

**TWITCHELL-
CHAMPLIN CO.
BUILDING
MERRILL'S WHARF
254 COMMERCIAL
STREET
PORTLAND, ME
MASONRY FAÇADE
RESTORATION**

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254 COMMERCIAL STREET, PORTLAND, ME

MASONRY FAÇADE RESTORATION

In 1884, the first structure of the present 100,000 SF Twitchell-Champlin Company building was constructed. After that, four more additions were added in 1886, 1896, 1904 & 1914-1924. It is the largest masonry structure built on the wharf and was one of the last to not be used for industrial purposes. The building remained unaltered for 50 years until it was rehabilitated in 2011. This building holds significant historical value for the city of Portland, not only because it was one of the few buildings built in the 19th century to survive the great Portland fire, but also because it is located across from the Portland Waterfront Historic District. For these reasons, the owners requested that the boundaries of the Portland Waterfront Historic District be expanded to include this structure. The property retains a high degree of desirability in regards to location, setting, design, feeling and integrity of materials and workmanship, which are in line with the Portland Historic District. Spanning more than 30 acres, the Historic District includes architecture examples of Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Second Empire, Romanesque Revival, and Queen Anne.

Over the years, the building had been significantly neglected. The windows had been in-filled with concrete block, the roof was structurally unsound and leaking, many of the floors were sagging, and the exterior brick masonry façade was in desperate need of restoration to prevent sections of the walls from falling down.

One of the major issues with the structure was the separation of the outer course of brick from the inner wythes. Each year the freeze and thaw from water infiltration caused header bricks to breakdown and also caused sections of the walls to bulge. Several sections of wall had previously fallen down and were rebuilt using brick and mortar that were of the incorrect size and strength as well as historically incorrect.

Metric Construction awarded the masonry restoration and waterproofing contract to Knowles Industrial Services of Gorham, ME. Becker Structural Engineers (BSE) provided plans, specifications and construction monitoring for this technically challenging project. The owner also hired a masonry expert, Building Envelope Consultants (BEC), to help Becker with some of the details as well as to monitor the quality of our work. Throughout the project, the Maine Historical Preservation and the National Parks Historic Preservation Societies were involved to minimize changes in construction techniques that were used during the original construction. Both entities required the use of original material types and installation practices in order to preserve the historic look of the building, which in turn resulted in tax breaks for the owner.

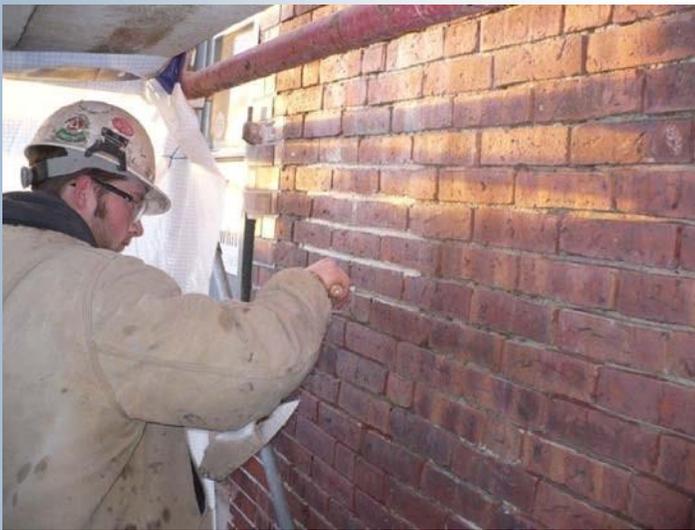
During this project, all of the windows in the entire building were replaced with new energy efficient units. A completely new roof system was also installed. In addition, the GC was undertaking a full interior gutting and rebuilding of the top four floors to provide new office space for the legal firm of Pierce Atwood. These items of work were performed by other contractors hired directly by the GC.

Complications and concerns included staging and scaffolding erection. Since the building is adjacent to the ocean, we were faced with nearly constant high winds.



Winter construction required supplemental heat to protect the new masonry work from the freezing temperatures.

During the project, unanticipated conditions arose as crews started removing deteriorated bricks. Some of these included completely deteriorated interior wythe mortar that had turned to sand, broken



granite sills, and internal cracking caused by building movement during the construction process. Knowles worked closely with the owner, GC, BSE and BEC to provide practical restoration solutions and actually save the owner money on the overall project using some of the design changes we developed.

Contribution to the Community:

What has been described recently by some as an eyesore on the waterfront of Portland is once again a beautiful historic landmark contributing to the revitalization of Portland's waterfront, as evidenced by recent stories in the Portland Press Herald (see attached articles highlighting how the renovated building is attracting business to Commercial Street). This was one of the last buildings in need of a facelift in order to compliment and improve the look of the Portland waterfront. The owners and neighbors are now proud of the building instead of having to apologize for it. Since the completion, the selling market for the remaining space has been high with most of the first floor now beginning to be occupied.

The fishing fleet also enjoyed the benefit of new pier pilings, electrical hookup, lighting, water source and dedicated parking for their usage. It was very important to all involved to keep the maritime community intact and help improve the marine infrastructure while improving the adjacent building property for the new clients.

Keeping Pierce Atwood in Portland was also a huge benefit to the city and community because it offered employment opportunities and a tax base that would stay in the city.

Innovation in construction techniques and materials:

Early on the project it was clear that the overall repointing and rebuilding of brick on a structure of this magnitude would make for a one of a kind project. The strengthening of the building cracks was performed using an innovative system of Helifix crack stitching stainless steel helical rods and epoxy paste, and cellular

foam cement was used to grout the voids between the



outer and inner wythe of brick.



January 2, 2012

Mr. Tim Rich
Knowles Industrial Services Corporation
295 New Portland Road
Gorham, ME 04038

Re: Cumberland Cold Storage Restoration Project

To Whom It May Concern:

It was a pleasure working with you and your crew on the Cumberland Cold Storage Building Restoration Project. I would like to offer our appreciation to you, Art Stilphen, and everyone on the Knowles crew for the support and professionalism we experienced throughout the entire project. From the initial planning to the final days of completion, you and your team supported us every step of the way and helped us deliver the project on time and on budget.

Knowles' ability to work with and around other contractors was key to our success. We also appreciate your expertise in resolving any issues that arose during the project. We are very pleased with the outcome of the building restoration and look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Dan Jacques
Engineering & Facilities Manager

Waterfront Maine
14 Maine Street
Brunswick, Maine 04011

Brunswick, ME: 207-729-7970

New York, NY: 212-695-8090

BUSINESS

Continued from Page A1

the survey's authors. The numbers quantify what the firm sensed: that the waterfront, the views and the bustle of Commercial Street are drawing tenants.

Erin Hadwen, manager of the Old Port Wine Merchants and Cigar Shoppe, is glad the store moved from Fore Street to Commercial Street in 2009. She said the move increased the shop's tourist traffic and drew local customers who hadn't been aware of it in the previous location.

Business improved so much that four people, rather than two, now work in the shop.

"We just can't say enough good stuff about Commercial Street," said Hadwen, whose job titles are manager and "wine goddess."

Commercial Street evolved in the 1980s as businesses like produce and meat wholesalers and plumbing and heating companies vacated their buildings, said Tom Dunham of the Dunham Group, a commercial real estate brokerage in Portland.

Those businesses went to locations that offered consolidation on a single floor, better truck access and proximity to the Maine Turnpike, he said. Their moves made redevelopment possible on Commercial Street.

Business people on Commercial Street are hopeful that recent developments will boost business even further.

In October, Pierce Atwood moved its 100 lawyers and their staffers from Monument Square to the former Cumberland Cold Storage building on the waterfront. The firm's move was only a matter of several city blocks, but it made a big difference for neighboring businesses on Commercial Street.

Hodgkins said he has long had regular customers who work at Pierce Atwood. Now, he's picking up business from lawyers from elsewhere in New England who visit the firm.

The Old Port Wine Merchants and Cigar Shoppe and the Salt Exchange restaurant also saw more business with the law firm's arrival.

This week, the City Council approved a zoning change to allow development of a vacant 10.5-acre parcel on Commercial Street, west of the Casco Bay Bridge.



David Hodgkins, owner of David Wood and other clothing stores on Commercial Street, says it's "like a magnet down here."

PORTLAND'S POTENTIAL

The business community in downtown Portland hopes the development of a 10.5-acre parcel on West Commercial Street will boost commerce.



STAFF GRAPHIC | MICHAEL FISHER

J.B. Brown & Sons sought the change from an industrial, water-dependent zone to one that allows residential, business and retail uses. The parcel is next to the Star Match Co. building, which the developer has owned since 1974.

Vin Veroneau, the company's president, sees the rezoned parcel as an extension of the Star Match Co. area, a visible site that is close to downtown but easily accessible from Interstate 295. He expects the accessibility from the highway to get even better with the completion of the new Veterans Memorial Bridge.

While Veroneau sees the project as self-contained, others hope development in the area could help to extend the pedestrian-oriented portion of Commercial Street westward.

"The more you can push out the borders - the boundaries - the stronger the middle will get," Hodgkins said.

Charlie Bryon, owner of the Salt Exchange, can envision an extension of the business district that reaches nearly to the Veterans Memorial Bridge. West Commercial Street would have to be more pedestrian-friendly than it is now, with good signage and a marketing plan.

Bryon can imagine a nationally known retailer serving as a draw, condominiums and perhaps an extension of the Narrow Gauge Railroad from the East End - all coexisting with the working waterfront. The nearby Fore River and open space would make an attractive scene.

"I would go all the way down. It's a beautiful approach," he said.

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High-Profile Focus: RENOVATIONS/RESTORATIONS FACILITY DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Metric Completes Merrill's Wharf Renovation

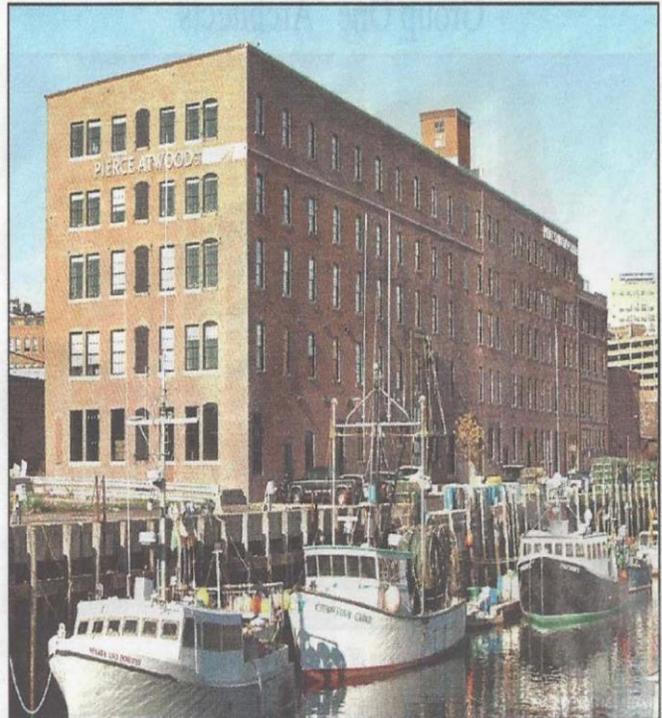
Portland, ME - Metric Construction Corporation of Boston recently completed a 100,000sf renovation at Merrill's Wharf in Portland.

The project consisted of a complex renovation resulting in the revitalization and reuse of a landmark property in Portland's historic waterfront.

Metric worked with Winton Scott Architects and Visnick & Caulfield Associates Inc., who designed the interior space for the firm of Pierce Atwood LLP to transform the tired five-story mill building into a modern and elegant office space for the renowned law firm and other smaller tenants.

Careful coordination allowed for the restoration of certain architectural elements throughout the building where exposed brick, granite, and stone were seamlessly blended into the décor. The project included the construction of networked offices for 170+ attorneys, a virtual conference center, a library, a large cafeteria, and a rooftop deck.

Salvaged granite blocks from the Million Dollar Bridge which preceded the Casco Bay Bridge across the Fore River mark the building's main entrance to celebrate and further preserve the historic significance of the landmark location.



Merrill's Wharf

Images by Neil Alexander



Interior space for Pierce Atwood

Project team for the Merrill's Wharf

Architect - Winton Scott Architects, PA

Architect and Interiors Consultant - Visnick & Caulfield Associates, Inc.

General Contractor - Metric Construction Corporation

Structural Engineer - Becker Structural Engineers, Inc.

MEP Engineer - Mechanical Systems Engineers, Inc.

Fire Protection Engineer - Eastern Fire Protection

HVAC Engineer - Mechanical Systems Engineers

Civil / Site Engineer - Blais Civil Engineering

Landscape Architect - Carroll Associates

Portland renovation lets lawyers live with the fishes

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Seth Koenig | BDN

This 19th century brick structure on Merrill's Wharf will become the new home for Pierce Atwood later this month. The renovation project is being hailed by supporters as a model for adapting a waterfront for new uses without excluding traditional, fishing-related uses. *Buy Photo*

By Seth Koenig, BDN Staff

Posted Sept. 15, 2011, at 5:15 a.m.

Last modified Sept. 15, 2011, at 5:54 p.m.



Recommend 29

PORTLAND, Maine — For nearly 60 years, the massive brick Cumberland Cold Storage building on Merrill's Wharf sat boarded up on the waterfront. Later this month, after extensive renovations, the largest law firm in northern New England will begin moving in, launching what supporters of the reclamation project are calling an innovative new model for mixing uses on a working waterfront.

Thomas Valleau — a member of the board of directors for the nearby [Portland Fish Exchange](#), a city-owned live seafood auction house — described the 100,000-square-foot, five-story structure's resurrection as a paradigm buster.

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“The conventional wisdom was that you can’t have high-end office space on a working waterfront — you have to have one or the other,” Valleau told the [Bangor Daily News](#) this week. “We have found a third way. We’re going to have a magnificently renovated building, we’re going to have a newly housed bait company, we’re going to have a much-needed new revenue stream for the fish exchange, and we’re going to capture 120 attorney jobs, plus their support staff. You can have your cake and eat it, too. I think this is going to be a project that will change the way people think about how to manage a working waterfront.”

The Cumberland Cold Storage Building was constructed incrementally in the 1800s and early 1900s and tenants for the structure revolved over time. But by 1962, the place was boarded up, and that’s the way it sat until recently, said [Dennis Keeler](#), a partner at [Pierce Atwood](#), the law firm slated to move into 70,000 square feet of the building starting on Sept. 24.

When Keeler moved to the area in 1984, the building had settled into abandonment, with cinder blocks filling many of the window spaces, he said.

“It was sort of like something out of [the movie] ‘[Raiders of the Lost Ark](#),’ where if you opened a window or opened a door, the whole building would crumble into dust around you,” he said.

And now?

“These offices will be on magazine covers,” said Valleau, who toured the structure and got an update on its progress last week. “It is a stunning project.”

The \$10 million-plus plan to move the well-known law firm into a century-old deteriorating building next to an enclave of fishing-related operations was not without its challenges, however.

Keeler said the regional firm began looking for a new Maine home more than a year ago, after the outfit’s lease at the prominent One Monument Square building approached an end and “we simply were unable to reach terms [for renewal] with our landlords.”

Pierce Atwood began considering building a new headquarters in South Portland, closer to the highways and [Portland International Jetport](#), but Keeler said the longtime downtown [Portland](#) anchor tenants wanted to remain near the bustling center of Maine’s largest city.

“The problem was, we’re too big,” Keeler said. “We need 70,000 square feet of space, and if you look around, there aren’t a lot of places with 70,000 square feet of space available [in the downtown].”

Keeler said he and other Pierce Atwood executives saw the run-down Cumberland Cold Storage building from their Monument Square office windows, and the seed was planted to fix the place up to serve as their new home. Such a project would not have been allowed just five years ago, Keeler said, because city codes prevented nonmarine uses in waterfront buildings such as that one, part of a two-decade-old effort to block widespread condominium developments on Portland’s historic piers.



View Portland Fish Pier, Portland, Maine in a larger map

Twit

But a series of ordinance changes over the past few years cracked open the door to nonmarine uses above the first floor of such structures and further to allow 45 percent of the first floor to be rented out to nonmarine tenants.

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The arrival of Pierce Atwood will infuse the neighborhood with 175 to 200 new daily workers who likely will become customers for nearby stores and restaurants, Keeler noted. Health care consulting firm Compass Health Analytics also reportedly will join Pierce Atwood in the building, taking up a portion of the second floor that the law firm isn't slated to occupy.

"When we looked at it and started to get excited about it, we said, 'Look, this is something that could change a whole neighborhood,'" Keeler said. "It could put 200 people down there on a daily basis, to a neighborhood that had been sort of left behind."

That injection of spending money ultimately won't come at the expense of traditional marine-related operations on the nearby city-owned Fish Pier — at least those operations that are there now.

Pierce Atwood and the Brunswick-based [Waterfront Maine](#) will pay the Portland Fish Exchange an annual amount to preserve a covenant over a net yard — a large open space where local fishermen can open and repair nets — to the east of the building for as long as 35 years. The payments will start out at \$20,000 per year and will escalate over the life of the covenant, reaching a total amount of about \$935,000 if the options are renewed to the end of the 35-year span.

The building owner and its anchor tenant also paid nearly \$135,000 to move the Dropping Springs Lobster & Bait, which supplies bait to lobstermen, from that net yard, where the company worked from refrigerated trailers, to a new building closer to the fish exchange.

In tandem, Valteau said, the arrangements protected the newly repurposed office building's waterfront view — the mending of nets is not regarded as an obstruction — while leaving the displaced bait dealer in a better facility.

The city of Portland also made a deal with the law firm and building owner, providing a 20-year tax break worth about \$2.6 million to help offset the costs of the renovations, which included the complete overhaul of the structure's guts, 325 new windows and the delicate task of driving new piles into bedrock from inside the downtrodden building.

Keeler said the city received about \$17,000 in property taxes each year from the building before the renovations, and even with the tax break, will receive about \$96,000 annually from the property moving forward.

"It was brilliant," Valteau said. "We found solutions. We put ourselves in a partnership and we found solutions."

Similar articles:

[Portland zoning changes could alter waterfront](#)

[Portland hopes new business park means more high-tech jobs](#)

[Former Maine armory could get gig as movie studio](#)

WATERFRONT'S WORKING

Commercial Street living up to its name

Port-side restaurants, shops and offices – including a large law firm – have made the area one of Portland's most desirable places to conduct business.

By ANN S. KIM
Staff Writer



John Patriquin/Staff Photographer

Businesses on Commercial Street in Portland draw shoppers on Friday. A commercial real estate survey shows the area along the waterfront has the lowest vacancy rate in the city.

PORTLAND — Business on Commercial Street has exceeded David Hodgkins' expectations.

His three clothing stores are lined up next to one another at the intersection of Commercial and Union streets. He opened Portland Dry Goods Co. and Barbour by David Wood in 2008. In July, he moved David Wood from the space it had occupied at Market and Middle streets for 25 years.

"This is like a magnet down here," Hodgkins said.

In the real estate market, Commercial Street, with its mix of boutiques, restaurants, offices and waterfront businesses, is outperforming other parts of Portland.

At the end of 2011, Commercial Street had an 8 percent vacancy rate for office space and almost no available retail space, according to a survey by Malone Commercial Brokers.

By comparison, the office space vacancy rate was 13 percent for the Old Port and 16.5 percent for downtown Portland overall.

It's the first time the firm has broken down numbers for the three areas, said Jim Harden, one of

Please see **BUSINESS**, Back Page

West Wall During Construction



West Wall Near to Completion





**South Wall Prior to
Rehabilitation**

**South Wall
Completed**

