



William Francis Galvin
Secretary of the Commonwealth

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M. M. RHODES & SON, TAUNTON, 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 M. M. Rhodes & Son manufacturing complex in Taunton for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at a recent meeting. The nomination will be 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 M. M. Rhodes & Son in the National Register will help to protect a remarkable resource--a rare collection of intact industrial architecture and machinery that has been continually owned and operated by a local family for more than 150 years.”

M. M. Rhodes & Sons, 12 Porter Street, is a small complex of seven manufacturing buildings constructed between 1865 and 1960. Tightly grouped on a 1.9-acre polygonal lot, the buildings range from one to three stories in height and display minimal Classical Revival architectural details. Together the buildings represent a rare example of unaltered 19th-century industrial architecture, retaining much of their original design and historic fabric, as well as original belt-driven machinery, equipment, and fixtures.

Founded by Marcus Morton Rhodes in 1861, M. M. Rhodes & Sons produced specialized fastening products, which at various times included shoe buttons, tacks, nails, shoelaces, and wiring staples.

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State House, Room 337, Boston, Massachusetts 02133

Six generations of the Rhodes family operated the business continuously from 1861 to 2014, and family members designed, built, and patented some of the machinery and equipment used at the complex. The company employed hundreds of local families, and is the last intact industrial complex in this increasingly residential part of town, which thrived as a manufacturing center from the mid 19th through the mid 20th centuries.

The company's closure in 2014 largely resulted from the severe recession that began with the housing crisis and stock market crash in 2007 and 2008. The Rhodes family hopes to find a developer to rehabilitate the complex for residential housing, who will preserve the site's history while adapting it to a new purpose.

M. M. Rhodes & Son is one of five 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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