or expected values of Central.

The Central board retained KBW as financial adviser to Central regarding the merger. As part of its investment banking business, KBW is continually engaged in the valuation of bank and bank holding company securities in connection with mergers and acquisitions, negotiated underwritings, secondary distributions of listed and unlisted securities, private placements and valuations for other purposes. As specialists in the securities of banking companies, KBW has experience in, and knowledge of, the valuation of banking enterprises. In the ordinary course of its business as a broker-dealer, KBW may, from time to time, purchase securities from, and sell securities to, Central and Independent. As a market maker in securities KBW may from time to time have a long or short position in, and buy or sell, debt or equity securities of Central and Independent for KBW's own account and for the accounts of its customers.

Central and KBW have entered into an agreement relating to the services to be provided by KBW in connection with the merger. Central has agreed to pay to KBW at the time of closing of the transaction a cash fee equal to 1.00% of the aggregate consideration to be paid in exchange for the outstanding shares of common stock of Central. Pursuant to the KBW engagement agreement, Central also agreed to reimburse KBW for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses and disbursements incurred in connection with its retention and to indemnify against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the federal securities laws. During the two years preceding the date of its opinion to Central, KBW did not receive compensation for investment banking services from either Central or Independent.

Approval of Independent's Board of Directors and Reasons for the Merger

Independent's board of directors determined that the merger agreement and the merger are advisable and in the best interests of Independent and its shareholders. Accordingly, Independent's board of directors adopted and approved the merger agreement.

The Independent board of directors unanimously approved the merger agreement and the merger because it determined that the merger should strengthen Independent's existing franchise and increase long term shareholder value because Central is, like Rockland Trust, a bank that is deeply committed to its customers, employees, and the communities that it serves. The merger is consistent with Independent's geographic expansion strategy, should help Independent accelerate loan and deposit growth in the contiguous, attractive markets where Central is now located, and should provide Rockland Trust with greater access to customers and potential customers in the suburban communities north and west of Boston, Massachusetts. The merger should,

Table of Contents

in particular, significantly improve Independent's deposit market share in Middlesex County, Massachusetts. The transaction is financially attractive to Independent and its shareholders because it allows Independent to add Central's loan and deposit base to that of Independent while simultaneously providing Independent with the opportunity to maintain and deepen relationships with Central's customers by offering Independent's deeper set of products. The Independent board of directors believes that the combined company should have the potential to realize a stronger competitive position and improved long-term operating and financial results, including revenue and earning enhancements. In addition, Independent's financial advisor, Sandler, reviewed in detail with the board of directors the financial aspects of the proposed transaction and delivered its opinion that the proposed transaction was fair to Independent's shareholders from a financial point of view.

After taking into account these and other factors, the Independent board of directors determined that the merger agreement and the merger were in the best interests of Independent and its shareholders and that Independent should enter into the merger agreement and complete the merger. Independent's board of directors evaluated the factors described above, including asking questions of Independent's management and Independent's legal and financial advisers, and reached the unanimous decision that the merger was in the best interests of Independent and its shareholders, its employees, its customers and the communities served by Independent. This discussion of the factors considered by Independent's board of directors is not exhaustive, but includes all material factors considered by the board. Independent's board of directors considered these factors as a whole, and overall considered them to be favorable to, and to support, its determination. Independent's board of directors did not consider it practical to, nor did it attempt to, quantify, rank or otherwise assign relative weights to the specific factors that it considered in reaching its decision. In considering the factors described above, individual members of Independent's board of directors may have given different weights to different factors. Independent's board of directors considered these factors as a whole, and overall considered them to be favorable to, and to support, its determination.

Regulatory Approvals Required to Complete the Merger

The merger is subject to the condition that all consents and approvals of any governmental authority required to consummate the merger and the other transactions contemplated by the merger agreement shall have been obtained and remain in full force and effect and all statutory waiting periods in respect thereof shall have expired or been terminated. The merger also is subject to the condition that none of such regulatory approvals shall impose a Burdensome Condition, which is defined in the merger agreement to mean any prohibition, limitation or other requirement that would prohibit or materially limit the ownership or operation by Central or any of its subsidiaries, or by Independent or any of its subsidiaries, of all or any material portion of the business or assets of Central or any of its subsidiaries or Independent or its subsidiaries, or compel Independent or any of its subsidiaries to dispose of all or any material portion of the business or assets of Central or any of its subsidiaries or Independent or any of its subsidiaries.

The consents and approvals of governmental authorities that Independent and Central believe are required to consummate the merger are as follows:

the approval of the Board of Bank Incorporation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to merge Central with and into Independent, with Independent surviving the merger;

confirmation from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership Fund (the Housing Partnership Fund) that Independent has made arrangements satisfactory to the Housing Partnership Fund; and

the approval of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System under the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956.

The consents and approvals of governmental authorities that Independent and Central believe are required to consummate the merger of Central Co-operative Bank with Rockland Trust (which are not conditions to consummation of the merger) are as follows:

the FDIC's approval of the merger of Central Co-operative Bank with and into Rockland Trust; and

Table of Contents

the approval of the Massachusetts Commissioner of Banks to merge Central Co-operative Bank with and into Rockland Trust, with Rockland Trust being the surviving entity.

The parties have filed all applications and notice materials necessary to obtain these regulatory approvals or confirmations. The merger cannot be completed until the first three approvals and confirmations listed above have been obtained, are in full force and effect and all statutory waiting periods in respect thereof have expired, and the merger between Rockland Trust and Central Co-operative Bank (the bank merger) cannot be completed until after the last two approvals listed above have been obtained. The merger may not be consummated until 30 days after the approval of the Federal Reserve Board (or such shorter period as the Federal Reserve Board may prescribe with the concurrence of the United States Department of Justice, but not less than 15 days), during which time the Department of Justice may challenge the merger on antitrust grounds. The bank merger (the completion of which is not a condition to the merger) may not be consummated until 30 days after the approval of the FDIC (or such shorter period as the FDIC may prescribe with the concurrence of the United States Department of Justice, but not less than 15 days), during which time the Department of Justice may challenge the bank merger on antitrust grounds. The commencement of an antitrust action by the Department of Justice would stay the effectiveness of the Federal Reserve Board or FDIC approval, as the case may be, unless a court specifically orders otherwise. In reviewing the merger and the bank merger, the Department of Justice could analyze the merger's effect on competition differently than the Federal Reserve Board and the FDIC, and it is possible that the Department of Justice could reach a different conclusion than the applicable banking regulator regarding the merger's (or the bank merger's) competitive effects.

Independent and Central cannot assure you that all required regulatory approvals or confirmations will be obtained, when they will be obtained or whether there will be conditions in the approvals or any litigation challenging the approvals. Independent and Central also cannot assure you that the United States Department of Justice or the Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will not attempt to challenge the merger on antitrust grounds, or what the outcome will be if such a challenge is made. Independent and Central are not aware of any other government approvals or actions that are required prior to the parties' consummation of the merger. It is currently contemplated that if any such additional governmental approvals or actions are required, such approvals or actions will be sought. There can be no assurance, however, that any such additional approvals or actions will be obtained.

Interests of Central's Executive Officers and Directors in the Merger

Central's executive officers and directors have interests in the merger that may be different from, or in addition to, the interests of other Central's shareholders generally. The Central board of directors was aware of these interests and considered them, among other matters, when it approved the merger agreement.

Equity Plans

All outstanding unvested Central stock options and restricted shares of Central common stock will become fully vested immediately prior to the effective time of the merger. Central options will be cancelled upon consummation of the merger, and each option holder will receive a cash payment upon such cancellation in an amount equal to the product of (i) the number of shares of Central common stock provided for by such option and (ii) the excess, if any, of (a) \$32.00 over (b) the exercise price of the option. Holders of restricted shares of Central common stock that are vested in connection with the merger will be entitled to receive the same forms of consideration as other holders of Central common stock.

The Central shareholders' approval of the merger will cause the acceleration of vesting of all outstanding unvested stock options and unvested restricted stock under Central's 1999 Stock Option and Incentive Plan and 2006 Long-Term Incentive Plan. As of April 30, 2012, unvested stock options for approximately 31,733 shares of Central common stock and 15,929 unvested shares of restricted stock were outstanding under such plans. The merger agreement provides for the immediate termination of the tax-qualified employee stock ownership plan of Central subject to, and effective upon, the consummation of the merger. See Merger Agreement Employee Benefits Matters below.

Table of Contents

The following table sets forth, as of April 30, 2012, the total number of options held by the named executive officers of Central, the executive officers of Central as a group and all non-employee directors of Central as a group, as well as the value of cash payments to be received upon cancellation of such options. In addition, the following table reflects the number of unvested shares of restricted stock held by the named executive officers of Central, the executive officers of Central as a group and all non-employee directors of Central as a group which will vest as a result of the merger.

Name	Number of Options	Payment at Completion of Merger when Options are Cancelled (Before Deduction of Withholding Taxes) (1)	Number of Currently Unvested Shares of Restricted Stock	Value at Completion of Merger of Currently Unvested Shares of Restricted Stock (Before Deduction of Withholding Taxes) (2)
John D. Doherty	8,267	\$ 119,872	10,049	\$ 321,568
William P. Morrissey				
Paul S. Feeley	7,466	\$ 108,257	1,800	\$ 57,600
Executive Officers as a Group	16,000	\$ 232,000	4,080	\$ 130,560
TOTAL	31,733	\$ 460,129	15,929	\$ 509,728

(1) Calculated by multiplying the number of options by the amount of the excess of the cash purchase price of \$32.00 per share over the exercise price per share of the options.

(2) Calculated by multiplying the number of unvested shares of restricted stock by the cash purchase price of \$32.00.

Settlement Agreements

Independent has agreed to honor Central's pre-existing employment agreements, salary continuation agreements and executive health plan insurance agreements with John D. Doherty, Central's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, and William P. Morrissey, Central's President and Chief Operating Officer, and Central's pre-existing severance agreements with Paul S. Feeley, Central's Chief Financial Officer, and Bryan Greenbaum, Central's Senior Vice President of Retail Banking. In connection with the merger agreement, Independent and Central have entered into settlement agreements (that include waiver and release provisions) with these officers for the purpose of setting forth, and avoiding any future disagreement with respect to, the lump sum payments and continuation of health insurance benefits that the executive officers are entitled to receive under their agreements with Central. Pursuant to the settlement agreements, the pre-existing agreements will terminate at the closing of the merger (other than the survival of certain specified provisions) and the officers will look solely to the terms of the settlement agreements to determine their rights to receive severance and other payments and benefits related to the termination of their employment.

Under these settlement agreements, in settlement of certain portions of their existing employment agreements and salary continuation agreements or severance agreements with Central, as applicable, lump sum cash payments will be made at closing to these executives, in the amount of \$1,334,131 for Mr. Doherty, \$1,509,766 for Mr. Morrissey, \$368,773 for Mr. Feeley and \$254,032 for Mr. Greenbaum. The settlement agreements with each of Messrs. Doherty and Morrissey also provide for (i) full satisfaction of the obligations of Central Bank under the executive health plan insurance agreements with such executives, in the amount of \$59,772 for Mr. Doherty and \$149,373 for Mr. Morrissey, and (ii) payment to each such executive of any vested benefits he might have under the tax-qualified retirement plans maintained or contributed to by Central in which he is a participant.

In addition, as provided in their existing employment agreements, Mr. Doherty and Mr. Morrissey will be provided with an indemnification payment for the excise taxes imposed under Section 4999 of the Internal Revenue Code so that, after payment of the excise tax and all income and excise taxes imposed on the indemnification payments, the executive will retain the same or approximately the same net-after tax amounts

Table of Contents

that he or she would have retained if there were no 20% excise tax imposed under Section 280G. It is not expected that any such indemnification payments will be required. The amounts payable to Messrs. Feeley and Greenbaum will be reduced, if necessary, to ensure that no portion of the amounts payable to them would be subject to excise tax under Section 4999 of the Internal Revenue Code or would be non-deductible to the payor by reason of Section 280G of the Internal Revenue Code. It is not expected that any such reduction will be necessary.

Consulting, Non-Competition and Non-Solicitation Agreements

The merger agreement requires as a condition to closing that Mr. Doherty enter into a non-competition agreement binding him to confidentiality, non-competition and non-solicitation covenants, with the non-competition and non-solicitation restrictions that survive for two years following the effective date of the merger. As consideration for these covenants, Mr. Doherty is entitled to a lump sum cash payment of \$320,000 at closing.

The merger agreement also requires as a condition to closing that Mr. Morrissey enter into a consulting, non-competition and non-solicitation agreement under which he will provide Independent with certain consulting services for a term of three years following the effective date and be bound by confidentiality, non-competition and non-solicitation covenants, with the non-competition and non-solicitation restrictions that survive for three years following the effective date of the merger. As consideration for these covenants, Mr. Morrissey is entitled to a lump sum cash payment of \$210,000 at closing as well as payments of \$33,333 on each of the first, second and third anniversaries of closing. As consideration for his consulting services, Mr. Morrissey will be paid \$200,000 per year payable in equal monthly installments.

Compensation of Central's Named Executive Officers in Connection with the Merger

The following table reflects the compensation and benefits that will or may be paid or provided to each of Central's named executive officers in connection with the merger as described above. Please note that the amounts indicated below are estimates based on multiple assumptions that may or may not actually occur, including assumptions described in this proxy statement/prospectus. Some of these assumptions are based on information currently available and, as a result, the actual amounts, if any, to be received by a named executive officer may differ in material respects from the amounts set forth below. Further, calculations are based on (i) an assumed closing date as of May 31, 2012, including with respect to calculating the portion of equity awards subject to acceleration of vesting (assuming continued vesting of the equity and assuming that all Central options, unvested shares of restricted stock remain outstanding on such date), (ii) the price per share of \$32.00, (iii) the equity holdings of the named executive officers as of May 31, 2012 (assuming no vesting of awards or exercises of Central options after May 31, 2012), and (iv) the termination of the named executive officers without cause or for good reason immediately following a change in control as of May 31, 2012.

Compensation of Central's Named Executive Officers in Connection with the Merger

Name	Cash (\$)	Equity (\$)	Pension/ NQDC (\$)	Perquisites/ Benefits (\$)	Other (\$)	Total (\$)
John D. Doherty	1,057,750	441,440	276,381	92,034(1)	320,000(3)	2,187,605
William P. Morrissey	935,137		674,629	156,590(2)	910,000(4)	2,676,356
Paul S. Feeley	368,773	165,843				534,616

- (1) Amount represents a benefit of \$59,772 from the Executive Health Insurance Plan and \$32,262 relating to Mr. Doherty's car and license plate.
- (2) Amount represents a benefit of \$674,629 from the Executive Health Insurance Plan and \$7,217 relating to Mr. Morrissey's car and license plate.

Table of Contents

- (3) Amount represents value of noncompete agreement between Mr. Doherty and Independent.
- (4) Amount represents value of noncompete agreements between Mr. Morrissey and Independent of \$310,000 and a consulting agreement of \$600,000.

Indemnification and Insurance

The merger agreement provides that Independent will indemnify and hold harmless the present and former officers and directors of Central and its subsidiaries against costs or expenses, judgments, fines, losses, claims, damages or liabilities incurred in connection with any claim, action, suit, proceeding or investigation, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, arising out of or pertaining to matters existing or occurring at or prior to the merger, whether asserted or claimed prior to, at or after the effective date of the merger, to the extent such indemnified party would have been indemnified, as a director or officer of Central or any of its subsidiaries under Central's bylaws. Independent will also continue to cover those persons for a period of six years following the effective date of the merger arising out of actions or omissions occurring at or prior to the merger, except that Independent is not required to expend more than 200% per year of the current amount expended by Central to maintain such insurance.

Appointment of Central Director to the Independent and Rockland Trust Boards of Directors

Effective as of and contingent upon the effective time of the merger, the board of directors of Independent and Rockland Trust shall duly elect John J. Morrissey, a member of the Central and Central Bank boards of directors, to the board of directors of each of Independent and Rockland Trust. Mr. Morrissey will be paid the same fees payable to Independent's non-employee directors. John Morrissey is the son of William Morrissey.

Litigation Relating to the Merger

A putative stockholder class action lawsuit was filed in connection with the merger agreement on July 17, 2012 in Superior Court in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, against Central, each of Central's directors, and Independent, captioned *Rational Strategies Fund v. John D. Doherty et al, Civil Action No. 12-2682*. The lawsuit alleges that Central and Central's directors breached their fiduciary duties owed to Central's shareholders in connection with the approval and disclosure of the proposed merger with Independent and that Independent aided and abetted the alleged breaches of fiduciary duty. Central, Central's directors and Independent believe the factual allegations in the complaint are without merit and intend to defend vigorously against the allegations in the complaint.

Table of Contents

THE MERGER AGREEMENT

The following summary describes certain aspects of the merger, including material provisions of the merger agreement. This summary is not complete and is qualified in its entirety by reference to the merger agreement, a copy of which is attached as Annex A to this document and is incorporated into this document by reference. You should read the merger agreement in its entirety, as it is the legal document governing the merger.

The Merger

Each of Central's board of directors and Independent's board of directors has unanimously adopted and approved the merger agreement, which provides for the merger of Central with and into Independent. Each share of Independent common stock issued and outstanding at the effective time of the merger will remain issued and outstanding as one share of common stock of Independent, and each share of Central common stock issued and outstanding at the effective time of the merger will be converted into the right to receive cash in the amount of \$32.00 or shares of common stock of Independent, par value \$0.01 per share, based on the exchange ratio provided for in the merger agreement, as described below. See "Consideration To Be Received in the Merger" below.

Effective Time and Completion of the Merger

The merger will be completed and will become effective upon the acceptance for filing by the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts of the articles of merger related to the merger. However, the parties may agree to a later time for completion of the merger and specify that later time in the articles of merger in accordance with Massachusetts law.

We currently expect that the merger will be completed in the fourth quarter of 2012, subject to Central's shareholders' approval of the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby, the receipt of all necessary regulatory approvals and the expiration of all regulatory waiting periods. However, completion of the merger could be delayed if there is a delay in obtaining the required shareholder or regulatory approvals or in satisfying any other conditions to the merger. There can be no assurances as to whether, or when, Central and Independent will obtain the required approvals or complete the merger.

Board of Directors of Independent

Effective as of and contingent upon the occurrence of the effective time of the merger, Independent will elect John D. Morrissey, a current director of Central, to become a director of Independent.

Consideration to Be Received in the Merger

In the merger, each outstanding share of Central common stock will be converted into the right to receive either (i) \$32.00 in cash or (2) a number of shares of Independent common stock as determined by an exchange ratio that will float linearly upward or downward within a set range to adjust for fluctuations in the price of Independent common stock. The final exchange ratio will be determined within a 12% range (*i.e.*, 6% upward or downward) of a \$28.66 base price for Independent common stock (with a corresponding base exchange ratio of 1.1165) by dividing \$32.00 by the volume weighted average price of Independent common stock for the twenty trading day period ending with the last regulatory approval of the transaction and the expiration of any waiting periods related to such approvals. By way of illustration using the extremes of the possible 12% range as examples: if the volume weighted average price of Independent Stock during the applicable period is \$26.94 (*i.e.*, 6% below \$28.66) or less, the exchange ratio will increase to 1.1878; and, if the volume weighted average price of Independent common stock during the applicable period is \$30.38 (*i.e.*, 6% above \$28.66) or higher, then the exchange ratio will decrease to 1.0533. Independent will not issue any fractional shares of its common stock in the merger, but will instead pay cash (determined on the basis of the volume weighted average closing price of Independent common stock on the NASDAQ Global Select Market for the five (5) trading days ending on the fifth (5th) trading day immediately preceding the completion of the merger) for any fractional share a Central shareholder would otherwise receive after aggregating all of his or her shares.

Table of Contents

Central's shareholders will be able to elect to receive cash, Independent common stock or a combination of cash and Independent common stock for their shares of Central common stock. Regardless of a Central shareholder's choice, however, elections will be limited by the requirement that 60% of Central common stock be converted into Independent common stock and 40% be exchanged for cash. Therefore, the allocation of cash and Independent common stock that a Central shareholder will receive will depend on the elections of other Central shareholders. The allocation of the consideration payable to Central shareholders will not be known until the exchange agent tallies the results of the cash/stock elections made by Central's shareholders. If a Central shareholder does not make an election, the type of consideration such shareholder will receive will depend on the consideration elected by other Central shareholders.

Exchange of Central Stock Certificates for Independent Stock Certificates

On or before the closing date of the merger, Independent will cause to be delivered to the exchange agent certificates representing the shares of Independent common stock to be issued in the merger. In addition, Independent will deliver to the exchange agent an aggregate amount of cash sufficient to pay in lieu of fractional shares of Independent common stock. Independent has selected Computershare Limited to act as the exchange agent in connection with the merger.

If the merger is approved, Central's shareholders will receive separate instructions for the exchange of certificates representing Central common stock. No later than five business days following the effective time of the merger, the exchange agent will mail to each Central shareholder of record at the effective time of the merger who did not previously surrender Central stock certificates, a letter of transmittal and instructions for use in surrendering the shareholder's Central stock certificates. When such Central shareholders deliver their Central stock certificates to the exchange agent along with a properly completed and duly executed letter of transmittal and any other required documents, their Central stock certificates will be cancelled and in exchange they will receive:

a check representing the amount of cash, if any, they are entitled to receive under the merger agreement as payment of merger consideration;

an Independent stock certificate representing the number of whole shares of Independent common stock that they are entitled to receive under the merger agreement; and

a check representing the amount of cash that they are entitled to receive in lieu of fractional shares, if any.

No interest will be paid or accrued on any cash constituting merger consideration.

Central's shareholders are not entitled to receive any dividends or other distributions on Independent common stock with a record date after the closing date of the merger until they have surrendered their Central stock certificates in exchange for an Independent stock certificate. After the surrender of their Central stock certificates, Central shareholders of record will be entitled to receive any dividend or other distribution, without interest, which had become payable with respect to their Independent common stock.

Independent will only issue a stock certificate for Independent common stock or a check for cash in payment of merger consideration or in lieu of a fractional share in a name other than the name in which a surrendered Central stock certificate is registered if the exchange agent is presented with all documents required to show and effect the unrecorded transfer of ownership, together with evidence that any applicable stock transfer taxes have been paid.

Stock Options and Restricted Stock

Stock Options

All outstanding unvested Central stock options will become fully vested immediately prior to the effective time of the merger. Central options will be cancelled upon consummation of the merger, and each option holder

Table of Contents

will receive a cash payment upon such cancellation in an amount equal to the product of (i) the number of shares of Central common stock provided for by such option and (ii) the excess, if any, of (a) \$32.00 over (b) the exercise price of the option.

The cash payment will be made without interest and will be net of all applicable withholding taxes. As of April 30, 2012, there were outstanding options to purchase 73,589 shares of Central common stock.

Restricted Stock

All outstanding unvested shares of Central restricted stock will become fully vested immediately prior to the effective time of the merger. All of such shares will be treated as outstanding Central shares for all purposes under the merger agreement, including for purposes of the holders' right to receive the merger consideration. As of April 30, 2012, there were 15,929 shares of unvested Central restricted stock outstanding.

Representations and Warranties

The merger agreement contains customary representations and warranties of Independent and Central relating to their respective businesses. With the exception of certain representations that must be true and correct in all material respects or true and correct except to a de minimis extent, no representation or warranty will be deemed untrue or incorrect as a consequence of the existence or absence of any fact, circumstance or event unless that fact, circumstance or event, individually or when taken together with all other facts, circumstances or events, has had or is reasonably likely to have a material adverse effect on the company making the representation or its ability to timely complete the merger and the bank merger. In determining whether a material adverse effect has occurred or is reasonably likely, the parties will disregard any effects resulting from (1) changes in banking and similar laws of general applicability or interpretations thereof, (2) changes in generally accepted accounting principles or regulatory accounting requirements applicable to banks or bank holding companies generally, (3) any modifications or changes to Central's valuation policies and practices in connection with the merger or restructuring charges taken in connection with the merger, in each case in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and with Independent's prior written consent, (4) changes after the date of the merger agreement in general economic or capital market conditions affecting financial institutions or their market prices generally and not disproportionately affecting Central or Independent, including, but not limited to, changes in levels of interest rates generally, (5) the effects of compliance with the merger agreement on the operating performance of Central or Independent, including the expenses incurred by Central or Independent in negotiating, documenting, effecting and consummating the merger, (6) the effects of any action or omission taken by Central with the prior consent of Independent, and vice versa, or as otherwise expressly permitted or contemplated by the merger agreement, (7) the impact of the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement on relationships with customers or employees (including the loss of personnel subsequent to the date of the merger agreement), and (8) the public disclosure of the merger agreement or the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement.

The representations and warranties of each of Independent and Central have been made solely for the benefit of the other party and such representations and warranties should not be relied on by any other person. In addition, such representations and warranties:

have been qualified by information set forth in confidential disclosure schedules exchanged by the parties in connection with signing the merger agreement which modifies, qualifies and creates exceptions to the representations and warranties in the merger agreement;

will not survive consummation of the merger and cannot be the basis for any claims under the merger agreement by the other party after termination of the merger agreement;

may be intended not as statements of fact, but rather as a way of allocating the risk to one of the parties to the merger agreement if those statements turn out to be inaccurate;

Table of Contents

are subject to the materiality standard described in the merger agreement which may differ from what may be viewed as material by you; and

were made only as of the date of the merger agreement or such other date as is specified in the merger agreement. Each of Independent and Central has made representations and warranties to the other regarding, among other things:

capital stock;

corporate matters, including due organization and qualification;

their authority to execute and deliver the merger agreement and the absence of conflicts with, or violations of, organizational documents or other obligations as a result of the merger;

the filing of securities and regulatory reports, and the absence of investigations by regulatory agencies;

governmental filings and regulatory approvals and consents necessary to complete the merger;

absence of certain changes or events;

compliance with applicable laws;

regulatory capitalization;

loan, non-performing and classified assets;

trust business and fiduciary accounts;

the Community Reinvestment Act and anti-money laundering requirements;

accuracy of this proxy statement/prospectus;

legal proceedings;

broker's fees payable in connection with the merger;

employee benefit matters;

labor matters;

environmental matters;

tax matters, including tax treatment of the merger; and

the accuracy of information supplied for inclusion in this document and other similar documents.

In addition, Central has made other representations and warranties about itself and its subsidiaries to Independent as to:

organization and ownership of subsidiaries;

matters relating to certain material contracts;

investment securities;

derivative transactions;

investment management;

repurchase agreements;

deposit insurance;

transactions with affiliates and insiders;

tangible properties and assets;

intellectual property;

Table of Contents

insurance;

the inapplicability of state anti-takeover laws;

the receipt of a fairness opinion; and

transaction costs.

Conduct of Business Pending the Merger

Central has undertaken customary covenants that place restrictions on it and its subsidiaries until the effective time of the merger. In general, Central has agreed that during this period it will, and will cause each of its subsidiaries to: (1) conduct its business in the ordinary course consistent with past practice; and (2) use commercially reasonable efforts to maintain and preserve intact its business organization and advantageous business relationships, including retaining the services of key officers and key employees and the goodwill of customers and other parties. Central further has agreed that, with certain exceptions, Central will not, and will not permit any of its subsidiaries to, among other things, undertake the following actions without the prior written consent of Independent:

issue, or enter into an agreement to issue, shares of common stock except pursuant to the exercise of Central stock options outstanding as of the date of the merger agreement, accelerate the vesting of any rights to acquire shares of common stock, or change the number of, or provide for the exchange of, shares of Central stock, any securities convertible into or exchangeable for any additional shares of stock, any rights issued and outstanding prior to the effective date of the merger as a result of a stock split, stock dividend, recapitalization, reclassification, or similar transaction with respect to its outstanding stock or any other such securities;

declare, set aside or pay any dividends or other distributions on any shares of its capital stock, other than (1) dividends paid by any of the wholly owned subsidiaries of Central to Central or to any of its wholly owned subsidiaries, and (2) regular quarterly cash dividends at a rate not to exceed \$0.05 per share;

enter into or amend or renew any employment, consulting, severance or similar agreements or arrangements with any director, officer, employee of Central or any of its subsidiaries, or grant any salary or wage increase or increase any employee benefit plan or pay any incentive or bonus payments, subject to certain exceptions primarily intended to permit increases in compensation and the payment of bonuses in the ordinary course of business;

hire any person except for at-will employees at an annual rate of salary not to exceed \$50,000 to fill vacancies that may arise from time to time in the ordinary course of business, or promote any employee, except to satisfy contractual obligations existing as of the date of the merger agreement;

with certain exceptions, enter into, establish, adopt, amend, modify or terminate any benefit plan or other pension, retirement, stock option, stock purchase, savings, profit sharing, deferred compensation, consulting, bonus, group insurance or other employee benefit, incentive or welfare contract, plan or arrangement, or any trust agreement related thereto, in respect of any current or former director, officer or employee;

except pursuant to agreements in effect as of the date of the merger agreement, pay, loan or advance any amount to, or sell, transfer or lease any properties or assets to, or enter into any agreement with, any of its officers or directors or any of their immediate family members or any affiliates or associates of any of its officers or directors other than compensation or business expense reimbursement in the ordinary course of business consistent with past practice;

sell, transfer, mortgage, pledge, encumber or otherwise dispose or discontinue any of its assets, deposits, business or properties other than real estate owned, or cancel or release any indebtedness owed to Central or any of its subsidiaries;

Table of Contents

acquire, other than by way of foreclosures or acquisitions of control in a bona fide fiduciary capacity or in satisfaction of debts previously contracted in good faith, all or any portion of the assets, business, deposits or properties of any other entity;

with certain exceptions, make any capital expenditures other than in the ordinary course of business consistent with past practice in amounts not exceeding \$50,000 in the aggregate unless consented to in writing by Independent;

amend its articles of organization or bylaws or any equivalent documents of any Central subsidiary;

implement or adopt any change in its accounting principles, practices or methods, other than as may be required by applicable laws or regulations or generally accepted accounting principles in the United States of America;

with certain exceptions, enter into, amend, modify or terminate any material contract, lease, or insurance policy;

enter into any settlement or similar agreement with respect to any action, suit, proceeding, order or investigation to which Central or any of its subsidiaries becomes party after the date of the merger agreement, which settlement involves payment of an amount exceeding \$25,000 individually or \$50,000 in the aggregate and/or would impose any material restriction on the business of Central or its subsidiaries;

enter into any new material line of business or materially change its lending, investment, underwriting, risk and asset liability management and other banking and operative policies, except as required by applicable law, regulation or policies imposed by any governmental authority, or file any application or make any contract or commitment with respect to branching or site location or relocation;

enter into any derivatives transactions;

incur, modify, extend or renegotiate any indebtedness or in any way assume the indebtedness of another person (except deposits, FHLB borrowings or federal funds purchased, in each case in the ordinary course of business) or assume, guarantee, endorse or otherwise as an accommodation become responsible for the obligations of any other person;

with certain exceptions, acquire, sell or otherwise dispose of any debt security or equity investment unless consented to in writing by Independent (which consent will not be unreasonably delayed or withheld);

make any changes in deposit pricing unless consented to in writing by Independent (which consent will not be unreasonably delayed or withheld);

with respect to loans:

except for commercial loans approved and/or committed as of the date of the merger agreement, make or renew any commercial loan, commercial loan commitment, commercial letter of credit or other extension of commercial credit, unless any such commercial loan, commercial loan commitment, commercial letter of credit or other extension of commercial credit has been credit approved by Central Bank in accordance with the pricing and credit underwriting guidelines of Rockland

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

Trust or, if more than \$1,000,000, is consented to in writing by Independent (which consent will not be unreasonably delayed or withheld);

except for residential loans approved and/or committed as of the date of the merger agreement, make or renew any residential loan or residential loan commitment, unless any such residential loan or residential loan commitment has a loan-to-value ratio that is compliance with Central Bank's current policies and procedures and is priced for conforming residential loans at an interest rate that is no less than the Freddie Mac Primary Mortgage Market Survey rate plus 0.125% and is priced for jumbo residential loans at an interest rate that is no less than the Freddie Mac Primary Mortgage Market Survey rate plus 0.50% or, if more than \$1,000,000, is consented to in writing by Independent (which consent will not be unreasonably delayed or withheld).

Table of Contents

except for home equity or consumer loans approved and/or committed as of the date of the merger agreement, make or renew any home equity loan or home equity loan commitment in excess of \$100,000 or make or renew any other consumer loan or consumer loan commitment in excess of \$10,000, unless any such loan is made in the ordinary course of business and consistent with Central Bank's current policies and procedures and recent past practice, unless consented to in writing by Independent (which consent will not be unreasonably delayed or withheld);

renegotiate, increase, extend or modify any loan, loan commitment, letter of credit or other extension of credit, unless consented to in writing by Independent (which consent will not be unreasonably delayed or withheld);

make any investment or commitment to invest in real estate or in any real estate development project other than by way of foreclosure or deed in lieu thereof;

make or change any material tax election, file any material amended tax return, enter into any material closing agreement, settle or compromise any material liability with respect to taxes, agree to any material adjustment of any tax attribute, file any claim for a material refund of taxes, or consent to any extension or waiver of the limitation period applicable to any material tax claim or assessment;

knowingly take any action that would prevent or impede the merger or the bank merger from qualifying as a reorganization within the meaning of Section 368(a) of the Internal Revenue Code.

commit any act or omission which constitutes a material breach or default of an agreement with any governmental authority or any other material agreement, lease or license;

foreclose on or take a deed or title to any real estate other than single-family residential properties without first conducting a Phase I environmental assessment of the property or foreclose on or take a deed or title to any real estate other than single-family residential properties if such environmental assessment indicates the presence of hazardous substances or other regulated materials;

except as may be required by applicable law or regulation, take or fail to take, or adopt any resolutions of its board of directors in support of, any action which would result in (1) any of Central's representations and warranties in the merger agreement becoming untrue in any material respect, (2) any of the conditions to the merger not being satisfied, or (3) a material violation of any provision of the merger agreement;

repurchase, redeem or otherwise acquire any shares of its capital stock or any securities convertible into or exercisable for any shares of its capital stock;

enter into any contract with respect to, or otherwise agree to do any of the actions prohibited by the preceding bullet points;

with certain exceptions or except as may be required by applicable law or regulation, make application for the opening, relocation or closing of any, or open, relocate, or close any, branch office, loan production or servicing facility or automated banking facility; or

compromise, resolve, or otherwise workout any delinquent or troubled loan unless done in the ordinary course of business consistent with recent past practice and approved by Central Bank's workout committee.

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

Independent has agreed that, except with Central's prior written consent, Independent will not, among other things, undertake the following actions:

except as may be required by applicable law or regulation, take any action or fail to take any action that is intended or reasonably likely to result in: a delay in the consummation of the merger or the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement; any impediment to its ability to consummate the merger or the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement; any of its representations and warranties contained in the merger agreement becoming untrue in any material respect at or prior to the effective time; any of the conditions contained in the merger agreement not being satisfied; or a material violation of any provision of the merger agreement; or

Table of Contents

enter into any contract with respect to, or otherwise agree to do any of the actions prohibited by the preceding bullet point. The merger agreement also contains mutual covenants relating to preparation of this document, access to information of the other company, public announcements with respect to the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement, regulatory filings and consents, notification of certain changes, information systems conversion, coordination of dividends and agreements by Central allowing Independent access to Central's customers and suppliers and to conduct environmental assessments of certain real property owned by Central.

Shareholder Approval

Central has called the special meeting to consider and vote upon approval of the merger agreement and any other matters required to be approved by Central's shareholders in order to permit consummation of the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement. Central has agreed to use commercially reasonable efforts to convene the meeting within 45 days following the time when the registration statement becomes effective. Central has agreed to take all lawful action to solicit shareholder approval of the merger agreement, although under certain circumstances Central's board of directors may recommend to Central's shareholders a Superior Proposal (as defined below) in the exercise of its fiduciary duties, as described below under No Solicitation of Alternative Transactions.

Under the merger agreement, Central's board of directors must, at all times prior to and during the special meeting, recommend approval of the merger agreement by Central's shareholders and may not withhold, withdraw, amend or modify its recommendation in any manner adverse to Independent or take any other action or make any other public statement inconsistent with its recommendation, except as and to the extent described below under No Solicitation of Alternative Transactions.

No Solicitation of Alternative Transactions

With certain exceptions described below, Central has agreed that it, its subsidiaries and their officers and directors will not, and Central will use its reasonable best efforts to cause each of its and its subsidiaries' representatives not to, directly or indirectly:

solicit, initiate or encourage any inquiry with respect to, or the making of, any proposal that constitutes or could reasonably be expected to lead to an Acquisition Proposal (as defined below);

participate in any negotiations regarding an Acquisition Proposal with, or furnish any nonpublic information relating to a Acquisition Proposal to, any party that has made or, to the knowledge of Central, is considering making an Acquisition Proposal; or

engage in discussions regarding an Acquisition Proposal with any party that has made, or, to Central's knowledge, is considering making, an Acquisition Proposal.

However, prior to the time that Central's shareholders approve the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby, if Central receives a written and unsolicited Acquisition Proposal that Central's board determines in good faith (after consultation with its financial advisers and outside counsel) is or could reasonably be expected to lead to a Superior Proposal (as defined below), Central may take the following actions:

furnish nonpublic information to the party making such Superior Proposal, but only if (1) prior to so furnishing such information, Central has entered into a customary confidentiality agreement with such party on terms no less favorable to Central than the confidentiality agreement between Central and Independent, and (2) all such information has previously been provided to Independent or is provided to Independent prior to or contemporaneously with the time it is provided to the party making such Superior Proposal; and

engage or participate in any discussions or negotiations with such party with respect to the Superior Proposal.

Table of Contents

Central must promptly advise Independent of the receipt of:

any proposal that constitutes or could reasonably be expected to lead to an Acquisition Proposal and the material terms of the proposal; and

any request for non-public information relating to Central or any of its subsidiaries other than requests for information not reasonably expected to be related to an Acquisition Proposal.

Thereafter, Central must keep Independent reasonably informed on a reasonably current basis of the status of any such Acquisition Proposal (including any material change to the terms thereof).

Except as described below, Central's board of directors may not:

withhold, withdraw or modify (or publicly propose to withhold, withdraw or modify), in a manner adverse to Independent, its recommendation that Central's shareholders approve the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby; or

approve or recommend (or publicly propose to approve or recommend) any Acquisition Proposal.

Except as set forth below, Central may not, and its board of directors may not allow it to, and Central may not allow any of its subsidiaries to enter into any letter of intent, memorandum of understanding, agreement in principle, acquisition agreement, merger agreement or other agreement (except for customary confidentiality agreements as described above) relating to any Acquisition Proposal.

Notwithstanding the previous paragraph, Central's board of directors may, prior to the time Central's shareholders approve the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby, (1) change its recommendation that Central shareholders approve the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby or (2) terminate the merger agreement (and concurrently with such termination cause Central to enter into an acquisition agreement with respect to the Superior Proposal), in either case if and only if the board of directors has determined in good faith, after consulting with its outside counsel, that the failure to take such action would be inconsistent with the directors' fiduciary duties. However, the board of directors may not take any such action in connection with an Acquisition Proposal unless:

the Acquisition Proposal constitutes a Superior Proposal;

prior to terminating the merger agreement, Central provides written notice to Independent at least four business days in advance of its intention to take such action (which notice must specify all material terms and conditions of the Superior Proposal, including documentation related thereto and the identity of the party making the Superior Proposal);

during the four-day notice period, Central negotiates with Independent in good faith if Independent proposes to make adjustments in the terms and conditions of this merger agreement so that the Acquisition Proposal ceases to constitute a Superior Proposal; and

the Acquisition Proposal continues to constitute a Superior Proposal after taking into account any amendments that Independent agrees to make to the merger agreement.

As used in the merger agreement, the term "Acquisition Proposal" means any proposal or offer with respect to any of the following involving Central:

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

any merger, consolidation, share exchange, business combination or other similar transaction;

any sale, lease, exchange, mortgage, pledge, transfer or other disposition of assets that constitute a substantial portion of the net revenues, net income or assets of Central in a single transaction or series of transactions;

any tender offer or exchange offer for 20% or more of the outstanding shares of Central's capital stock or the filing of a registration statement under the Securities Act, in connection therewith; or

Table of Contents

any public announcement by any party of a proposal, plan or intention to do any of the foregoing or any agreement to engage in any of the foregoing.

As used in the merger agreement, the term "Superior Proposal" means any bona fide written Acquisition Proposal with respect to more than 50% of the combined voting power of the shares of Central common stock then outstanding or all or substantially all of the assets of Central:

that is on terms which Central's board of directors determines in good faith, after consultation with its financial advisor, to be more favorable from a financial point of view to Central's shareholders than the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement;

that constitutes a transaction that, in the good faith judgment of Central's board of directors, is reasonably likely to be consummated on the terms set forth, taking into account all legal, financial, regulatory and other aspects of such proposal; and

for which financing, to the extent required, is then committed pursuant to a written commitment letter.

Employee Benefits Matters

Benefit Plans

The merger agreement provides that following the effective date of the merger, Independent will provide those individuals who are employees of Central and its subsidiaries and who continue as employees of Independent or any of its subsidiaries with employee benefit plans of general applicability for which Independent has analogous plans with such employee plans being either those of Central or Independent as selected by Independent; provided, however, that all such employees will be entitled to participate in all benefit plans of general applicability then maintained by Independent to the same extent as similarly-situated employees of Independent. Independent will make all commercially reasonable efforts to cause each benefit plan providing medical or dental benefits to continuing employees to waive any preexisting condition limitations relating to any conditions that were covered under the applicable medical or dental plans of Central and its subsidiaries, take into account all eligible expenses incurred for purposes of satisfying the deductible and coinsurance and waive any waiting period limitation or evidence of insurability requirement which would otherwise be applicable to the continuing employee.

Severance Pay Plan

In addition to the settlement agreements referenced elsewhere in this proxy statement/prospectus and individual severance arrangements offered to certain key employees, Independent has agreed to a severance pay plan that provides for severance benefits for eligible employees not covered by any contractual severance arrangement in connection with certain terminations of employment that occur within one year after the effective date of the merger. Under this severance pay plan, eligible employees whose employment is terminated without cause during the one year following the merger would be entitled to receive severance pay in a lump sum. The amount of this lump sum payment would be equal to two weeks' salary per year of service up to a maximum of twenty-six (26) weeks.

Employee Stock Ownership Plan

The merger agreement provides for the termination of the tax-qualified employee stock ownership plan of Central Bank (the "ESOP") immediately to, and effective upon, the consummation of the merger. All shares held by the ESOP will be converted into the right to receive merger consideration. All accounts under ESOP will vest in full upon the termination of the ESOP. Any surplus unallocated assets held in the ESOP upon termination will first be used to satisfy the outstanding loan that was incurred by the ESOP to purchase shares of Central common stock, as well as any administrative costs of the ESOP. Remaining surplus assets, if any, will then be allocated to the accounts of ESOP participants in proportion to their account balances at the time of the ESOP's termination. Upon the receipt of a favorable determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service related to the ESOP's termination, the amounts held in the ESOP will be distributed to the account holders.

Table of Contents

Additional Covenants

Each of Independent and Central agreed to cooperate and use their respective commercially reasonable efforts to obtain all approvals of third parties and governmental authorities necessary to redeem Central's preferred stock issued to the U.S. Treasury Department under the Small Business Lending Fund program. Additionally, Independent agreed to assume the performance of Central's obligations under all agreements related to Central's issuance of trust preferred securities.

Conditions to Complete the Merger

Our respective obligations to complete the merger are subject to the fulfillment or waiver of mutual conditions, including:

receipt of approval of Central's shareholders;

the effectiveness of the registration statement of which this document is a part, with respect to the Independent common stock to be issued in the merger under the Securities Act, and the absence of any stop order or proceedings initiated or threatened by the Securities and Exchange Commission for that purpose;

the receipt by each party of a legal opinion from its counsel with respect to certain U.S. federal income tax consequences of the merger;

the receipt and effectiveness of all regulatory approvals, registrations and consents, (none of which shall impose a term, condition or restriction that independent reasonably determines to be a burdensome condition) and the expiration of all waiting periods required to complete the merger; and

the absence of any statute, regulation, rule, decree, injunction or other order in effect by any court or other governmental entity that prohibits completion of the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement.

Each of Central's and Independent's obligations to complete the merger is also separately subject to the satisfaction or waiver of a number of conditions, including the performance by the other party in all material respects of its obligations under the merger agreement, and the other party's representations and warranties in the merger agreement being true and correct in all material respects (except that no representation or warranty will be deemed not to be true and correct unless the failure of such representation or warranty to be true and correct, together with all other failures, would have a material adverse effect on the party).

Independent's obligation to complete the merger is further subject to the conditions that the number of outstanding shares of Central common stock shall not exceed 1,690,951, except to the extent increased as a result of the exercise of stock options outstanding on the date of the merger agreement, and to the receipt of a non-competition and non-solicitation agreement from John D. Doherty and a consulting, non-competition and non-solicitation agreement from William P. Morrissey.

We cannot provide assurance as to when or if all of the conditions to the merger can or will be satisfied or waived by the appropriate party. As of the date of this document, we have no reason to believe that any of these conditions will not be satisfied.

Termination of the Merger Agreement

General

The merger agreement may be terminated at any time prior to the completion of the merger by our mutual consent authorized by each of our boards of directors, as determined by a vote of a majority of its respective members, or by either Independent or Central if:

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

a governmental entity which must grant a regulatory approval as a condition to the merger denies approval of the merger or any governmental entity has issued an order prohibiting the merger and such action has become final and non-appealable;

Table of Contents

the requisite shareholder approval is not obtained from Central's shareholders;

the merger is not completed by March 31, 2013 (other than because of a material breach of the Agreement caused by the party seeking termination); or

the other party breaches the merger agreement in a way that would entitle the party seeking to terminate the agreement not to consummate the merger, subject to the right of the breaching party to cure the breach by the earlier of: 30 days following written notice or 2 business days before March 31, 2013 (unless it is not possible due to the nature or timing of the breach for the breaching party to cure the breach).

The merger agreement may also be terminated by Independent if Central has materially breached its non-solicitation obligations; the Central board has failed to recommend in this proxy statement the approval of the merger agreement, or has withdrawn, modified or qualified, or has proposed to withdraw, modify or qualify, in any manner adverse to Independent, its recommendation that its shareholders approve the merger agreement; the Central board has recommended, proposed or publicly announced its intention to recommend or propose, to engage in an Acquisition Transaction (as defined below under Termination Fee and Expense Reimbursement) with any person other than Independent or a subsidiary or affiliate of Independent; or the Central board has failed to call the special meeting of Central shareholders.

Additionally, Central may terminate the merger agreement if:

it enters into a Superior Proposal as described under The Merger Agreement No Solicitation of Alternative Transactions, so long as it pays a termination fee of \$2.2 million to Independent; or

pursuant to a walk away right that is subject to a top up option, if (a) the twenty day volume-weighted average price of Independent's common stock as of a measurement date prior to closing is 20% below both (i) the ten day volume-weighted average price of Independent's common stock as of April 30, 2012 and (ii) the twenty day volume-weighted average price of the Nasdaq Bank Stock Index, (b) Central elects to terminate the agreement by a majority vote of Central's directors, and (c) following notice of such election Independent does not exercise its top up option under the merger agreement to increase the exchange ratio to a number that would compensate Central's shareholders for the extent of the drop in Independent's common stock price below the prices specified in (a)(i) and (ii) above. If Independent does exercise its top up option, then no termination will occur.

Effect of Termination

In the event the merger agreement is terminated as described above, the merger agreement will become void and neither Independent nor Central will have any liability under the merger agreement, except that:

both Independent and Central will remain liable for any willful breach of the merger agreement; and

designated provisions of the merger agreement, including those relating to the termination fee, the payment of fees and expenses, non-survival of the representations and warranties, and confidential treatment of information will survive the termination.

Termination Fee and Expense Reimbursement

Conditions Requiring Payment of Termination Fee

Central has agreed to pay a termination fee in the amount of \$2.2 million to Independent in the following circumstances:

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

if Central terminates the merger agreement because Central's board of directors has approved, and Central enters into, a definitive agreement with respect to a Superior Proposal (as defined above under "No Solicitation of Alternative Transactions"); or

Table of Contents

in the event that

(1) an Acquisition Proposal, whether or not conditional, has been publicly announced (or any person has publicly announced an intention, whether or not conditional, to make an Acquisition Proposal) or (2) Central's board of directors has withheld, withdrawn or modified (or publicly proposed to withhold, withdraw or modify) its recommendation for the merger, prior to or on the date of the special meeting or at any adjournment or postponement thereof at which the vote on the merger agreement is held; and

the merger agreement is terminated:

by Independent or Central because shareholder approval is not obtained by Central's shareholders;

by Independent or Central because the merger is not completed on or before March 31, 2013; or

by Independent because Central willfully breaches the merger agreement in a way that would entitle Independent not to consummate the merger, subject to the right of Central to cure the breach;

by Independent because:

Central materially breaches its non-solicitation obligations;

Central's board of directors fails to recommend that Central shareholders approve the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby, or the board withdraws the recommendation or modifies it in a manner adverse to Independent;

Central's board of directors recommends, proposes or publicly announces its intention to recommend or propose, to engage in an Acquisition Transaction (as defined below) with any party other than Independent or a subsidiary or affiliate of Independent; or

Central materially breaches its obligations to call, give notice of, convene and hold a meeting of Central shareholders in order to approve the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby; and

within 12 months following the date of termination, Central enters into a definitive agreement with respect to any Acquisition Transaction, Central's board of directors recommends any Acquisition Transaction, or Central consummates any Acquisition Transaction,

then Central must pay the termination fee to Independent. The amount paid will be offset by any amount previously paid for expense reimbursement as described below. Central must pay the termination fee prior to the earlier of Central entering into a definitive agreement for or consummating such Acquisition Transaction.

As used in the merger agreement, the term "Acquisition Transaction" means any of the following involving Central:

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

any merger, consolidation, share exchange, business combination or other similar transaction;

any sale, lease, exchange, mortgage, pledge, transfer or other disposition of assets that constitute a substantial portion of the net revenues, net income or assets of Central in a single transaction or series of transactions; or

any tender offer or exchange offer for 20% or more of the outstanding shares of Central's capital stock or the filing of a registration statement under the Securities Act, in connection therewith.

Conditions Requiring Expense Reimbursement

If the merger agreement is terminated by Independent because:

Central willfully breaches the merger agreement in a way that would entitle Independent not to consummate the merger, subject to the right of Central to cure the breach;

Table of Contents

shareholder approval is not obtained by Central's shareholders; or

the merger is not completed on or before March 31, 2013;
and prior to such termination,

an Acquisition Proposal, whether or not conditional, has been publicly announced (or any person has publicly announced an intention, whether or not conditional, to make an Acquisition Proposal); or

Central's board of directors has withheld, withdrawn or modified (or publicly proposed to withhold, withdraw or modify), its recommendation for the merger, prior to or on the date of the special meeting or at any adjournment or postponement thereof at which the vote on the merger agreement is held

but the \$2.2 million termination fee has not been paid and is not payable because Central has not entered into a definitive agreement with respect to, or consummated any Acquisition Transaction, then Central must pay as promptly as possible (but in any event within three business days) following receipt of an invoice therefor, up to \$750,000 of Independent's reasonably documented out-of-pocket fees and expenses (including reasonable legal fees and expenses) actually incurred by Independent prior to the termination of the merger agreement proximately in connection with the negotiation, execution, delivery and performance of the merger agreement by Independent.

Amendment of the Merger Agreement

We may amend the merger agreement at any time prior to completion of the merger. However, after any approval of the merger by Central's shareholders, there may not be, without further approval of the shareholders, any amendment of the merger agreement that requires such further approval by shareholders under applicable law.

Fees and Expenses

Except as described above under Termination Fee and Expense Reimbursement, each party will bear all expenses incurred by it in connection with the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby, including fees and expenses of its own financial consultants, accountants and counsel.

Restrictions on Resales by Affiliates

Shares of Independent common stock to be issued to Central shareholders in the merger have been registered under the Securities Act, and may be traded freely and without restriction by those shareholders not deemed to be affiliates (as that term is defined under the Securities Act) of Independent after the merger. Any subsequent transfer of shares, however, by any Central shareholder who is deemed an affiliate of Independent after the merger will, under existing law, require either:

the further registration under the Securities Act of the Independent common stock to be transferred; or

the availability of another exemption from registration.

An affiliate of Independent is a person who directly, or indirectly through one or more intermediaries, controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with, Independent. These restrictions are expected to apply to the directors and executive officers of Independent and the holders of 10% or more of the outstanding Independent common stock. The same restrictions apply to the spouses and certain relatives of those persons and any trusts, estates, corporations or other entities in which those persons have a 10% or greater beneficial or equity interest.

Independent will give stop transfer instructions to the exchange agent with respect to the shares of Independent common stock to be received by persons subject to these restrictions.

Table of Contents

VOTING AGREEMENTS

Concurrently with the execution of the merger agreement, the directors of Central separately entered into voting agreements with Independent under which they agreed to:

restrict their ability to transfer or dispose of their shares of Central common stock;

appear at the special meeting or otherwise cause their shares of Central common stock to be counted as present thereat for purposes of calculating a quorum;

vote their shares of Central common stock in favor of approval of the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated thereby;

vote their shares of Central common stock against any action or agreement that would result in a breach of any covenant, representation or warranty, or other obligation or agreement, of Central contained in the merger agreement;

vote their shares of Central common stock against any proposal to acquire Central by any person other than Independent or against any action, agreement or transaction intended to, or could reasonably be expected to, materially impede, interfere or be inconsistent with, delay, postpone, discourage or materially and adversely affect the consummation of the transactions contemplated by the merger agreement; and

not to vote or execute any written consent to rescind or amend in any manner any prior vote or written consent, as a shareholder of Central, to approve the merger agreement unless the merger agreement is terminated in accordance with its terms

The voting agreements were executed as a condition of Independent's willingness to enter into the merger agreement, and as an indication of the directors' support for the merger agreement and the transactions contemplated by it and their willingness to vote their shares of Central common stock in favor of the merger agreement at the special meeting.

On April 30, 2012, the date upon which these agreements were executed, these directors of Central had sole or shared voting power over 408,129 shares, or approximately 23.8%, of the outstanding shares of Central common stock.

No separate consideration was paid to any of the directors for entering into these voting agreements. However, the directors of Central may be deemed to have interests in the merger as directors that are different from or in addition to those of other Central shareholders. See "The Merger Interests of Central's Executive Officers and Directors in the Merger" beginning on page 50 of this proxy statement/prospectus.

Table of Contents

ACCOUNTING TREATMENT

Independent will use the acquisition method of accounting for the merger, in accordance with the provisions of the Business Combinations Topic of the Financial Accounting Standards Board Accounting Standard Codification. As of the date of the merger, Central's assets and liabilities will be recorded at their respective estimated fair values. To the extent that the purchase price exceeds the estimated fair value of the net assets acquired, Independent will allocate the excess purchase price to all identifiable intangible assets. Any remaining excess will then be allocated to goodwill. The goodwill resulting from the merger will not be amortized to expense, but instead will be reviewed for impairment at least annually. To the extent goodwill is impaired, its carrying value would be written down to its implied fair value and a charge would be made to earnings. Core deposit and other intangibles with definite useful lives will be amortized to expense over their estimated useful lives.

The financial statements of Independent issued after the merger will reflect the results attributable to the acquired operations of Central beginning on the date the merger is completed.

Table of Contents

MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES OF THE MERGER

The following section describes the anticipated material U.S. federal income tax consequences of the merger to U.S. holders (as defined below) of Central common stock. This discussion addresses only those holders that hold their Central common stock as a capital asset within the meaning of Section 1221 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the Internal Revenue Code), and does not address all the U.S. federal income tax consequences that may be relevant to particular holders in light of their individual circumstances or to holders that are subject to special rules, such as:

financial institutions;

insurance companies;

individual retirement and other tax-deferred accounts;

persons subject to the alternative minimum tax provisions of the Internal Revenue Code;

persons eligible for tax treaty benefits;

entities treated as partnerships or other flow-through entities for U.S. federal income tax purposes;

foreign corporations, foreign partnerships and other foreign entities;

tax-exempt organizations;

dealers in securities;

persons whose functional currency is not the U.S. dollar;

traders in securities that elect to use a mark to market method of accounting;

persons who are not citizens or residents of the United States;

persons that hold Central common stock as part of a straddle, hedge, constructive sale or conversion transaction; and

U.S. holders who acquired their shares of Central common stock through the exercise of an employee stock option or otherwise as compensation.

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

The following is based upon the Internal Revenue Code, its legislative history, Treasury regulations promulgated pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code and published rulings and decisions, all as currently in effect as of the date of this document, and all of which are subject to change, possibly with retroactive effect, and to differing interpretations. Tax considerations under state, local and foreign laws, or federal laws other than those pertaining to U.S. federal income tax, are not addressed in this document.

Holders of Central common stock should consult with their own tax advisers as to the U.S. federal income tax consequences of the merger as well as the effect of state, local, foreign and other tax laws and of proposed changes to applicable tax laws, in light of their particular circumstances.

For purposes of this discussion, the term "U.S. holder" means a beneficial owner of Central common stock that is:

a U.S. citizen or resident, as determined for federal income tax purposes;

a corporation, or entity taxable as a corporation, created or organized in or under the laws of the United States; or

otherwise subject to U.S. federal income tax on a net income basis.

The U.S. federal income tax consequences of a partner in a partnership holding Central common stock generally will depend on the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. We recommend that partners in such a partnership consult their own tax advisers.

Table of Contents**Tax Consequences of the Merger Generally**

Independent and Central have structured the merger to qualify as a reorganization within the meaning of Section 368(a) of the Internal Revenue Code. It is a condition to Independent's obligation to complete the merger that Independent receive an opinion of its counsel, Choate Hall & Stewart LLP, dated the closing date of the merger, substantially to the effect that the merger will be treated as a reorganization within the meaning of Section 368(a) of the Internal Revenue Code. It is a condition to Central's obligation to complete the merger that Central receive an opinion of its counsel, Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP, dated the closing date of the merger, substantially to the effect that the merger will be treated as a reorganization within the meaning of Section 368(a) of the Internal Revenue Code. In rendering these opinions, counsel may require and rely upon representations contained in letters and certificates to be received from Independent and Central. None of the tax opinions given in connection with the merger or the opinions described below will be binding on the Internal Revenue Service. Neither Independent nor Central intends to request any ruling from the Internal Revenue Service as to the U.S. federal income tax consequences of the merger. Consequently, no assurance can be given that the Internal Revenue Service will not assert, or that a court would not sustain, a position contrary to any of those set forth below. In addition, if any of the representations or assumptions upon which those opinions are based is inconsistent with the actual facts, the U.S. federal income tax consequences of the merger could be adversely affected.

As a result of the merger qualifying as a reorganization within the meaning of Section 368(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, the following material U.S. federal income tax consequences will result:

Exchange Solely for Independent Common Stock. No gain or loss will be recognized by a Central shareholder who receives solely shares of Independent common stock (except for cash received in lieu of fractional shares, as discussed below) in exchange for all of his or her shares of Central common stock. The tax basis of the shares of Independent common stock received by a Central shareholder in such exchange will be equal (except for the basis attributable to any fractional shares of Independent common stock, as discussed below) to the basis of the Central common stock surrendered in exchange for the Independent common stock. The holding period of the Independent common stock received will include the holding period of shares of Central common stock surrendered in exchange for the Independent common stock, provided that such shares were held as capital assets of the Central shareholder at the effective time of the merger.

Exchange Solely for Cash. A Central shareholder who receives solely cash in exchange for all of his or her shares of Central common stock (and is not treated as constructively owning Independent common stock after the merger under the circumstances referred to below under Possible Dividend Treatment) will recognize gain or loss for federal income tax purposes equal to the difference between the cash received and such shareholder's tax basis in the Central common stock surrendered in exchange for the cash. Such gain or loss will be a capital gain or loss, provided that such shares were held as capital assets of the Central shareholder at the effective time of the merger. Such gain or loss will be long-term capital gain or loss if the Central shareholder's holding period is more than one year at the effective time of the merger. The Internal Revenue Code contains limitations on the extent to which a taxpayer may deduct capital losses from ordinary income.

Exchange for Independent Common Stock and Cash. A Central shareholder who receives a combination of Independent common stock and cash in exchange for his or her Central common stock will not be permitted to recognize any loss for federal income tax purposes. Such a shareholder will recognize gain, if any, equal to the lesser of (1) the amount of cash received or (2) the amount of gain realized in the transaction. The amount of gain a Central shareholder realizes will equal the amount by which (a) the cash plus the fair market value at the effective time of the merger of Independent common stock received exceeds (b) the shareholder's basis in the Central common stock to be surrendered in the exchange for the cash and Independent common stock. Any recognized gain could be taxed as a capital gain or a dividend, as described below. The tax basis of the shares of Independent common stock received by such Central shareholder will be the same as the basis of the shares of Central common stock surrendered in exchange for the shares of Independent common stock, adjusted as provided in Section 358(a) of the Internal Revenue Code for the gain recognized and/or cash received in

Table of Contents

exchange for such shares of Central common stock. The holding period for shares of Independent common stock received by such Central shareholder will include such shareholder's holding period for the Central common stock surrendered in exchange for the Independent common stock, provided that such shares were held as capital assets of the shareholder at the effective time of the merger.

A Central shareholder's federal income tax consequences will also depend on whether his or her shares of Central common stock were purchased at different times at different prices. If they were, the Central shareholder could realize gain with respect to some of the shares of Central common stock and loss with respect to other shares. Such Central shareholder would have to recognize such gain to the extent such shareholder receives cash with respect to those shares in which the shareholder's adjusted tax basis is less than the amount of cash plus the fair market value at the effective time of the merger of the Independent common stock received, but could not recognize loss with respect to those shares in which the Central shareholder's adjusted tax basis is greater than the amount of cash plus the fair market value at the effective time of the merger of the Independent common stock received. Any disallowed loss would be included in the adjusted basis of the Independent common stock. Such a Central shareholder is urged to consult his or her own tax advisor respecting the tax consequences of the merger to that shareholder.

Possible Dividend Treatment. In certain circumstances, a Central shareholder who receives solely cash or a combination of cash and Independent common stock in the merger may receive dividend income, rather than capital gain, treatment on all or a portion of the gain recognized by that shareholder if the receipt of cash has the effect of the distribution of a dividend. The determination of whether a cash payment has such effect is based on a comparison of the Central shareholder's proportionate interest in Independent after the merger with the proportionate interest the shareholder would have had if the shareholder had received solely Independent common stock in the merger. This could happen because of your purchase (or the purchase by a family member or certain entities described below) of additional Independent stock or a repurchase of shares by Independent. For purposes of this comparison, the Central shareholder may be deemed to constructively own shares of Independent common stock held by certain members of the shareholder's family or certain entities in which the shareholder has an ownership or beneficial interest and certain stock options may be aggregated with the shareholder's shares of Independent common stock. The amount of the cash payment that may be treated as a dividend is limited to the shareholder's ratable share of the accumulated earnings and profits of Central at the effective time of the merger. Any gain that is not treated as a dividend will be taxed as a capital gain, provided that the shareholder's shares were held as capital assets at the effective time of the merger. Because the determination of whether a cash payment will be treated as having the effect of a dividend depends primarily upon the facts and circumstances of each Central shareholder, shareholders are urged to consult their own tax advisors regarding the tax treatment of any cash received in the merger.

Cash in Lieu of Fractional Shares. A Central shareholder who holds Central common stock as a capital asset and who receives in the merger, in exchange for such stock, solely Independent common stock and cash in lieu of a fractional share interest in Independent common stock will be treated as having received such cash in full payment for such fractional share of stock and as capital gain or loss, notwithstanding the dividend rules discussed above.

Tax Treatment of the Entities. No gain or loss will be recognized by Independent or Central as a result of the merger.

Reporting Requirements

A Central shareholder who receives Independent common stock as a result of the merger will be required to retain records pertaining to the merger. Certain Central shareholders are subject to certain reporting requirements with respect to the merger. In particular, such shareholders will be required to attach a statement to their tax returns for the year of the merger that contains the information listed in Treasury Regulation Section 1.368-3(b). Such statement must include the shareholder's adjusted tax basis in its Central common stock and other information regarding the reorganization. Central shareholders are urged to consult with their tax advisers with respect to these and other reporting requirements applicable to the merger.

Table of Contents

Withholding Requirements

Certain Central shareholders may be subject to backup withholding, at a rate of 28%, on cash received pursuant to the merger. Backup withholding will not apply, however, to a Central shareholder who (1) furnishes a correct taxpayer identification number and certifies that the shareholder is not subject to backup withholding on IRS Form W-9 or a substantially similar form, or (2) is otherwise exempt from backup withholding. If a Central shareholder does not provide a correct taxpayer identification number on IRS Form W-9 or a substantially similar form, the Central shareholder may be subject to penalties imposed by the Internal Revenue Service. Amounts withheld, if any, are generally not an additional tax and may be refunded or credited against the Central shareholder's U.S. federal income tax liability, provided that the Central shareholder timely furnishes the required information to the Internal Revenue Service.

THE PRECEDING DISCUSSION IS A SUMMARY OF THE MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES OF THE MERGER AND DOES NOT PURPORT TO BE A COMPLETE ANALYSIS OR DISCUSSION OF ALL POTENTIAL TAX EFFECTS RELEVANT THERETO. SHAREHOLDERS ARE URGED TO CONSULT THEIR OWN TAX ADVISERS AS TO THE U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES TO THEM OF THE MERGER (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, TAX RETURN REPORTING REQUIREMENTS), AS WELL AS THE EFFECT OF STATE, LOCAL, FOREIGN AND OTHER TAX LAWS AND ANY PROPOSED CHANGES TO APPLICABLE TAX LAWS.

Table of Contents

THE COMPANIES

INDEPENDENT

Independent is a Massachusetts corporation organized in 1985 and is registered with the Federal Reserve as a bank holding company under the Bank Holding Company Act. Independent is the sole shareholder of Rockland Trust, and its primary business is serving as the holding company of Rockland Trust.

Rockland Trust is a Massachusetts-chartered trust company. Rockland Trust was chartered in 1907. Rockland Trust's deposits are insured by the Deposit Insurance Fund of the FDIC up to applicable limits. Rockland Trust offers a full range of banking services through a network of 68 full-service bank branches in eastern Massachusetts and its commercial lending centers and investment management offices in eastern Massachusetts and Providence, Rhode Island. Rockland Trust provides investment management and trust services to individuals, institutions, small businesses and charitable institutions throughout eastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

At March 31, 2012, Independent had total consolidated assets of approximately \$5.0 billion, net loans of approximately \$3.8 billion, total deposits of approximately \$3.9 billion and total stockholders' equity of approximately \$478.9 million.

At March 31, 2012, Independent had (a) a total risk-based capital ratio of 12.73%, (b) a Tier 1 risk-based capital ratio of 10.71%, and (c) a Tier 1 leverage capital ratio of 8.77%. Independent is not subject to any written agreement, order, capital directive, or prompt corrective action directive issued by the Federal Reserve to meet and maintain a specific capital level for any capital measure. Rockland Trust is a well capitalized institution as defined by federal banking agencies.

You can find more information about Independent in Independent's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission referenced in the sections in this document titled "Where You Can Find More Information" and "Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference" beginning on page 126.

CENTRAL

General

Central. Central was organized by Central Bank on September 30, 1998, to acquire all of the capital stock of Central Bank as part of its reorganization into the holding company form of ownership, which was completed on January 8, 1999. Upon completion of the holding company reorganization, Central's common stock became registered under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act"). Central is a registered bank holding company subject to regulation and examination by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (the "Federal Reserve Board"). Central has no significant assets or liabilities other than loans to the Central Co-operative Bank Employee Stock Ownership Plan ("ESOP") and subordinated debentures as well as common stock of Central Bank and various other liquid assets in which it invests in the ordinary course of business. For that reason, substantially all of the discussion in this proxy statement/prospectus relates to the operations of Central Bank and its subsidiaries.

Central Bank. Central Co-operative Bank was organized as a Massachusetts chartered co-operative bank in 1915 and converted from mutual to stock form of ownership in 1986. The primary business of Central Bank is to generate funds in the form of deposits and use the funds to make mortgage loans for the purchase, refinancing, and construction of residential properties and to make loans on commercial real estate in its market area. In addition, Central Bank makes a limited amount of consumer loans including secured and unsecured personal loans, and commercial and industrial loans. Central Bank sells some of its residential mortgage loan production in the secondary mortgage market. Central Bank also maintains an investment portfolio of various types of debt securities, including corporate bonds and mortgage-backed securities, and common and preferred equity securities. Central Bank also offers investment services (including annuities) to its customers through a third party broker-dealer.

Central Bank is headquartered in Somerville, Massachusetts and its operations are conducted through nine full-service office facilities located in Somerville, Arlington, Burlington, Chestnut Hill, Malden, Medford,

Table of Contents

Melrose and Woburn, Massachusetts, a limited service high school branch in Woburn, Massachusetts, a stand-alone 24-hour automated teller machine (ATM) in Somerville, Massachusetts, as well as over the Internet. Each full-service branch office also has a 24-hour ATM. Central Bank is a member of the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) of Boston and its deposits are insured to applicable limits by the Deposit Insurance Fund of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). Due to issues associated with the recent economic downturn, FDIC deposit insurance costs have increased considerably. See Regulation and Supervision of Central Bank Insurance of Deposit Accounts for additional information regarding deposit insurance premiums.

All Massachusetts chartered co-operative banks are required to be members of the Share Insurance Fund. The Share Insurance Fund maintains a deposit insurance fund which insures all deposits in member banks which are not covered by federal insurance. In past years, a premium of 1/24 of 1% of insured deposits had been assessed annually on member banks such as Central Bank for this deposit insurance. However, no premium has been assessed in recent years.

The main offices of Central and Central Bank are located at 399 Highland Avenue, Somerville, Massachusetts 02144 and their telephone number is (617) 628-4000. Central Bank also maintains a website at www.centralbk.com. Information on Central Bank s website should not be considered a part of this proxy statement/prospectus.

The operations of Central Bank are generally influenced by overall economic conditions, the related monetary and fiscal policies of the federal government and the regulatory policies of financial institution regulatory authorities, including the Massachusetts Commissioner of Banks (the Commissioner), the Federal Reserve Board and the FDIC.

Market Area

All of Central Bank s offices are located in the northwestern suburbs of Boston, which are its principal market area for deposits. The majority of the properties securing Central Bank s loans are located in Middlesex County, Massachusetts. Central Bank s market area consists of established suburban areas and includes portions of the Route 128 high-technology corridor.

Competition

Central Bank s competition for savings deposits has historically come from other co-operative banks, savings banks, credit unions, savings and loan associations and commercial banks located in Massachusetts generally, and in the Boston metropolitan area, specifically. With the advent of interstate banking, Central Bank also faces competition from out-of-state banking organizations. In the past, during times of high interest rates, Central Bank has also experienced additional significant competition for deposits from short-term money market funds and other corporate and government securities. Central Bank has faced continuing competition for deposits from other financial intermediaries, including those operating over the Internet.

Central Bank competes for deposits principally by offering depositors a wide variety of savings programs, convenient branch locations, 24-hour automated teller machines, Internet banking, preauthorized payment and withdrawal systems, tax-deferred retirement programs and other miscellaneous services such as money orders, travelers checks and safe deposit boxes. Central Bank usually does not rely upon any individual, group or entity for a material portion of its deposits.

Central Bank s competition for real estate loans comes principally from mortgage banking companies, co-operative banks and savings banks, credit unions, savings and loan associations, commercial banks, insurance companies and other institutional lenders. Central Bank competes for loan originations primarily through the interest rates and loan fees it charges and the efficiency and quality of services it provides borrowers, real estate brokers and builders. The competition for loans encountered by Central Bank, as well as the types of institutions with which Central Bank competes, varies from time to time depending upon certain factors, including the general availability of lendable funds and credit, general and local economic conditions, current interest rate levels, volatility in the mortgage markets and other factors which are not readily predictable.

Table of Contents

Changes in bank regulation, such as changes in the products and services banks can offer and involvement in non-banking activities by bank holding companies, as well as bank mergers and acquisitions, can affect Central Bank's ability to compete successfully. Legislation and regulations have also expanded the activities in which depository institutions may engage. The ability of Central Bank to compete successfully will depend upon how successfully it can respond to the evolving competitive, regulatory, technological and demographic developments affecting its operations.

Lending Activities

Central Bank's lending focus is concentrated in real estate secured transactions, including residential mortgage and home equity loans, commercial mortgage loans and construction loans. For the year ended March 31, 2012, Central Bank originated loans totaling \$170.7 million. Of the total loans originated during fiscal 2012, \$165.7 million, or 97%, were residential mortgage and home equity loans; \$3.9 million, or 2%, were commercial real estate loans; and \$1.8 million, or 1%, were commercial and industrial, and other loans. During the years ended March 31, 2012 and 2011, Central Bank sold \$11.1 million and \$21.2 million, respectively, of residential mortgage loan originations. The sale of loans in the secondary market allows Central Bank to continue to make loans during periods when savings deposit flows decline or funds are not otherwise available for lending purposes and to manage interest rate risk.

Central Bank's loan portfolio increased by \$54.7 million, or 13.9%, to \$448.9 million at March 31, 2012 from \$394.2 million at March 31, 2011. The increase was primarily due to increases in residential real estate loans and decreases in the commercial real estate, land and construction loan portfolios. During fiscal 2012 and 2011, management de-emphasized higher-risk commercial real estate and construction and land lending in accordance with Central's business plan. Land and construction loans totaled \$937 thousand at March 31, 2012 compared to \$456 thousand at March 31, 2011. Commercial and industrial loans decreased primarily due to the repayment of such loans. During fiscal 2012 management focused on increasing the residential real estate portfolios as these loans generally have less risk compared to commercial and construction lending.

Loan Portfolio Composition. The following table summarizes the composition of Central Bank's loan portfolio by type of loan and the percentage each type represents of the total loan portfolio at the dates indicated:

	2012		2011		At March 31, 2010		2009		2008	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
(Dollars in Thousands)										
Mortgage loans:										
Residential	\$ 270,324	60.22%	\$ 183,157	46.46%	\$ 217,053	47.03%	\$ 183,327	39.80%	\$ 178,727	37.6%
Commercial	167,196	37.25	199,074	50.50	227,938	49.39	249,941	54.25	244,496	51.5
Land and construction	937	0.21	456	0.11	2,722	0.59	14,089	3.06	30,950	6.5
Home equity	8,471	1.89	8,426	2.14	8,817	1.91	7,347	1.59	6,559	1.4
Total mortgage loans	446,928	99.57	391,113	99.21	456,530	98.92	454,704	98.70	460,732	97.0
Other loans:										
Commercial and industrial	1,127	0.25	2,212	0.56	4,037	0.88	4,834	1.05	13,173	2.8
Consumer	831	0.18	892	0.23	943	0.20	1,132	0.25	1,037	0.2
Total other loans	1,958	0.43	3,104	0.79	4,980	1.08	5,966	1.30	14,210	3.0
Total loans	448,886	100.0%	394,217	100.0%	461,510	100.0%	460,670	100.0%	474,942	100.0%
Less:										
Allowance for loan losses	4,272		3,892		3,038		3,191		3,613	

Edgar Filing: INDEPENDENT BANK CORP - Form S-4/A

Loans, net	\$ 444,614	\$ 390,325	\$ 458,472	\$ 457,479	\$ 471,329
------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------

76

Table of Contents

Loan Portfolio Sensitivity. The following table sets forth certain maturity information as of March 31, 2012 regarding the dollar amount of commercial and industrial loans as well as construction and land loans in Central Bank's portfolio, including scheduled repayments of principal, based on contractual terms to maturity. Demand loans, loans having no schedule of repayments and no stated maturity are reported as due in one year or less.

	Due Within One Year	Due After One Through Five Years	Due After Five Years	Total
	(In Thousands)			
Commercial and industrial loans	\$ 583	\$ 456	\$ 88	\$ 1,127
Construction and land loans	568	369		937
Total	\$ 1,151	\$ 825	\$ 88	\$ 2,064

Residential Lending. Residential mortgage loans at March 31, 2012 totaled \$270.3 million, or 60.2%, of the total loan portfolio. Fixed-rate residential mortgages totaled \$234.3 million, or 86.7%, of the residential loan portfolio and adjustable-rate loans totaled \$36.0 million, or 13.3%, of the residential loan portfolio.

In recent years Central Bank has sought to increase its origination of residential mortgage loans and to generate additional noninterest income via loan sale gains, management regularly assesses the desirability of holding or selling newly-originated long-term, fixed-rate residential mortgage loans. A number of factors are evaluated to determine whether or not to hold such loans including, current and projected liquidity, current and projected interest rate risk profile, projected growth in other interest-earning assets, e.g., commercial real estate loans, and projected interest rates and economic conditions. During fiscal 2012, the market values in select communities within Central Bank's market area increased but overall the Boston area residential property values decreased approximately 1.3% while they decreased less than 1% during fiscal 2011. The combination of two years of declines in residential values overall reversed what appeared to be a turnaround in the housing market in Central Bank's market area.

Also, during fiscal 2012 and 2011, management strategically increased its emphasis on residential lending to reduce credit risk and increase regulatory capital levels. Due to the emphasis on increasing residential lending along with the relatively low interest rate environment, the residential loan portfolio increased by \$87.2 million or 47.6% during fiscal 2012 as compared to fiscal 2011.

Central Bank's adjustable-rate residential mortgage loans have a maximum term of 30 years, and allow for periodic interest rate adjustments. Central Bank prices the initial rate competitively, but generally avoids initial deep discounts from contracted indices and margins. Central Bank has adopted the U.S. Treasury Securities Index, adjusted to a constant maturity of one to three years, as its primary index. The margin at which adjustable-rate loans is generally set is 2.875 percentage points over the stated index. Interest rate adjustments on adjustable mortgage loans are capped at two percentage points per adjustment and six percentage points over the life of the loan.

Residential loans may be granted as construction loans or permanent loans on residential properties. Construction loans on owner-occupied residential properties may convert to residential loans at fixed or adjustable rates upon completion of construction. Loans secured by one- to four-family residential properties are typically written in amounts up to 80% of the appraised value of the residential property. Central Bank generally requires private mortgage insurance for loans in excess of 80% of appraised value. The maximum loan-to-value ratio on owner occupied residential properties is 95%. The maximum loan-to-value ratio on non-owner-occupied residential properties is 80%.

Commercial Real Estate and Construction Lending. Central Bank originates permanent commercial mortgages and construction loans on commercial and residential real estate projects. Commercial real estate loans are typically secured by income-producing properties such as apartment buildings, office buildings, industrial buildings and various retail properties and are written with either fixed or adjustable interest rates.

Table of Contents

Commercial real estate loans with fixed interest rates have terms generally ranging from one to five years while the interest rate on adjustable rate loans is generally set to the five-year FHLB classic advance rate plus a margin of 175 to 300 basis points. As of March 31, 2012, Central Bank's commercial mortgage portfolio totaled \$167.2 million and constituted 37.3% of the total loan portfolio, compared to a balance of \$199.1 million, or 50.5%, of total loans at March 31, 2011. The decline in the commercial mortgage loan portfolio during fiscal 2012, which totaled \$31.9 million, or 16.0%, is attributable to management's decreased emphasis on this type of lending in the current economic environment.

Commercial real estate loans are generally made for up to 75% of the appraised value of the property. Commercial real estate loans currently offered by Central Bank can have amortization periods of up to 20 to 25 years. Title insurance, fire insurance, casualty insurance and flood insurance are required in amounts sufficient to protect Central Bank's interest, where applicable. In some cases, commercial real estate loans are granted in participation with other lenders.