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**FITCHBURG YARN MILL, FITCHBURG, APPROVED FOR NOMINATION TO
THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission approved the Fitchburg Yarn Mill in Fitchburg for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at a recent meeting. The nomination has been submitted to the National Register of Historic Places at the National Park Service in Washington, DC, for final consideration and designation.

“The Massachusetts Historical Commission is dedicated to preserving the Commonwealth’s rich historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources,” Secretary Galvin said. “Inclusion of the Fitchburg Yarn Mill in the National Register will help preserve an important part of Fitchburg’s industrial heritage.”

The Fitchburg Yarn Mill, 1428 Main Street, is a well-preserved, early 20th-century factory complex designed by Sheldon & Sons, a prominent architecture and engineering firm that specialized in mill construction. The Fitchburg Yarn Mill consists of six principal buildings and four structures, including the smokestack, an iconic feature of an industrial landscape. Situated between the North Nashua River and the Boston & Maine Railroad, the Fitchburg Yarn Mill was constructed in 1907 amid a period of expansive industrialization throughout New England.

The mill contributed to Fitchburg’s position as a dominant manufacturing community and was a mainstay of Fitchburg’s industrial economy for much of the 20th century, including the financially challenging years of the Great Depression, when the mill operated 24 hours a day and employed more than 800 operatives.

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Materials used in the mill's construction included Pittsburgh steel, two million bricks from nearby Greenfield, and one million feet of spruce and hard pine. The 160-foot-tall, round brick smokestack, described in the local newspaper as the largest in the city, was built on a concrete foundation with a 17-foot diameter. It was estimated that 250,000 bricks were used in its construction. Utilitarian in design, the principal mill buildings are three stories tall with the characteristic monumental windows that helped provide adequate light to operate the machinery that produced cotton and acrylic yarns.

Fitchburg Yarn operated until 1979, after which the property was occupied by Nockege Mill Industries and then Home Line Furniture Company. Following a period of vacancy, the mill is being converted into housing, using state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits. Scheduled for completion in the spring of 2017, the project will create 96 units of affordable and market-rate housing.

The rehabilitation has included masonry repairs and new aluminum windows that closely replicate the appearance of the deteriorated wood sash. On the interior, the building's original exposed brick walls, wood columns, full-height ceilings, and hardwood flooring are being incorporated into the residential layout, retaining the building's historic integrity.

The Fitchburg Yarn Mill is one of six historic resources around the Commonwealth approved for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts Historical Commission at this meeting.

Secretary Galvin serves as Chairman of the 17-member board, which meets regularly and considers historic resources eligible for the National Register four times a year.

The National Register is the nation's official listing of significant historic resources. In Massachusetts, there are more than 70,000 properties listed in the National Register. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has been administering the National Register of Historic Places program in Massachusetts since 1966.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission is the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer and the State Archaeologist. It was established in 1963 to identify, evaluate, and protect important historical and archaeological assets of the Commonwealth. Visit our website to learn more about the Commission's programs (www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc).

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