

Case Study

Historic Acquisition

In 2014 and as buyer representation, Dowell Commercial contracted this property for a NC Housing Finance Agency apartment conversion for developer Third Wave Housing.

Property: 14 East Guilford Street, Thomasville in Davidson County, NC. Known as Lambeth Furniture Mill, this is a 150,000 SF building on 5.39 acres. At time of purchase this property's roof is caving in, there is an active homeless population onsite, and the property is listed by a residential broker whom don't know what they have.

Team: Sean Dowell of Dowell Commercial Realty.



Approach

Specialty Development Type: Historic rehabilitation is a niche development type and requires a specialty understanding. Having not being presented the option, neither the city nor the seller had considered historic rehabilitation of this derelict building. In fact, the city was looking at this property as a tear down for a new police department building. Alternatively, this historic developer was exciting about this “old building.” This is a rare all wood historic rehabilitation. Most of these either burned or demoed themselves.

Environmental Understanding: Due to this property's environmental issues, this asset could not be sold via conventional financing. Developer put this property in the brownsfield program and was granted EPA funds towards site clean up. Environment conditions made this property difficult for anyone but a development team with environmental experience to pull off.

Results

Property is purchased in December 2016 for \$205,000 (\$1.36 SF). By 2018, this property was developed into a 138 unit apartment complex called Big Chair Lofts. In 2019, this property won the Charles L. Edison Tax Credit Excellence Award.

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