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RPL Commercial leases 2,500 s/f at renovated The Design Exchange

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Designs by Lolita, has signed a lease for 2,500 s/f of space at 161 Exchange St., The Design Exchange. RPL Commercial, a division of Residential Properties Ltd., brokered the deal.

The concept for the Design Exchange was conceived by Morris Nathanson, principal of Morris Nathanson Design, who sold Lerner Ladds + Bartels Architects the vacant building next to their renovated live/work complex. Seeing the potential of collaboration, the architects decided to renovate the industrial space into a space for design centric entrepreneurs. Chris Ladds and Kathy Bartels, partners in the firm, assisted with the project.

Originally constructed in 1880, this four story brick building was part of the R.I. Cardboard Co.

This classic brick mill building has four floors. Each available suite has ten foot high ceilings, seven foot tall windows, heavy timber columns and beams with original plank ceilings. New amenities include new electrical and tele/data service with ample capacity to meet the demands expected of heavy technology users, new thermally glazed aluminum windows, high efficiency heating and cooling systems, full sprinkler and fire alarm systems, a commercial grade elevator, stairway core and ADA- accessible restrooms on each floor.

Spaces range in size from 800 s/f to a full floor at 5,000 s/f.

"The goal is to attract creative professionals to the Design Exchange and to forge opportunities for collaboration under one roof" said Bartels. "Web designers, engineers, marketing strategists"these are all disciplines that would thrive within a creative neighborhood. We are absolutely thrilled that Designs by Lolita will be joining us at the Design Exchange."

Chris Ladds described the decision to work with RPL Commercial as the leasing agent. "Jim DeRentis saw the potential of the Design Exchange-open, loft-like space but with all the technological amenities that a professional business demands"and really believed it could fill an under-represented niche in the marketplace. There's a lot of commercial space available out there, but not a lot of space as unique as this. He's been committed to the concept from the beginning."

Sally Lapidés, CEO of Residential Properties Ltd. said, "We are pleased to help fill this creative space with talented companies. The retention of creative firms in the area is good for the economy of RI."

Ray Bourcier at DEC Consulting Co. was the project manager for the renovation and the general contractor was Case Construction.