



**GUILFORD COUNTY**  
**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**Revolution Cotton Mill**  
**Motion of Recommendation**  
**August 16, 2016**  
**Guilford County Historic Preservation Commission**

The Guilford County Historic Preservation Commission recommends designation to the Greensboro City Council a Joint Guilford County Historic Landmark designation for interior common areas, exterior facades of mill buildings A (1250), B, C, D, E, F and G, Carpenter Shop facade, three smokestacks and water tower of the Revolution Mill Site, 1200 Revolution Mill Drive, Greensboro, NC with a condition that when the rehabilitation is complete, a new set of photographs will be submitted to guide future certificate of approvals.

Following the Commissioners' discussion of the application, Commission Member Leimenstoll made a motion to approve historic designation.

Commission Member Pittman seconded the motion, and the Commissioners voted 9-0 to approve the motion.



# REVOLUTION MILL

## Guilford County Landmark Status Application

Submitted December, 2015



Revolution Mill Landmark Status Application  
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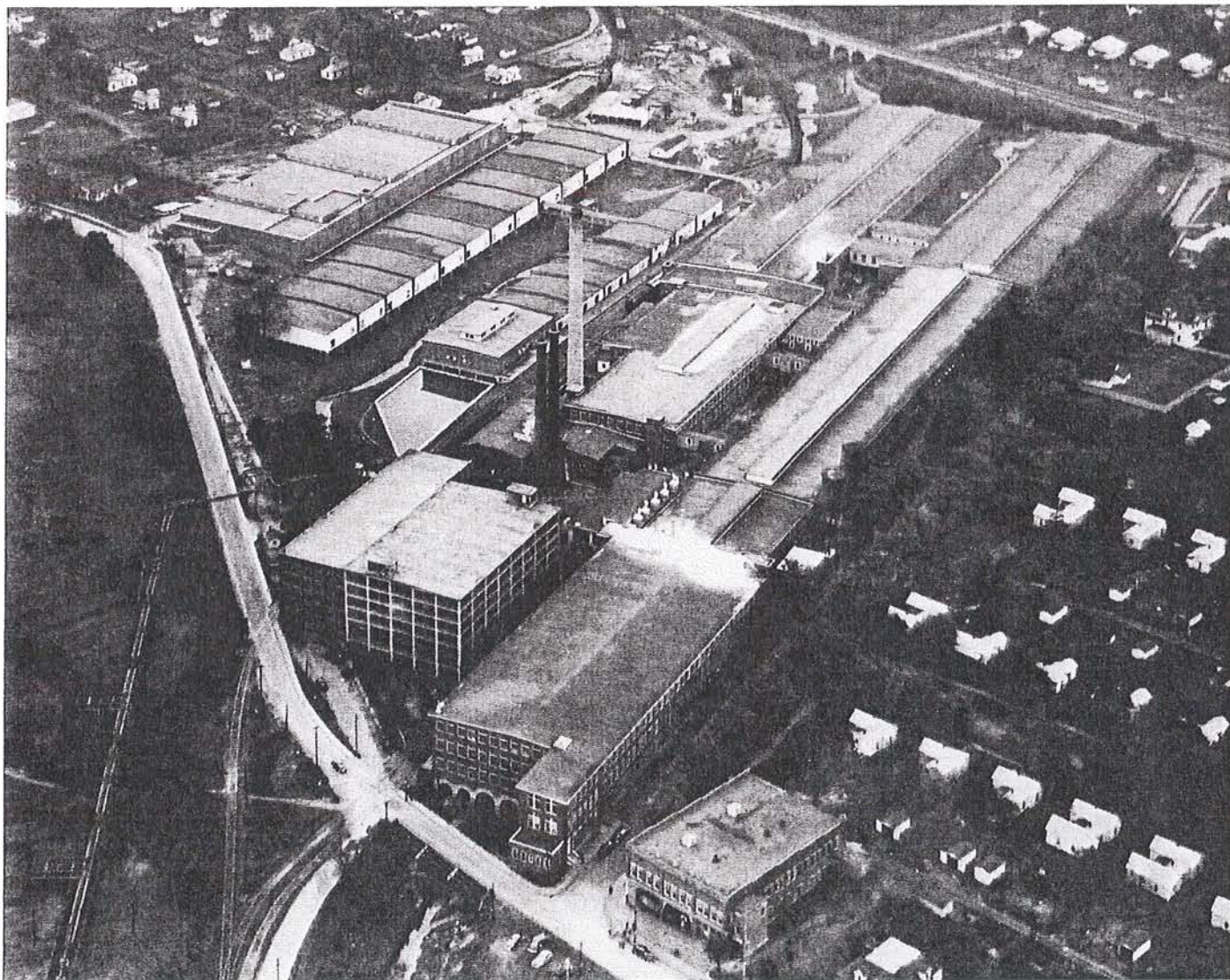
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**Guilford County  
Historic Preservation Commission  
Landmark Application  
General Information Sheet**

Historic name of Property: Revolution Cotton Mill



Street address: 1200 Revolution Mill Drive  
Greensboro NC

Tax Map#: 7875

Deed Book & Page #:BK. 7396, PG. 1836-1834

Plat Book & Page#: BK. 150, PG. 30

Zoning: L

Acreage designated 25.47

Interior designated Yes

Legal Owner(s) of Property

Name: Historic Revolution, LLC

Address: 301 W Main Street

City: Durham, NC 27701

Phone Number(s): Fax Number:

E-Mail:

Applicant/Contact Person (If other than owner):

Name: Emma Schropp

Address: 1200 Revolution Mill Drive

City: Greensboro NC

Phone Number(s): 239-896-7770

E-Mail: Emma.Schropp@Self-Help.org



## Summary Paragraph

Historic Revolution, LLC seeks to designate the interior common areas and all exteriors of the above-referenced property as an historic landmark in Guilford County, North Carolina. The property is currently being rehabilitated and repurposed, with an estimated completion of 2017. The project utilizes the state Mill Tax Credit and the federal Historic Tax Credit. As such, all work will follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Work that is currently underway has already been reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service. Future work will either fall under approved Tenant Upfit Guidelines or will be reviewed and approved separately by SHPO and NPS. Additional detail about the status of previous work, work underway, and future work, follows in the section of this report labeled Architectural Significance.

The Revolution Mill complex is a large, formerly industrial complex located in Northeast Greensboro. It was constructed in 1899 as a joint venture of the prominent Cone and Sternberger families, and it is widely regarded as an integral component of Greensboro's early industrial development. Moreover, it is a significant example of the diversification of the southern textile production industry during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, particularly due to the fact that it is believed to be the first flannel mill in the South.

By 1930, Revolution had become the largest exclusive flannel producer in the entire world, and continued to produce textiles until 1982, when most production began to be outsourced to foreign production facilities. In 1984, Revolution Mill was nominated for placement on the National Register of Historic Places, for reasons significant to industry and architecture.

The historical and architectural significance of Revolution Mill has been well documented in the 1983 National Register of Historic Places nomination form (Exhibit A of this document) filed by 'Revolution Associates I' and Dewayne H. Anderson. Per its listing, Revolution Mill has achieved historical significance in the following four categories:

A. Revolution Cotton Mills is associated with the early twentieth century industrial development of Greensboro and with the innovations in the Southern textile industry which occurred during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

B. Revolution Cotton Mills is associated with the lives of various members of the Cone and Sternberger families of Greensboro. These families not only served as industrial leaders (in the case of the Cones, well beyond the confines of

Greensboro), but as community leaders who contributed substantially to numerous philanthropic endeavors through the years.

C. Revolution Cotton Mills embodies the distinctive characteristics of standard textile mill construction of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, incorporating the "slow burning construction" and good lighting and ventilation prescribed by factory insurance companies of the period. It is the most intact of the early twentieth century textile mills in Greensboro.

D. May be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

This application will reference the "Description" and "Significance" portions of the associated National Register listing where thorough information has already been made available.

### **Property Description**

Legal description and associated maps of the property are included on the following pages:



## Legal Description

Being all of that Parcel of land known as Lot 2, as recorded in Plat Book 150, Page 30 in the Guilford County Register of Deeds, and being more particularly described as follows:

BEGINNING at a iron pin marking the intersection of the southern margin or the 50-foot-wide right-of-way of Revolution Mill Drive (formerly 9<sup>th</sup> Street) with the western margin of the 80-foot-wide right-of-way of Yanceyville Street in the City of Greensboro, said point having coordinates of North 856,249.8773 and East 1,770,956.3890, and running thence along the right-of-way of Yanceyville Street South 11 degrees 22 minutes East 143.76 feet to an iron pin; thence continuing along said right-of-way line South 10 degrees 32 minutes 04 seconds East a chord distance of 24.43 feet having a radius of 836.73 feet and an arc length of 24.43 feet to the northeast corner of the 3.481-acre tract described as Lot 1 of the Property of Revolution Associates I as recorded in Plat Book 84, Page 17, Guilford County Registry; and running thence along the northern line of said tract South 71 degrees 23 minutes West 168.03 feet to a point; thence South 78 degrees 3 minutes West 59.92 feet to a point; thence North 11 degrees 57 minutes West 39.48 feet to a point; thence South 78 degrees 3 minutes West 220 feet to a point; thence South 11 degrees 57 minutes East 72.50 feet to a point; thence with a curve to the right South 33 degrees 22 minutes West a chord distance of 38.72 feet to a point; thence South 78 degrees 3 minutes West 11.56 feet to a point; thence South 11 degrees 57 minutes East 67.47 feet to a point; thence South 58 degrees 44 minutes East 33.33 feet to a point; thence North 78 degrees 3 minutes East 28.26 feet to a point; thence South 11 degrees 57 minutes East 71.14 feet to a point; thence South 76 degrees 18 minutes 11 seconds West 152.62 feet to a point; thence South 09 degrees 22 minutes 10 seconds East 82.57 feet to a point; thence South 80 degrees 15 minutes 39 seconds West 258.13 feet to a point; thence North 09 degrees 44 minutes 21 seconds West 16.81 feet to a point; thence South 79 degrees 23 minutes 11 seconds West 372.32 feet to a point; thence North 68 degrees 10 minutes 45 seconds West 99.79 feet to a point; thence South 83 degrees 07 minutes 28 seconds West 150.86 feet to a point; thence South 67 degrees 01 minutes 56 seconds West 96.27 feet to a point; thence South 84 degrees 07 minutes 06 seconds West 215.29 feet to a point in the center of the Southbound rail of Southern Railway; thence along the center of Southbound rail of Southern Railway the following 6 (six) course and distances: North 5 degrees 35 minutes 30 seconds East 386.61 feet; North 6 degrees 39 minutes East 201.84 feet; North 9 degrees 32 minutes East 200.51 feet; North 12 degrees 55 minutes East 200.01 feet; North 16 degrees 22 minutes 200.01 feet; North 20 degrees 1 minute East 232.63 feet to an iron pin set in the southern margin of the 60-foot-wide right-of-way of Cornwallis Drive; and running thence along the southern line of said right-of-way South 85 degrees 50 minutes 30 seconds East 97.22 feet to a control corner; thence South 3 degrees 40 minutes West 537.00 feet to an existing iron pipe control corner; thence South 86 degrees 03 minutes East 157.88 feet to a point in the western margin of the 50-foot-wide right-of-way of Hubbard Street; thence with the margin of Hubbard Street as dedicated in Plat Book 150, Page 30, Guilford County Registry the following courses and distances: South 03 degrees 35 minutes West 97.83 feet; South 86 degrees 25 minutes East 50.00 feet; North 3 degrees 35 minutes East 16.39 feet; a curve to the right North 48 degrees 35 minutes East a chord distance of 14.14 feet, having a radius of 10.00 feet and an arc length of 15.70 feet; South 86 degrees 25 minutes East 15.93 feet; North 3 degrees 35 minutes East 30.00 feet; North 86 degrees 25 minutes West 15.93 feet; a curve to the right North 41 degrees 25 minutes West a chord distance of 14.14 feet, having a radius of 10.00 feet and an arc length of 15.70; North 3 degrees 35 minutes East 31.89 feet to a

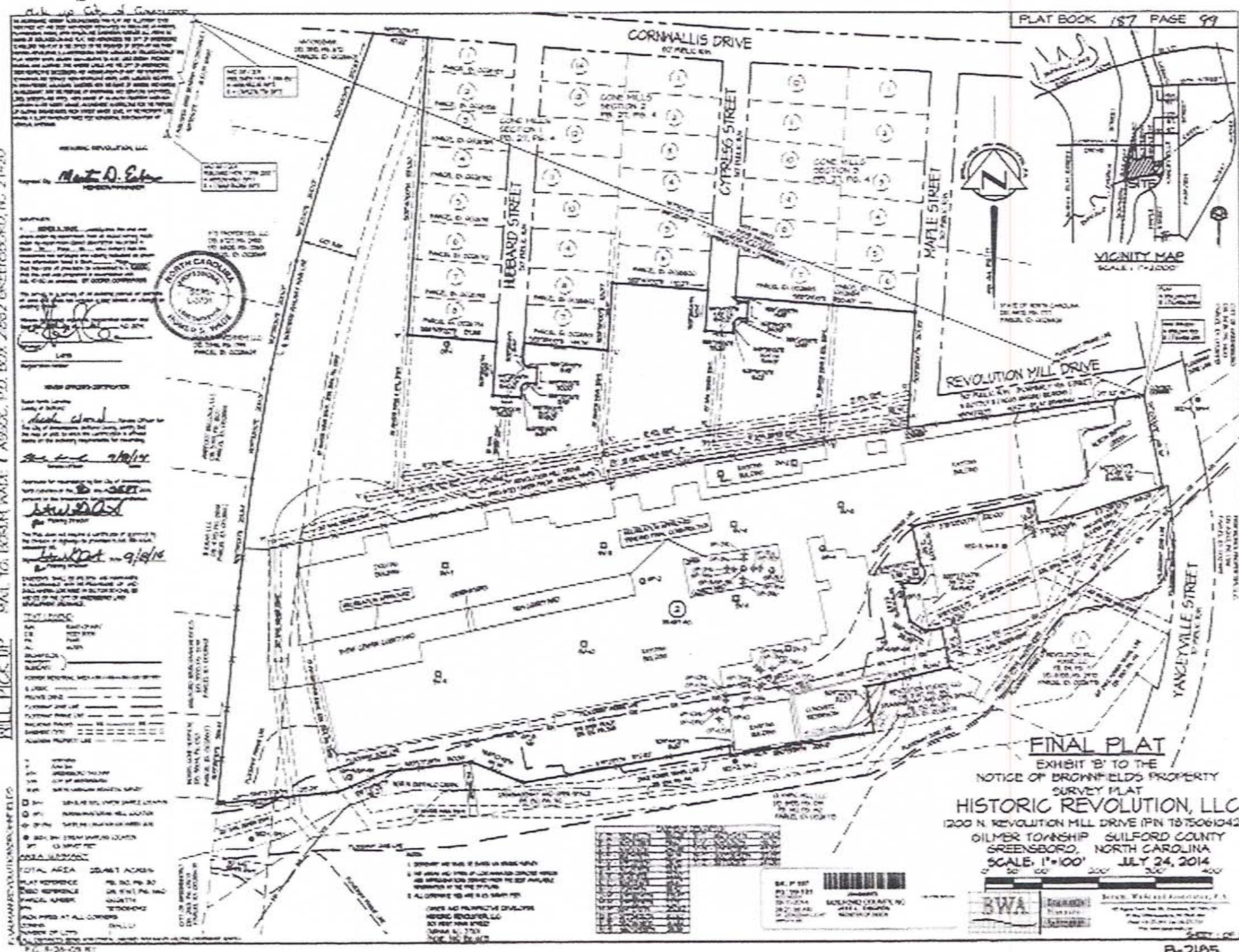


point; thence leaving the Eastern margin of Hubbard Street South 85 degrees 35 minutes East 149.74 feet to an iron pin; thence North 3 degrees 38 minutes East 121.07 feet to an iron pin; thence South 85 degrees 40 minutes East 170.27 feet to an iron pin in the western margin of Cypress Street with the margin of Cypress Street as dedicated in Plat Book 150, Page 30, Guilford County Registry the following courses and distances: South 03 degrees 36 minutes East 16.02 feet; a curve to the right North 48 degrees 36 minutes East a chord distance of 14.14 feet, having a radius of 10.00 feet and an arc length of 15.70; South 86 degrees 24 minutes East 12.95 feet; North 3 degrees 36 minutes East 30.00 feet; North 86 degrees 24 minutes West 14.53 feet; a curve to the right North 41 degrees 21 minutes 57 seconds West a chord distance of 11.91 feet, having a radius of 10.00 feet and an arc length of 12.76 feet; thence leaving the Eastern margin of Cypress Street and continuing along the Southern line of Cone Mills Corporation Subdivision as recorded in Plat Book 27, Page 4, Guilford County Registry South 85 degrees 21 minutes East 320.39 feet to an iron pin in the western margin of Maple Street; thence South 3 degrees 33 minutes West 207.85 feet along the western margin of Maple Street to an iron pin set in the southern margin of Revolution Mill Drive (formerly 9<sup>th</sup> Street); thence following the southern margin of Revolution Mill Drive North 81 degrees 42 minutes East 421.27 feet to the point and place of the BEGINNING.

Said parcel contains 25.467 acres, more or less, as shown on a survey titled "ALTA/ACSM Land Title Survey for Revolution Studios, LLC" prepared by CPT Engineering and Surveying, Inc. of Greensboro, North Carolina, Job number 520-05, signed and sealed on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2006. It is the same property conveyed to Historic Revolution, LLC by the instrument recorded in Book 7396, Page 1836, Guilford County Registry.

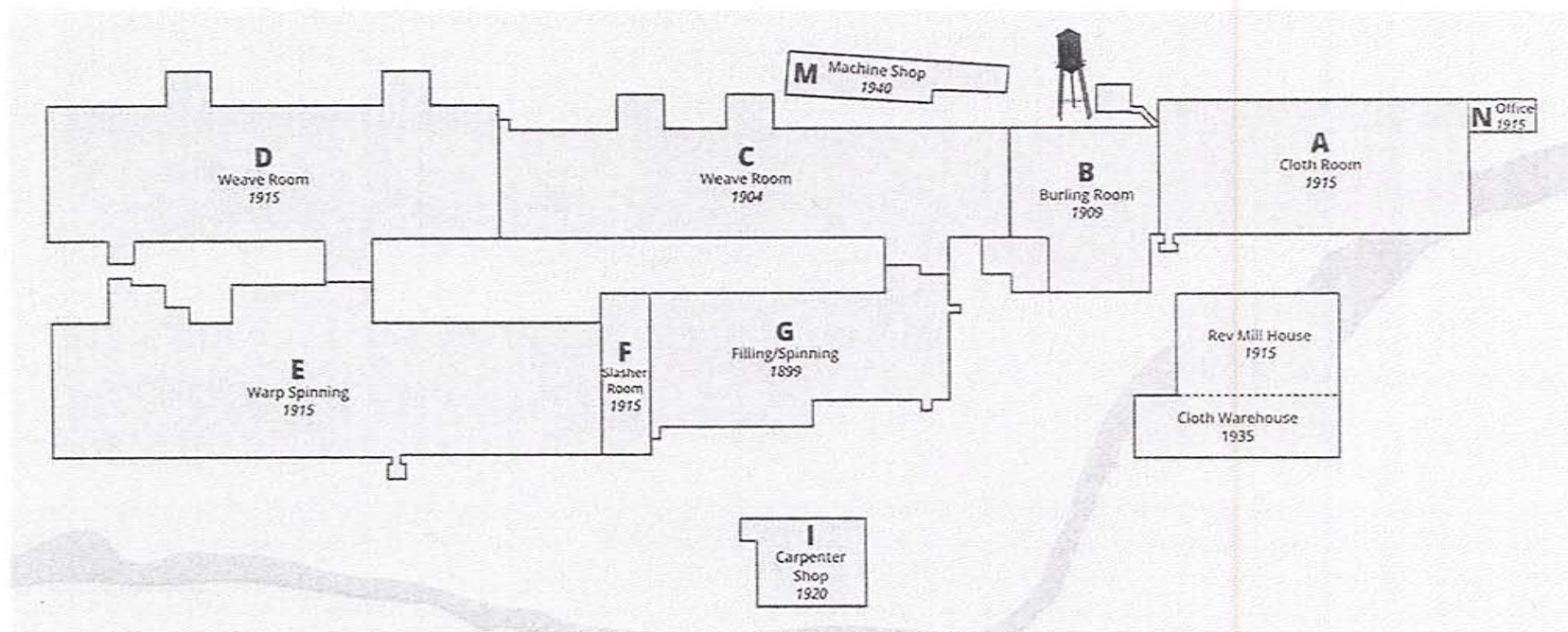


MAIL TO: PICK UP MAIL TO: BISM WARE & ASSOC. P.O. BOX 2882 GREENSBORO, NC 27420

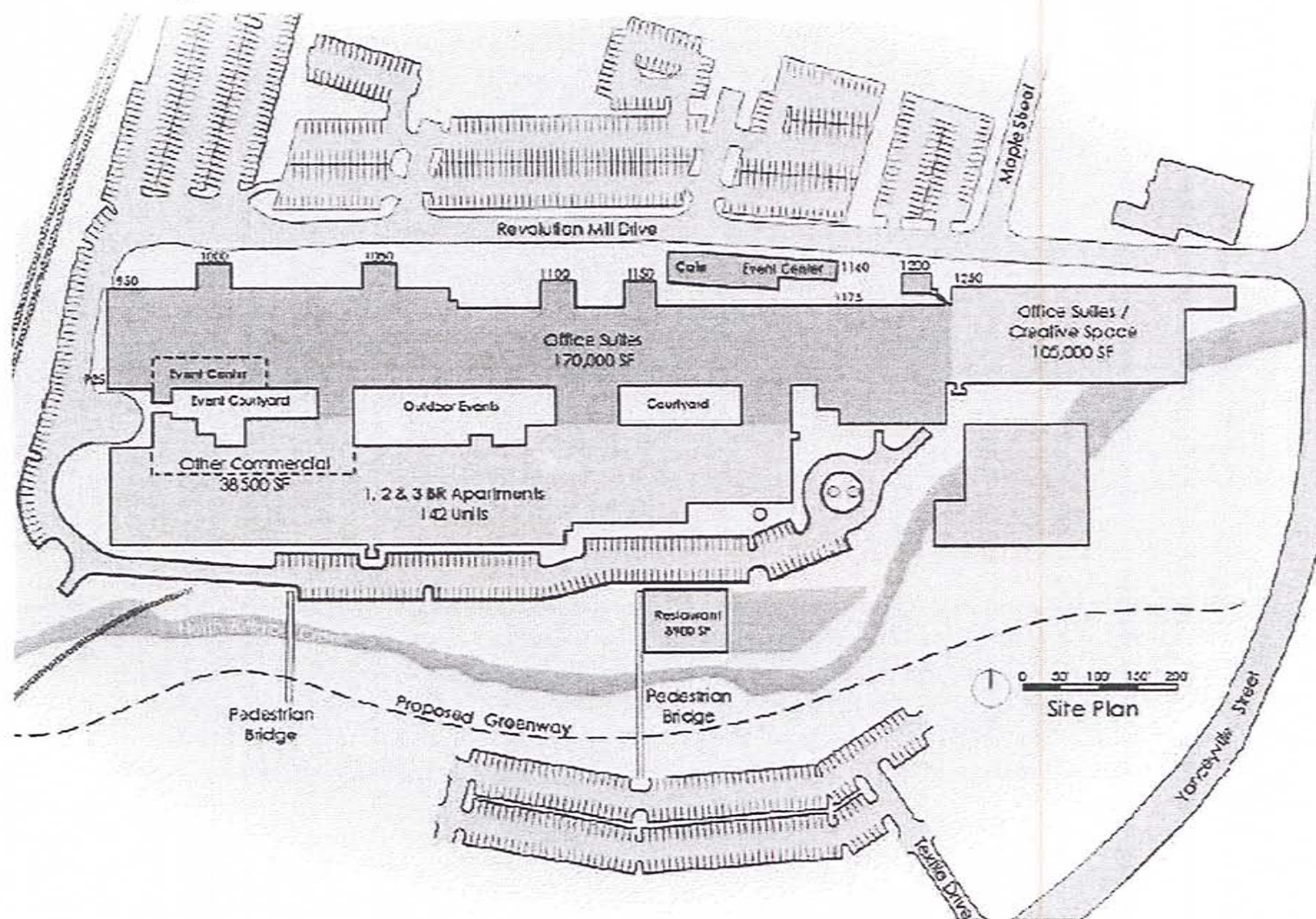




Map 2: Historical Uses of Revolution Mill



Map 3: Future Uses for Revolution Mill Site Plan





## Historical Significance

For a thorough explanation of the historical significance of Revolution Mill, please refer to Exhibit A: National Register Nomination Form, Section 8: Significance (pages 9-16).

## Architectural Significance

For historical architectural significance, please reference Exhibit A: National Register Nomination Form, section 7: Description (pages 2-8).

Furthermore, at the time of this application substantial redevelopment work has been proposed and occurring at Revolution Mill for nearly a decade. The following is a summary narrative of this work, as well as the included applications to and correspondence with the National Park Service regarding the redevelopment and remediation work proposed and completed at Revolution Mill.

### Response to Previous Development Work

Prior to Self-Help's acquisition of Revolution Mill in 2012, the project was in the process of redevelopment under the ownership of Frank Auman and Jim Peeples, beginning in the mid-2000s. As a result of financial stress related to the economic recession, Auman and Peeples determined that they would apply for a Part 3 before the project was completed in full, as their investor was unwilling to put more money into the project without a part 3 application.

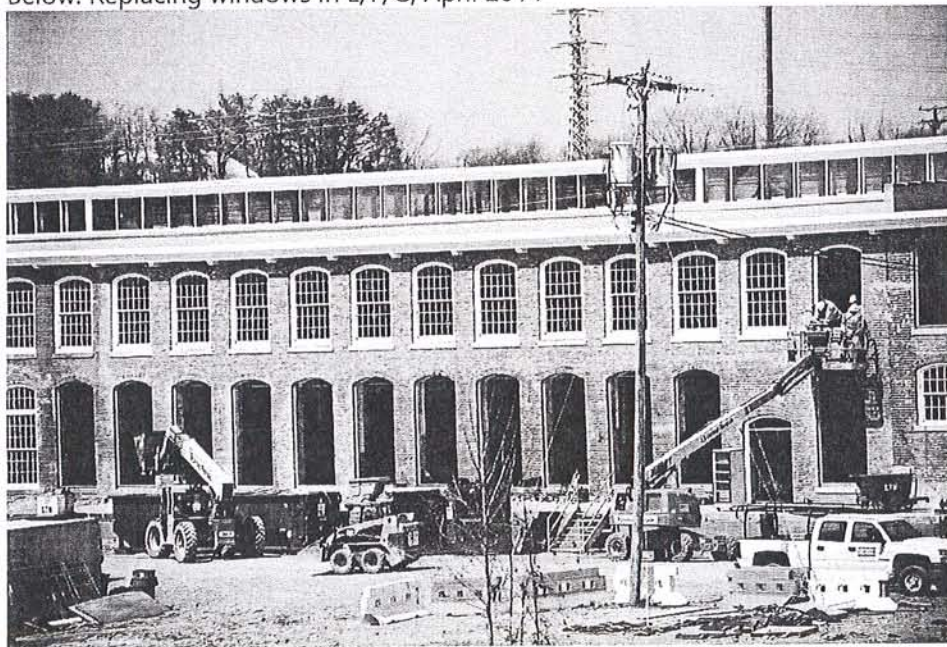
This Part 3 application was denied by NPS for the following reasons-

1. The first reason for denial of certification was that the project had not been completed. Revolution Mill is a functionally related set of five buildings, and at the time of their application, large portions of the complex had not been redeveloped as proposed.
2. The second reason for denial was in reference to incompatible exterior alterations that had been completed without the review of knowledge of NPS. These alterations were, generally, not compatible with the historic, industrial character of the complex, and did not meet the Standards.

3. The third reason for denial was in reference to compromising the overall historic character of the Mill through use of incompatible and inappropriate finishes and landscaping. This includes, among other things, high-style finishes such as elaborate iron railings, crown moldings, chandeliers, carriage lights, and stone retaining walls and pathways.

As Self-Help assumed ownership in 2012, Self-Help and Belk Architecture immediately began discussions with the National Park Service about what additional work was needed to remediate the inappropriate interior and exterior work, and to stabilize buildings that had not previously been protected. Our first step was to immediately work on shell stabilization of the south row of buildings (shown as E/F/G) to repair deteriorated structure, put on a new roof, and to replace all windows so that even if progress stopped at that point, we could ensure that the building would remain in a stabilized condition. This work took place for approximately 18 months in 2013-2014.

Below: Replacing windows in E/F/G, April 2014



At this time, the north row of buildings (shown as B/C/D) was already occupied with commercial tenants, many of whom liked the interior detailing that NPS did not approve of. Belk Architecture and its founder, Eddie Belk, utilized its considerable experience to propose a strategy for remediating the prior work. Since 1979, Belk has completed 68 historic tax credit projects amounting to nearly 4 million square feet of heritage buildings. Belk, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the



National Park Service negotiated a strategy to ensure that it was financially feasible to complete the rehabilitation of Revolution Mill.

This was a major challenge which required us to develop a strategy that allowed us to gradually remediate the interior details that were inappropriate as tenants began to change. More immediately, we made exterior alterations to the degree practical. This included replacing cloth awnings with industrial style metal awnings; replacing all decorative street lights with LED industrial streamlined lights; replacing all building-mounted carriage lights with hooded industrial LED lights; and removing a large, ornate, spear-point finial iron fence from along the north stretch of the property. The NPS approved both elements of this strategy in the Phase 2 Amendment dated 06/2013 (see Exhibit B).



Before: Green cloth awnings and wall-mounted carriage lights have since been replaced with more appropriate, industrial fixtures



Ornate, wrought iron fence has since been removed from in front of Building M.

### Initial Approach to Redevelopment, 2012

Once we had addressed the need for stabilization and remediation, our focus shifted to the continued redevelopment of the remaining campus. This included extensive market research, visioning, and team discussion around what would be the best use for the remaining buildings. A large part of this conversation centered on how to create an active, 24/7 life for the campus, and led to our interest in developing a campus with multiple diverse uses including office space, restaurants, and apartments. We believe there is a high value of bringing back people and constant activity to a complex, for reasons pertaining to both historical use/activity, as well as to ensure constant use, updating, and preservation of the physical structure. Revolution Mill was, historically, a hub of activity and an integral part of Greensboro's sense of community, and we hope to make this local landmark a relevant and valuable asset to the community again, rather than leaving in dormant or minimally utilized by a small fraction of the community.

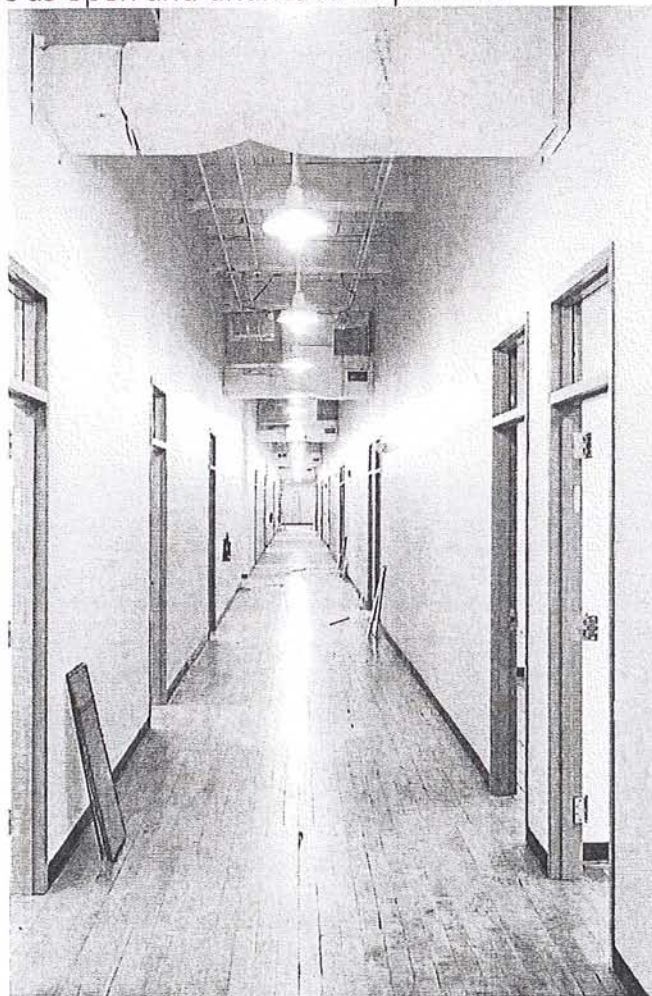
Market research for the area showed demand for market-rate apartments. With these apartments, the sizes and layouts were quite compatible with the existing architectural character of the buildings. Initially, we planned for 100 1 and 2 bedroom apartments (09/2014). After completing construction documents we realized that there was a lot more space in our buildings to work with and

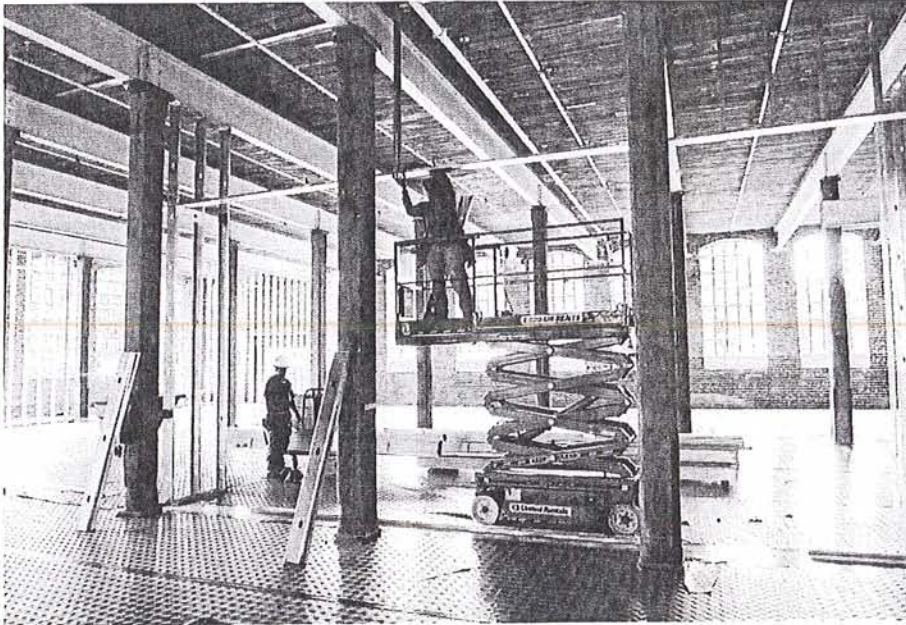


four months later we decided to do a very clean addition of 42 more apartments, omitting the north side of building E for artisan space where the building was not suitable for residential (see Exhibit C, Phase 2 Amendment dated 05/2015). Now we are in the process of building all 142 apartments for a cohesive development and delivery.

The former Nussbaum Center for Entrepreneurship (1250 Revolution Mill Drive) had potential for additional residential development, but we felt we had an obligation to the community to develop more business and creative-oriented space that could return Revolution Mill to its roots as a catalyst for economic development. Incorporating artist space (artist studios and galleries) with office space was a great, active use for the building but is also harmonious with existing office and planned apartments. On the second and third floors of this building, we have planned office space for medium and larger potential tenants, in order to leave the floors as open and undivided as possible.

Before: The Nussbaum Center  
for Entrepreneurship in  
Building A



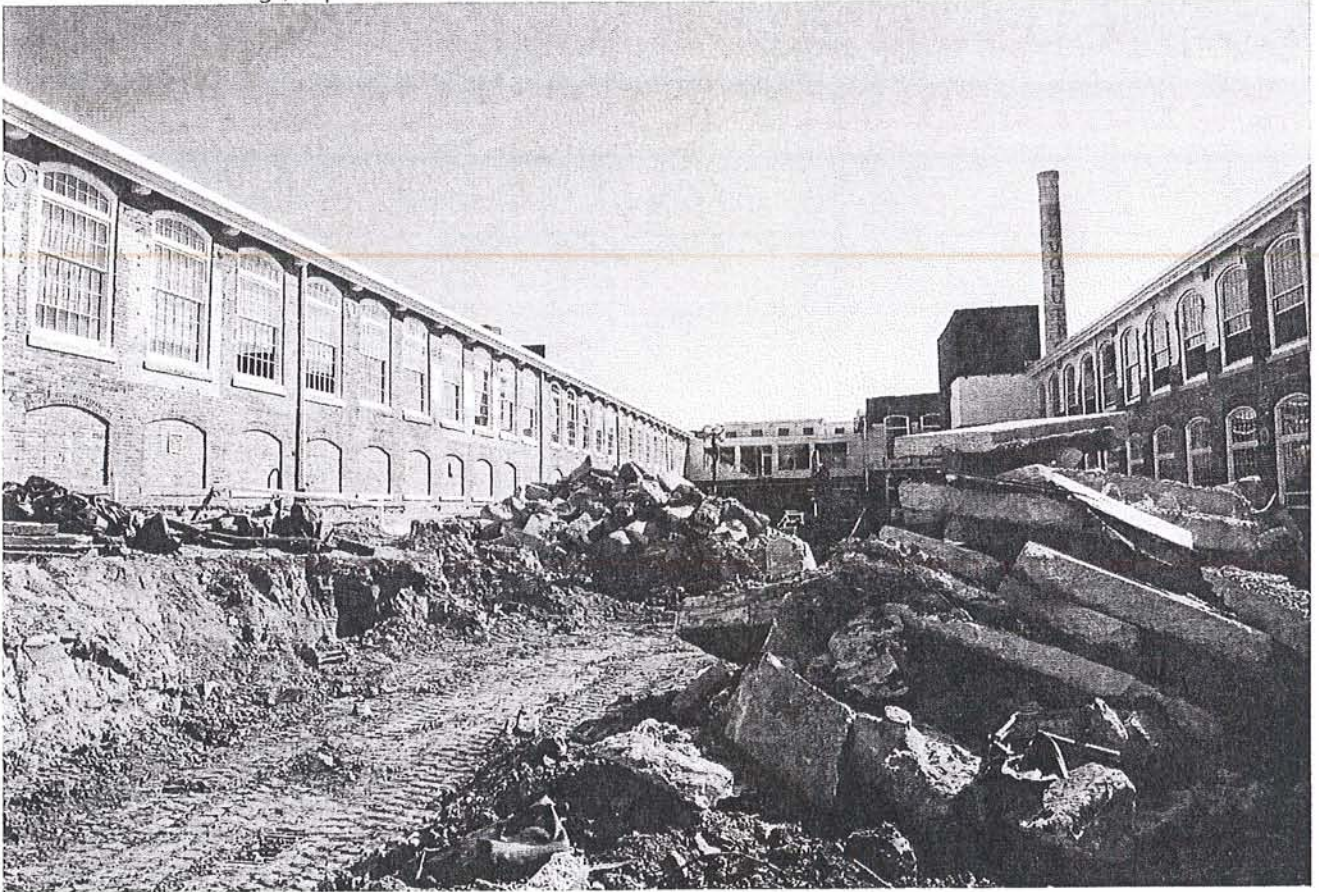


After: Self-Help  
developing office and  
creative space in  
Building A

As we started evaluating how to move forward with all of the existing building that we had, we discovered through historical photos and documents, that we had a historic basis for opening up the internal courtyards between the north and south rows of buildings. As a result, we proposed to uncover and redevelop the internal courtyards to their historically accurate size, to serve as additional tenant and resident activity centers. The courtyards will help to create a much higher quality of space between the north and south side buildings, as Revolution Mill's original workers would have enjoyed them. In pursuit of this stronger historic preservation outcome, we incurred significant additional expense while sacrificing the income that would have resulted from additional rentable area.



Below: We have opened up the interior courtyards between the north and south buildings, September 2015



#### Later Part 2 Amendments and Current Work

As a second measure of remediation, in June of 2015 we worked with the Park Service to develop a set of Tenant Design Guidelines- new standards for future interior and tenant up-fit work that ensured future work would be fully compatible with the Secretary's Standards. This agreement assured NPS that all future development would be respectful of the industrial interior of the building and architectural elements, and in accordance with the Standards. The guidelines (included as Exhibit C) defined standards for all work done in the following categories:

- Exterior Windows- tenant layout walls and ceilings will not intersect existing historic windows, they may only intersect the solid wall pillars and may not harm the wall surfaces.



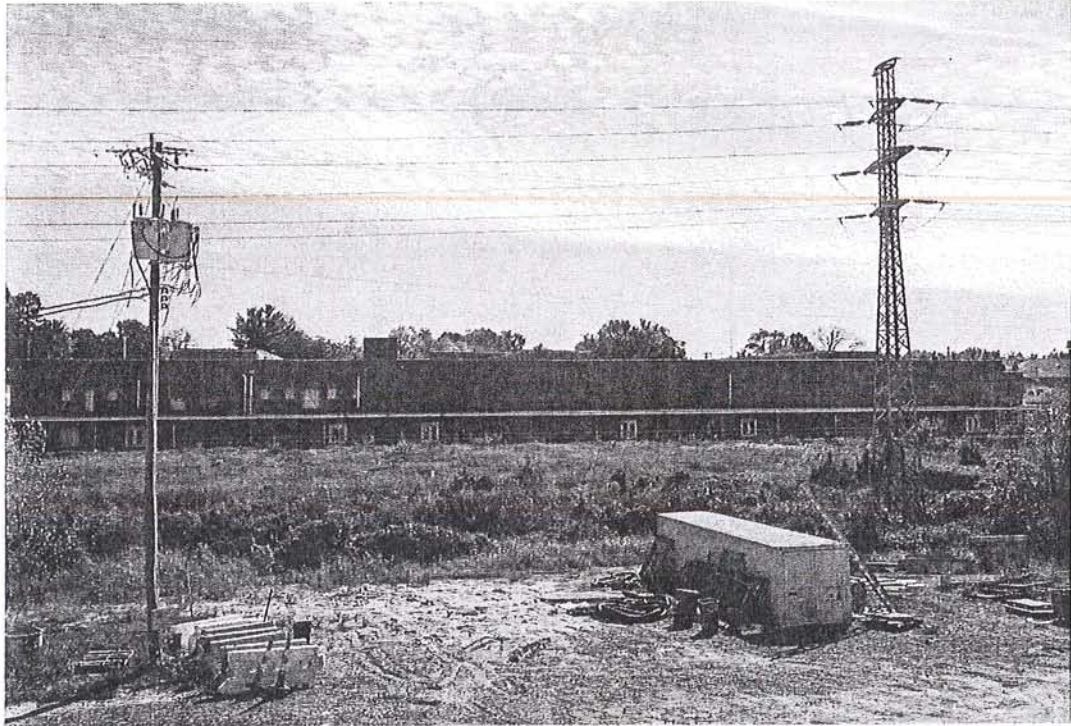
- Interior/Corridor Walls- new corridor wall layouts and transparency have been developed to share the experience of height and volume inherent to these industrial spaces. All tenant layouts will strive to maintain open volume and view lines to as high a degree as possible.
- Structural Columns/Grid- Historic industrial buildings are primarily laid out in a uniform grid of column bays. This building rhythm is integral to the architectural statement of these historic structures. Corridor walls and common area walls act as backdrops to this structural rhythm. Tenant layouts will also avoid intersecting/interrupting this grid rhythm in every possible way.
- Exposed Ceiling Structure- the exposed ceiling beam grid and heavy timber decking contributes to the architectural character of these spaces. Tenant layouts will maintain this open structural ceiling. Interior spaces will minimize drop or lay-in ceilings. In spaces where they are absolutely required they will follow these guidelines. Ceiling will not intersect exterior or interior windows.
- Architectural Style- tenant interiors should follow simpler, contemporary lines to compliment the clean lines of the industrial structure. Incompatible faux history details are strongly discouraged.

These design guidelines were crucial for NPS to regain confidence in the project, and it also negates the need for the State Office to review each tenant upfit for compliance. Tenant upfit guidelines were established so that we, NPS, and the Guilford County Historic Preservation Commission can feel confident that all internal work will be done in an appropriate way and will not be cumbersome via COA and review processes. These guidelines are applied toward all tenant work done in building A, all future tenant work done in buildings B/C/D, and the residential development done in buildings E/F/G.

In the summer of 2015, we began demolition work on the non-historic Olympic Mill site south of Buffalo Creek to prepare that site for future phase of the campus' development. Olympic Mill was built in the mid-20th century at a time period when most mills were implementing artificial methods of lighting and conditioning. It was constructed essentially without windows and therefore had a very large footprint with mostly dark, interior, warehouse space. It was not a building that was easy to repurpose into a new, modern use, and it would likely have had to be used as a warehouse or a storage facility. The Olympic Mill property was not in a historic district, and it was not identified as contributing to the functional complex. Being able to get the site south of Buffalo creek available for future supporting development was more beneficial, from a community development perspective, than attempting to force-fit new uses into the existing structure, so we ultimately decided upon, and received NPS approval for, demolition of the structure. We salvaged materials out of Olympic Mill that could be



used in the renovation at Revolution, and the 19-acre site is now available to be repurposed for larger office tenants, supporting retail, amphitheaters, green spaces, and other community uses.



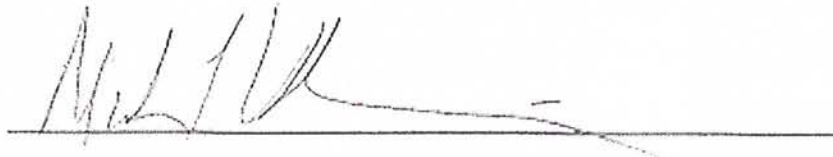
The Former Olympic Mill prior to demolition

### Conclusion

Just as it was when it was first developed, Revolution Mill is now poised once again to be one of the largest catalytic development projects in Greensboro. The project investment is estimated to total \$100 million, and will bring apartments, office and creative spaces, markets, cafes and restaurants, event venues, and community gathering spaces to an area of town that has seen significant disinvestment since the closing of the mill in the 1980s. From a historic preservation perspective, this project will ensure the continued preservation and care of Revolution Mill, and will breathe new life and constant activity back into one of Greensboro's greatest heritage icons.

### Acknowledgement

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE STATEMENTS ARE TRUE AND ACCURATE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF; AND SUPPORT LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF THE PROPERTY DEFINED HEREIN. I ALSO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE GUILFORD COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MAY REQUIRE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

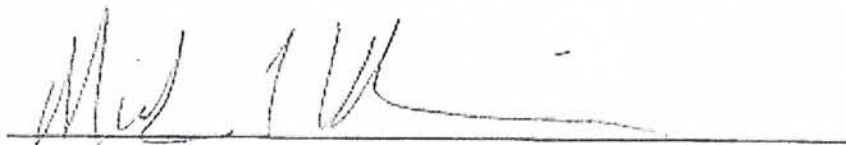


Date

12/7/15

Signature of Owner(s)

I ALSO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE DESIGNATION INCLUDES THE INTERIOR, INTERIOR FEATURES AND DETAILS; EXTERIOR, EXTERIOR FEATURES AND DETAILS OF ALL STRUCTURES; AND LAND, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED IN THE APPLICATION. ANY ALTERATIONS OF THE PROPERTY AND/OR FEATURES DESIGNATED, REQUIRES AN APPROVED CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS (COA) ISSUED BY THE GUILFORD COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION.



Date

12/7/15

Signature of Owner(s)