

High-Profile FOCUS: RESTORATION/RENOVATION FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Completes Renovations Pezzuco Renovates Mercantile Block Durkee, Brown, Viveiros, Werenfels Architect



with housing and retail space on the grounds of a former church campus.

garage that worked into the layout of the other new structures.

The rectory was completely gut renovated while salvaging and refurbishing the ornate interior/exterior trim and fireplace. The project was unique in that it required historic restoration, building relocation, underground parking, steel construction for the retail area, a four story structure with 36 apartments and 16 wood frame condominiums.

Bilt-Rite's flexibility in continuing the work when funds were delayed played a major role in the overall success of the project. Due to major changes in the economic climate, the owner was required to seek alternate funding sources which required us to work closely with the owner and complete the work as the financing

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Providence, RI – AS220, a nonprofit developer of space for artists to live and work in Providence, recently completed renovation to the 52,000sf, four-story Mercantile Block to create 22 units of affordable apartments for artists and 11 work studios.

Project team included Mercantile Block, LLC of Providence, owner; Pezzuco Construction, Inc. of Cranston, general contractor; and the Durkee, Brown, Viveiros, Werenfels of Providence, architect.

Like its recently completed neighbor, the Dreyfus, the Mercantile Block will be a place where artists live, work, and collaborate. A public access print shop and restored street-level retail spaces will provide opportunities to create, display, and sell artwork. It is also the new home to the Fab Lab, a computer fabrication and technology collaboration between AS220 and MIT. The rehabilitation incorporated many sustainable design elements, such as natural daylighting, low-consumption plumbing fixtures, insulated windows, reflective roof membrane, and recycled building materials.

AS220's adaptive reuse of the historic Mercantile Block provides for a vibrant mix of live and work studios, arts related offices, and one-of-a kind, local retail and

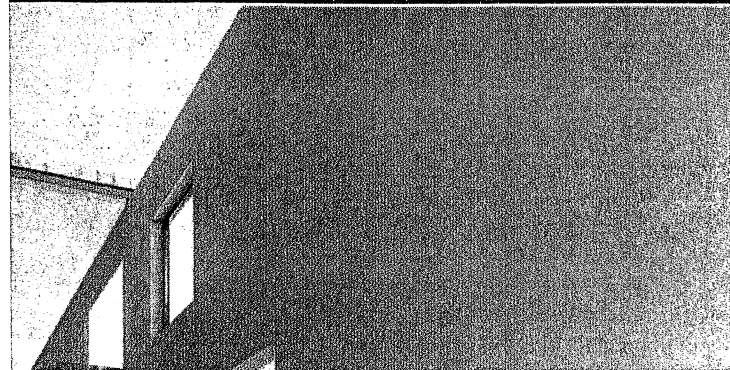
commercial spaces. Especially noteworthy is the effort to revitalize Martha Street. Original building openings have been uncovered and restored, creating a beautiful and highly functional set of entrances, replete with glass sidelights, transoms, and storefronts. Once regarded as a "back alley," Martha Street has been transformed into a vibrant pedestrian way, greatly animating the neighborhood and enhancing safety.

Located in the heart of historic downtown Providence, the century-old Mercantile boasts numerous architectural features with historical significance that are being restored to a high quality, including original cast iron columns that can be found in many of the building's residential studios on the third and fourth floors.

Studios range in size from 690sf to 880sf, and are priced from \$640 to \$1,125 per month. Rent includes Internet access, gas, water, and sewer. The Building offers laundry room, elevator, and bicycle storage.

The Mercantile's second floor will house the Rhode Island Council on the Humanities and College Visions, a college access program. AS220's Lab and Print Shop will be located on both the first and second floors. And best of all, the basement will be fitted with three music rehearsal studios, available for rent to local musicians.

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