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ART AVAILABLE: jpegs – building move, historic pic of move in 1930s

RUMFORD CENTER: MOVING THE ORIGINAL FACTORY BUILDING

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Relocation of the original “Rumford Chemical Works” factory building, built in 1858, to a new site within the [Rumford Center](#) complex.

WHERE: Rumford (East Providence), RI

PROJECT SUMMARY: The wooden factory building was built two years after the founding of Rumford Chemical Works. The company produced and shipped Rumford Baking Powder across the nation and the world. As the mill complex grew, the 1858 building was used for many different aspects of the business – from manufacturing to laboratory work to staff offices.

In the 1930s, the building was moved from its first location in the heart of the mill complex to a new spot on Newman Avenue, at the edge of the site. Historic (and current) site plans refer to it as “Building 4.” It weighs 86 tons and measures 2400 square feet.

As part of the re-development of the mill into a vibrant, mixed-use community, Building 4 needed to move back to the “core.” During the first days of January, 2008, the development team partnered with Heffernan Bros., a West Warwick company which has been moving structures for three generations.

They faced several challenges. The wooden building, like most of the structures on site, had fallen into disrepair. And, it had to move a total of 1200 feet across uneven dirt, and be eased down a 1° incline to its new foundation. Finally, adjacent brick mill buildings made for a tight squeeze.

Heffernan Bros. constructed a “girdle” of steel bolts to maintain the integrity of the building during the move. The team custom designed a platform of 10 steel beams, from 40 to 60 feet long. Over the course of 15 days, they gingerly raised Building 4 onto the platform using hydraulic lifts and cribbing. A truck then pulled the building into place, at one point rotating it 180° as it was backed into place.

For photos of the move, please visit www.RumfordCenter.com.

HISTORY: At its height of activity around the turn of the century, Rumford Chemical Works included 300 acres of working farms and communities to sustain the factory workers, and the Village of Rumford was called the “kitchen capital of the world.”

Thanks to the development team of PK Rumford, the old Chemical Works is getting a new life as [Rumford Center](#). The remaining buildings occupy 8.3 acres. The original factory building, the only building that will be physically moved during construction, will become a central element in a community with more than 120 apartments, 9 condominiums, 6,500 square feet of retail and 60,000 square feet of office space. Apartments will be available beginning in June of 2008.

The site was recognized as a National Historic Chemical Landmark in June of 2006.

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