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Will The Pomona Cotton Mill Be Landfill?



The Pomona Mill [located](#) at the corner of Spring Garden at Merritt Drive, appears to be headed for destruction.

The history of the mill dates back to 1897, when construction began on the complex for the Hunter Manufacturing and Commission Company. Later, this company was renamed Pomona Cotton Mill. Its simple two- and three-story, brick buildings stood alongside the main railroad tracks to Winston-Salem. Several wings were added to the original structure throughout the 1910s. Its style of architecture was found throughout the American South, and related Greensboro visually to other textile towns across the region.

Changing dynamics in the textile industry caused the mill operations to close in the 1950s. In the 1970s the sprawling complex was adaptively reused as an outlet mall, among the first examples of adaptive reuse of historic buildings in the city of Greensboro. Cotton Mill Square, as the mall was known, contained dozens of stores, including Linens 'n Things, Famous Footwear, Dress Barn, and Burlington Coat Factory.

Pomona Cotton Mill was listed to Preservation Greensboro's Treasured Places Watch List in 2005. In recent years, the building has been neglected by its current owner. The deteriorated condition of the complex illustrates the practice of "Demolition By Neglect", a process in which owners of historic buildings deliberately allow the structure to fall into a poor state of repair, to the point that demolition becomes an accepted remedy. The process is detrimental to the preservation of our



environmental resources, the cultural resources associated with the building, Greensboro's efforts to reduce landfill material, neighboring land values, and the city's tax base.

The property had the potential to take a high-profile role as student housing integrated into the newly dedicated bicycle route along Spring Garden Street to the UNCG campus. The site was listed on Preservation Greensboro's Treasured Places Watch List in 2007. Likely eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, redevelopment could be done in a way that would secure federal and state historic preservation tax credits that would amount to 40% of the project's costs. For the city of Greensboro, the loss of this redevelopment opportunity and recuperation of these credits is money left on the table.

Though its history is little appreciated by some, this example of Greensboro's industrial history illustrates an important chapter in how the city grew to become one of the largest cities in North Carolina. Time will tell how this chapter of history will turn out, but it certainly does not look positive.

NOTE 2/20/08: Greensboro might be losing a landmark property, but the site's owner did quite well by selling Greensboro's historic brick. According to the News and record newspaper, the vintage material from this site was sold at nearly \$200,000 per truck load.

Written by Benjamin Briggs

Preservation Greensboro contributes a key role in the growth of Greensboro's economy and vitality through tourism, reinvestment, and place-making. With diverse initiatives that help you to restore, explore, and connect with your community, Preservation Greensboro provides a voice for revitalization, improved quality of life, and conservation of historic resources for future generations. Are you a member yet? Learn more about Greensboro's only member-supported preservation organization by exploring our [website](#) or joining our [Facebook](#) page. Please join us today!

Categories: Greensboro Preservation News, Lost Greensboro, Treasured Places Watch List By Benjamin Briggs

January 29, 2008 8 Comments



Author: Benjamin Briggs

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Don Moore

January 29, 2008 at 9:12 pm (Edit)

I hope that they allow restoration folks an opportunity to recover some of the structure for use elsewhere. I recall that it was quite a place when it was open.



Benjamin

January 30, 2008 at 9:14 am (Edit)

Savy owners of mill buildings such as this across the state have made a handsome profit off of salvages where vintage bricks are sold on a national market. Although many bricks and some timbers may be saved, a majority of the materials used to construct the mill (flooring, roofing material, partition walls) will end up in Greensboro's land fill.



Paul E Sams

February 14, 2008 at 9:02 am (Edit)

This is another sad day in the history of Greensboro and for the textile industry in particular. The only people in Greensboro that seem to care about the Textile Heritage are the people who are renovating the Revolution Cotton Mill. The textile industry was one of the prime reasons for the economic and cultural success of

Greensboro. The mill villages and their people have played a significant role in the growth of Greensboro and to watch another mill being torn to the ground is really sad to a few of us that seem to really care about the history of the Textile Industry.



Paul

February 18, 2008 at 10:10 pm (Edit)

Don't care much for the textile history, but what i love i old building and hate to see this one comen down.



Joy

February 27, 2008 at 9:30 am (Edit)

I agree with Paul Sams. I have a tremendous interest in the textile industry, especially Cone Mills, where my family worked for generations. I would love to see someone come in and restore Pomona, if for nothing else, for the history that surrounds it and out of respect for those who labored to make a better life for themselves, their families, and for the betterment of Guilford County.



Chris Schierkolk

February 27, 2008 at 7:00 pm (Edit)

I worked here as a maintenance man in the mid Nineties when the retail shops occupied the mill. I worked on boilers that were 4 times were times my age. The building had 18-20 inch solid wooden columns as support in some areas. These had to have come from old growth forests. The hardwood floors were amazing even after decades of use. It's a real shame the old place has succumb to the wrecking ball. I remember when we shut down. There was an ice storm that year and we had a power outage. This outage caused a large mechanical circuit breaker to trip. When electrician came out to fix it, he tried to force circuit breaker back in and somehow the transformer blow. The electrician escaped with only minor injuries. The old man who owned the place who often referred to me as "the yard boy" didn't want to invest the money for repairs. He just closed up shop and sent all the business packing. That guy was a real tool.



CHELSEA

November 9, 2010 at 7:59 pm (Edit)

I really hate the people in charge of the mill and the people who shut them down because Greensboro used to be a more respected and well known city now it's like any other city it used to have a train run by it it used to do many wonderful things it's just sad and the other mill or what ever that is almost across from it is even worse SOMETHING HAS TO BE DONE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



CHELSEA

November 9, 2010 at 8:06 pm (Edit)

I do think they should make it into a museum to keep things from the past here I really think people should really care more about Guilfor County's history.I think they should get exterminators to control the pests or animals that are in the building and clean the whole thing up to get it running up I swear to my heart (unless they knock it down first) I will find a way to make it a museum or to make it run agagin YOU HAVE MY WORD!

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