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## **Connolly Brothers, Inc. and Tropical Products Inc. hold topping off celebration at 373 Highland Ave., Salem, MA**

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Salem, MA Connolly Brothers, Inc. and Tropical Products Inc. held a steel topping off celebration at 373 Highland Ave. Once in its new location, the company will expand operations from eight to 20 automated filling lines for a variety of products, from gels to foamy liquids in containers of all sizes. The new manufacturing and office headquarters will also enable Tropical Products to double the size of its workforce by employing up to 120 employees from the local communities.

“It is really gratifying to see the progress,” said Ed Berman, president of Tropical Products of the topping off milestone. “We went from buying a 5.5-acre lot with significant ledge and landscape challenges to blasting and excavation and the transformation has been incredible.”

At the topping off, Berman was joined in signing the final steel beam by co-owner and wife Kerry Berman, vice president of finance and operations Renee Dionne, and several other company representatives. Connolly Brothers president Jay Connolly and vice president of real estate/development Thaddeus Minshall were also in attendance with several Connolly Brothers staff, alongside Cambridge Savings Bank senior vice president Angela Gee and chief credit officer Michael Bonsey, as well as John Rizzo, partner with Wakefield, Mass. accounting firm CRR, LLP.

The final beam completed the outline of a single-story, bi-leveled building that will be nearly 100,000 s/f with a partial mezzanine, including a four-truck loading dock. Tropical Products has grown, Berman reports, as some businesses are expressing renewed interest in U.S.-based manufacturing

and bottling in the wake of concerns about reliability and quality in some overseas markets.

“Connolly’s team camped out here for a week to see what we are doing and made a lot of architectural design suggestions that we are using to increase our efficiency,” Berman said.

“During the height of the COVID pandemic, Tropical Products stepped up with many donations of hand sanitizer products to the local community,” said Connolly. “It is our pleasure to be able to help them expand on the North Shore as they fulfill the manufacturing and bottling needs of their many business clients from across the U.S.”

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