

JULY 2020
by: Allison Klingler

ADAPTIVE REUSE



Above: "The Old Mill" Photo by Joe Pulcinella

Dever Architects is Celebrating 35 Years: Adaptive Reuse

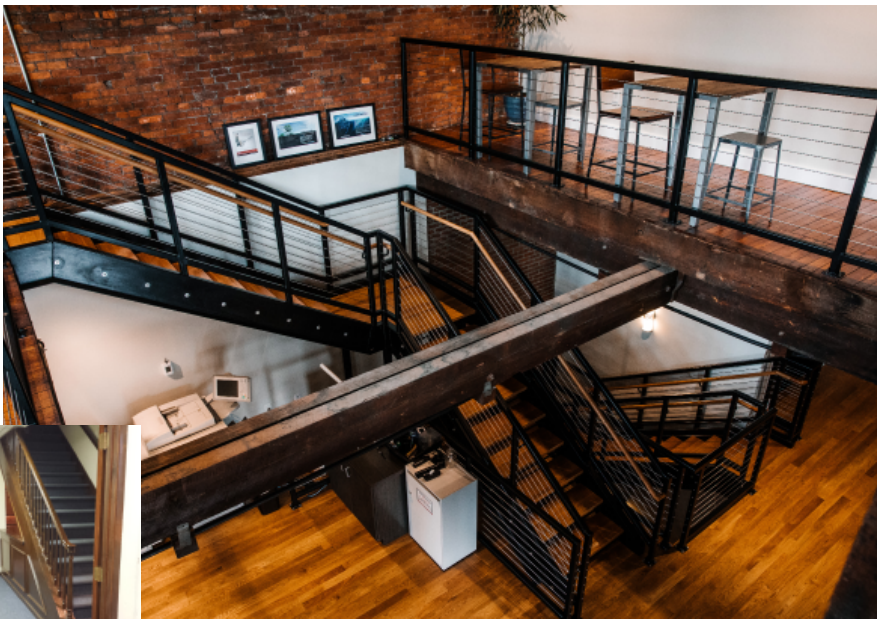
In honor of Dever Architects' 35th anniversary, all our 2020 newsletters will reflect on the projects and clients that made such a milestone possible, as well as the projects and clients that will keep us around for the next 35 years.

Located where we are, in southeastern Pennsylvania, there have long been old buildings available, which brings about the need for adaptive reuse designs. One such building was an early 19th century mill whose owner needed office space in 1997.

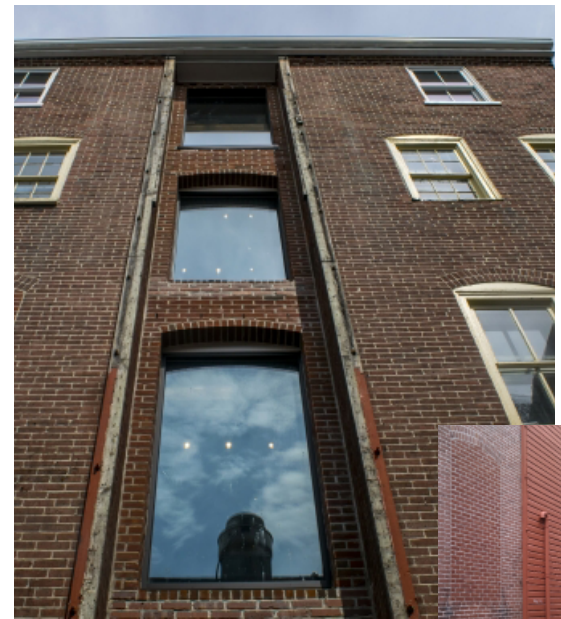
This nearly two-hundred year-old building still had its operating water mill as well as the original stone structure. In order to make this building usable as a modern office space, Dever Architects came up with a design that featured glass partitions and a modern ramp. The glass both reflected a contemporary style and allowed for the original building elements to be seen from anywhere in the building. The ramp is made of wood, glass, and steel and takes up most of the wheel room's main space, adding an important element that shows a move to both modernity and accessibility.

The Old Mill project won the Best Suburban Construction award from the 1997 Commerce Bank / Philadelphia Business Journal Building Excellence Awards.

Another award winning project, was Synchrony Healthcare. This 2016 adaptive reuse project won two awards: a Professional Silver Award from SARA PA and the West Chester Historic Preservation Award.



Above: "Stairs, after" Photo from Synchrony Healthcare
 Left: "Stairs, before" Photo from Dever Architects



Above: "Shaft, after" Photo from Synchrony
 Left: "Shaft, before" Photo from Dever Architects

Synchrony Healthcare (previously mentioned in the March 2018 Newsletter) was originally a stove manufacturing facility built in the 1840s. Over the years, the original brick and woodwork was covered up, private offices had formed narrow hallways and closed off rooms, and a historic hoist gear shaft was boarded up and the mechanism forgotten.

For this renovation, Dever Architects opened up the whole inside, removing the partitions that created the awkward hallways and office rooms. New office areas were created with low-height partitions and glass walls, in order to keep the space open. We exposed what original wood and brick we could and accented it with replacements where the original work was too damaged. We turned the attic space into a mezzanine by opening it to the lower floors with a featured, monumental staircase.

But our favorite part of this renovation was bringing back the hoisting mechanism and displaying the original shaft. We filled in existing floor and wall openings with strong panes of glass, to reflect where there was once an open shaft. The extra glass also allows lots of natural light to come in. The mechanism was restored and displayed in the attic atop the glass floor.

Sometimes, the best way to save an old building is to give it a new use and Dever Architects knows how important it is to be able to transform old building so that they are modern and usable. Both the Old Mill and the Synchrony offices are still well used today, providing their owners with practical and special spaces.



Above: "Gear Hoist, after" Photo from Synchrony Healthcare
 Left: "Gear Hoist, before" Photo from Dever Architects



Above: "Offices, after" Photo from Synchrony
 Left: "Offices, before" Photo from Dever Architects

The Old Mill Project Manager: Dave Clemente, Dever Architects, 610-358-2300 dcllemente@deverarchitects.com
 Synchrony Healthcare Project Manager: Jeff Ivins, Dever Architects, 610-358-2300 jivins@deverarchitects.com