

REBUILDING LIVABLE, ENDURING COMMUNITIES

Using Rehabilitation as Framework for Revitalization



Historic



Before



After

MILLER & RHOADS MIXED USE PROJECT

Richmond, VA

SYNOPSIS

The Miller & Rhoads Department Store was once the headquarters and iconic flagship store for this regional retail company. In 1989, the company closed, leaving over 450,000 square feet of vacant space within the City Center District of downtown Richmond, Virginia. Filling an entire City block, the company's growth is reflected in the multiple expansions added over its 100 year history. Due to the building's large size with its crowds of shoppers and employees, adjacent businesses flourished. Inevitable, the vacancy of the retail giant had a significant impact on the decline of surrounding businesses. Business decline led to building vacancies and demolition in surrounding blocks to Miller & Rhoads. The challenge was to find a new vibrant use for this expansive structure that would also serve as a catalyst for new re-development of surrounding properties.

Robert Mills, serving as a downtown advocate, worked with City of Richmond Planning Staff, Richmond Redevelopment Housing Authority and the local development community in soliciting for possible uses for this property. A hotel user was of primary focus for the community due to the property's proximity to the Regional Convention Center. Due to the building's size, other uses, in association with hotel use, were also encouraged. In 2007, a development team was put together based on the mixed-use needs of the community and city leaders' vision to repurpose this historic landmark. Due to his commitment to the project and focus on the neighborhood's revitalization, Robert Mills served as Project Principal and Project Manager in the rehabilitation of this beloved building.

The project was completed in 2009, bringing hotel, residential and retail components and a sense of renewed vitality back to this area of downtown. The rejuvenated Miller & Rhoads Building has since served as a catalyst for further adjacent re-development in the neighborhood including a Performing Arts Center, a new Federal Courthouse, numerous rehabilitations for residential and restaurant tenants, and neighborhood streetscape improvements.

DESIGN FIRM

COMMONWEALTH ARCHITECTS

COMPLETION DATE

2009

ROLE OF NOMINEE

Project Principal and Project Manager

AWARDS

2011 ULI Richmond – Vision Award, Most Innovative Project
2010 Greater Richmond Association of Commercial Real Estate – Best Mixed Use Project
2010 AIA – Richmond Merit Award
2009 Alliance to Conserve Old Richmond Neighborhoods – Best Commercial Renovation

PUBLICATIONS

2010 Trends Magazine, "Historical Rehabilitation & Compatible Infill Development"
2009 Style Weekly Magazine, "Suite Deal"



"The impact of the Miller & Rhoads project could be felt even before the project was completed, catalyzing the rehabilitation of the neighboring buildings and spurring the revitalization of Richmond's historic and cultural center on Broad Street.



Kathleen S. Kilpatrick
Director and State Historic Preservation Officer,
Virginia Department of Historic Resources

