

North Adams Planners Get Update on Greylock Works

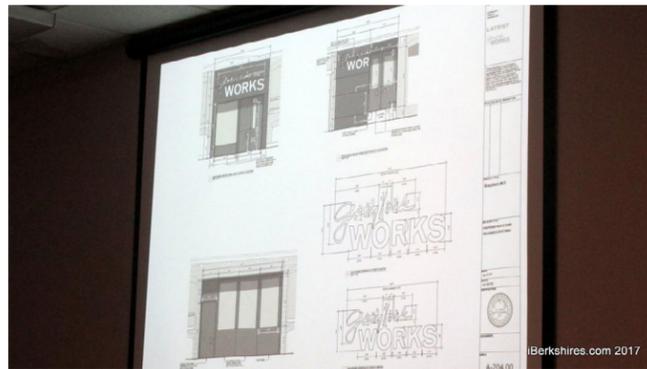


Greylock Works owner Salvatore Perry described the rejuvenation of the 50,000 linear feet of floor in the Weave Shed an ‘enormous challenge.’

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By Tammy Daniels, iBerkshires Staff

NORTH ADAMS, Mass. — Greylock Works is beginning renovations to its south side and the rest of the massive Weave Shed that runs along State Road.

Salvatore Perry, owner and developer, gave the update to the Planning Board as part of some smaller amendments to plans already approved by the board.



Changes in new entryways for Greylock Works.

Perry and his partner, Karla Rothstein, purchased the massive textile mill a couple years ago and are planning to put \$15 million or more into rehabbing the space into artisanal food production, event space and hospitality.

The next step in the project is replacing the windows facing State Road in the flat-roof section of the Weave Shed and doubling the size of the entryway where the offices of the former Cariddi Sales had been. New windows will be placed on the south side, toward the parking lot facing Alcombright Athletic Complex, and the current overhead door on the loading dock entering the shed will be replaced with four hinged doors that will open seasonably.

Another change is a partially bricked-up window on the northeast corner, next to the Greylock Works sign, that will be elongated and have fixed glass installed.

Perry’s illustrated update showed some of the changes already done in the sawtooth roof section of the mill, where the “irreplaceable architecture” of the roofline and skylights was completely restored.

“The floor itself has been an enormous challenge and a gratifying one at this juncture,” he said.

More than 50,000 linear feet of 3 1/2 inch-thick Douglas fir planking was uncovered, scraped, cleaned, filled and sealed. More than 2,000 holes were custom-routed and filled, tens of thousands of nails were removed by hand, and any gap over 3/8ths of an inch was filled with new wood. The 26,000 square feet of flooring was sealed with four applications of an environmentally safe coating made from whey and manufactured in Vermont.

Over the last six months, thousands of gallons of chemicals and more than 20 above-ground storage tanks were removed from the complex’s blighted southwest corner, where an aluminum anodizing company had operated years ago. The building was also demolished, lead and asbestos abatement done, and 145 tons of soil contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls removed.

“We’ve now prepared the site for the phase of MassWorks site improvements recently approved by the Planning Board,” he said, referring to the parking lot off Protection Avenue, behind the mill. “Expect the bids next week to be able to start that work.”

Greylock Works received a \$2,176,341 MassWorks grant last fall to redo the entry and parking lots on the east and south side of the sprawling structure.

Perry also lead the board through the some of the marketing materials being used to promote the mill and the layout of the planned 79 rooms in the hotel portion to accommodate visitors ranging from Appalachian Trail hikers to families. A new website is also up and he spoke of collaborative efforts with local and state organizations, including the Franklin County Community Development Corp. and Lever.

Greylock Works is also promoting the Berkshires as a “vibrant and supportive ecosystem for new businesses” to attract tenants and has an office providing design services for those interested in

using the food production space. It expect to host its first event, a wedding, later this summer in the completed Weave Shed area that includes a commercial kitchen.

The board approved the amendments and congratulated Perry on the work done so far.

“I know it’s got to be extraordinarily challenging to bring a building like that back to life, not just on the scale, the size of the building, but the age and the other things that go along with that,” said Chairman Michael Leary. “It’s wonderful to see.”

In other business, the board approved applications for:

- Empire Education Corp., doing business as Mildred Elley, to open an admissions office at 33 Main St., at the corner of Main and Marshall streets. The educational institution will have a receptionist and someone to speak to potential students about admissions and financial aid.
- Robert Moore Jr. to operate an automotive repair garage and used-car sales at 303 State St. Moore said he would be the only employee and did not plan to have too many vehicles on site, in response to concerns from planners over extra cars.

“I can assure that the lot will be kept very neat, very organized,” he said. “There will not be vehicles left there in disarray.”

The city has run into issues with auto repair businesses in the past that have overloaded their lots or had non-operating vehicles on their properties for weeks at a time.

Moore agreed to a condition of 14 vehicles total, with the option to return to the board if more spots are needed.

- Developer Finance Corp. to move into the first floor of 26 Union St., the former Wall-Streeter building. Amy Backiel, executive vice president, said 10 employees would be moving into the building. The company is currently located in Williamstown.

The board also:

- Set a tentative joint hearing with the City Council on a zoning change on Veazie Street for Tuesday, May 23, at 6:30 p.m.
- Heard from attorney James Sisto that China Buffet at 41 Main St. would be changing its name to Joy’s Meng’s Pan Asian House. It will be removing its buffet and updating its sushi bar. When asked if it would be merging with the adjacent Sushi House, Sisto said he did not know but that the Japanese restaurant’s lease is up at the end of the year.

“They’ve been their 16 years and they think this change is necessary,” he said of the Chinese restaurant.

China Buffet is owned by Meng Wu Wang and the Sushi House, which opened in 2011, by him

and Yaling “Joy” Wang.

- Asked that the owners of the “gas stations” on State Road and the corner of Eagle and Canal streets come before the board to explain their plans. Both sites have been approved for new gas stations and convenience stores but no work as been done and neither location has gasoline.

“They’re trying to work through the numbers,” Building Inspector William Meranti said he was told. “They turned them from gas stations with kiosks to kiosks. That’s not what they were approved for.”

Prior to the Planning Board, the Redevelopment Authority met and approved a business transfer of Eat to Health located at 14 Ashland St. Renee Tassone has sold the business to Thalia Crespo-Diaz, a graduate of McCann Technical School who attended the New England Culinary Institute.