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Monadnock Mill buildings redevelopment to rejuvenate City of Claremont's economy

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Four vacant and vandalized former mills used to dot the landscape on the Sugar River, a visual reminder of a depressed economy, yet a source of pride for the historic legacy of the city of Claremont. Part of the first historic mixed use district, the former Monadnock Mill buildings once were part of the New England textile economy. Over time the city acquired the properties and in 2004 publicized a Request for Developers. With approximately 130,000 s/f in three mills along the river in close proximity, putting the right team of developers and tenants together with the same needs in terms of green space, public infrastructure, and timing, was a challenge that was met by Sugar River Mills Redevelopment LLC of South Burlington, VT., the Common Man Inn and Restaurant from Meredith, and Red River Computer Co. from Lebanon. Due to severe structural problems, Historic tax credits and New Market tax credits for Monadnock Mill #2 & #6 made the project feasible.

Construction began on two of the mills in May 2008 with completion scheduled for May 2009. In the meantime the city has completed a pedestrian bridge over the Sugar River, a new park, water & sewer upgrades, road construction, and embarked on the 4th mill project. The "Sawtooth" mill, originally part of the former Joy Machine complex, is an adaptive re-use project that will ultimately create 10,000 s/f of new commercial space and a 256 car parking garage. Infrastructure, including the parking garage, will also be completed in May 2009.

The lower level of Monadnock Mill #2 & #6 will be home to the new Common Man Inn and floors 3 and 4 will be the new corporate headquarters for Red River Computer Co. Recognized for three consecutive years by Business NH magazine as one of the top 100 private companies in the state, Red River is currently headquartered in Lebanon with a regional office in Virginia. Two floors of the building will be available for commercial lease from John Illick at Sugar River Mills Redevelopment LLC.

The Common Man Restaurant will open in the former Woven Label building with riverside dining and new function rooms. Alex Ray and the Common Man family of restaurants are very familiar with historic building rehabilitation, having brought several historic buildings back to new life in their other locations. The third Monadnock Mill building, locally known as the Peterson Mill, is scheduled to begin construction next year and provide 47 new market rate condominium units by Sugar River Mills Redevelopment.

The mills project is the centerpiece of the revitalization of this proud city of 13,300. Bordered by the Connecticut and Sugar Rivers, Claremont's history was rich in the 19th century manufacturing that grew along the great rivers. This very exciting mixed use rehabilitation project will have profound implications not only for the economy of Claremont in the future, but for the surrounding towns in Sullivan County.

