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in vintage Bousquet fashion, he regrets at all. It's been an e

American Insulated Wire building slated for mixed-use development

By DONNA KENNY KIRWAN

PAWTUCKET — The American Insulated Wire Corp. building will be getting a substantial facelift and a new purpose thanks to its recent purchase by a prominent property development team.

Christopher Starr, owner of the Boston-based Starr Development, confirmed that his company, in a joint partnership with Brady Sullivan Properties of New Hampshire, has acquired the

American Insulated Wire building and plans to turn it into a "mixed use" development. This would include approximately 140 residential rental units and several thousand square feet of commercial space, he said.

The partnership of Brady Sullivan Properties and Starr Development was behind the successful overhaul of the former Slater Cotton Mill into stylish, loft-style apartments two years ago. The same partnership also turned a former Grant Mill in

Providence into a similar urban residential living space.

The 278,000-sq. ft. brick building, located at the intersection of Central Avenue and the George Bennett Industrial Highway, served as headquarters for American Insulated Wire for decades. Around 2005, the company moved to Mansfield, Mass., but the building still maintains several commercial tenants. Starr said he is hoping to keep the current tenants, which include Ken Ryan Baseball and

Absorbent Specialty Products.

Starr said the building, which dates back to 1900, had been placed in receivership by its previous owner and was purchased from the receiver. He said federal historical tax credits will be utilized in the renovation.

According to the Pawtucket Tax Assessor's Office, the property was purchased for \$560,000 from receiver Diane Finkle under the name of American Wire LLC. The most

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recent owners were listed as Central Industrial Properties LLC and One New Road LLC. During the last property reevaluation, the total assessment on the buildings and land was almost \$1.3 million. Starr said that the plan is to maintain the integrity of the mill and its unique features, which include an enclosed walkway bridge between two multi-story buildings. He also said that the portion of

Freeman Street that passes under the bridge is now a private way that belongs to the property owners. "There is the possibility to create an incredibly attractive streetscape, and for the development to have its own enclave," Starr said.

Starr added that he and the Brady Sullivan group are very pleased to have acquired the property, both because of its location in the heart of the city and its access to major highways. Additionally, he said the developers have had all positive experiences in dealing with city officials, and have been happy with the way the Slater Cotton Mill project was received.

"We really like Pawtucket. The city has been great to work with," said Starr. "And with Slater Cotton Mill, we have maintained a very high occupancy rate," he said. He added that the developers hope to be able to get through the permitting process within the next 30 to 60 days and expect to start construction immediately after that.

According to a recent article in Providence Business News, a Georgia company called Southwire Co. has

acquired the 86-year-old American Insulated Wire Corp. for undisclosed terms. AWI was founded in 1924, and since 1936, had been a subsidiary of Leviton Manufacturing Co., Inc.

City officials expressed their pleasure at the purchase by Starr Development and Brady Sullivan, especially given the success with Slater Cotton Mill. Mayor Donald Grebien, who had worked for many years at AIW, said he knew how much character and architecture there was inside the historic building. "It has a lot of potential," he said.

The mayor also said it is one more important piece of development for the industrial area of Cottage Street that has started to pick up with the new Stop & Shop and Walgreen's and Ken Zuckerman's building on Freight Street.

Pawtucket Planning Director Michael Davolio commented, "We're very excited to have someone who has done such quality work in the city back in the field. We think it's a wonderful project that will benefit the entire area."

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