

## BUILDING ANALYSIS

The Subject property is located on the north side of Commercial Alley. According to the public records the Subject building occupies 1,014 square feet of ground however, the building is 1,330 square feet of gross ground area. This is a two story building that has been constructed over a full but unfinished basement. Although removed from view the foundation is likely a stone wall beneath the ground that forms a right-angle such that the inside wall is vertical and the outside wall broadens to extend beneath the sidewalk. The foundation wall encloses a full basement that is about six feet in height and there is a ledge outcrop toward the alley or south side. The basement floor is poured concrete. The north-west concrete floor is relatively new. In the basement are brick columns that are spaced eight feet apart. On these are 10" x 10" beams that run north/south to fit into pockets in the brick foundation at street level. On these wood beams are 4" x 8" floor joists that are spaced 18" on center. These in turn support tongue and groove planking for the first floor deck.

Extending vertically from the foundation is a solid brick wall with a height of about 16 feet. Because these building were once connected each demising wall is a party-wall. Interior framing consists of vertical wood posts that carry what is thought to be wood beams. It is assumed that the same construction found in the basement is found on the first floor with floor joists and a deck of tongue and groove planking. This is repeated on the second floor to a slightly pitched shed roof deck that inclines from the alley to the rear court yard. The roof decking is likely rough board to rigid insulation and a rubber membrane which is said to have been installed in 1997 or 1998.

There is a single wood frame door at the southeast corner that leads to a step-down into the south-west corner of the shop. Walls are brick. The floor is carpeting and the ceiling is gypsum between the exposed beams. Actual display area is about 20 feet deep and 38 feet long. There is an office along the east wall and a second office along the west wall with a vault room between them. Along the rear of the north wall is a galley kitchen and access to the second floor.

There are two stairways to two separated areas on the second floor. The stairway to the west is narrow and leads to a former lounge, restroom and work area. These are small rooms with carpeted flooring over planking, gypsum wall and ceilings. Returning to the first floor and crossing to the northwest corner is a stairway to a work area and office.

The general construction of the building is good in that it was originally built as a warehouse. The second floor in the west section is accessible by one stairway while the east section is accessibly by a different stairway and neither of these two sections are connected.

This is somewhat self-created in that the first floor offices and work areas could be transferred to the second floor and the two sections connected.

There is a forced warm-air gas fired furnace in the basement. There is one air conditioning unit. Electricity is delivered through breakers along plastic wiring from two boxes. Waste is via PVC and the building has a central vacuum cleaner that has never been used.

Permitted uses - The Subject is in the Central Business - B district with Historic and Downtown overlays. The parcel occupies 1,489 square feet of ground where 1,000 square feet is required but occupies 100% of the parcel where 95% is required. As a result, the Subject parcel is non-conforming. However, the dimensions of the parcel pre-date the ordinance therefore it is referred to as pre-existing non-conforming and is accepted under the existing ordinance.

Physical uses - The Subject is on an alley that is not exposed to vehicular traffic and only light pedestrian traffic. Surrounding uses are office, retail and restaurants within two-story buildings.

Profitable uses - From among the possible uses the commercial use is the only use that is permitted. Therefore, if the site were vacant the current commercial use would be the Highest and Best Use.

#### **As Improved**

Permitted uses - The Subject is improved with a two-story brick building that is used commercially as retail and office. Permitted uses are limited to commerce by including office, restaurant and retail.

Possible uses - The most reasonable commercial use is as retail or office. Such uses are found in ample supply within the district. These are in two-story brick buildings of the same vintage as the Subject. Similarly, these other uses are on small parcels that consume the entire lot in an attached or condominium style.

## **9 COMMERCIAL ALLEY**

Portsmouth is located at the Harbor along the Piscataqua River two miles west of the Atlantic Ocean. Such a location is known for the intersection of Interstate 95, the Spaulding Turnpike, Route 1 and Route 33. The Central Business District is odd in that it has no industrial mill at its center. Instead, the community has formed almost concentric circles with a dense core surrounding the Harbor.

The Subject is located in the central business district just off Market Square which is considered the heart of the community. Certainly the center of the district represents the maximum rent found in the community. Uses in this compact district are retail, office and

apartments within masonry buildings that are two to six stories in height. Typically, first floor space is devoted to retail, second floor space to office or apartments and third floor to apartments. Few building in this historic district have elevators. These buildings typically consume the entire parcel which may be 1,000 to 10,000 square feet. The Subject is located on Commercial Alley which is a walk-way between Market Street and Penhallow. And it is Market Street upon which most of the traffic flows. This is to say that the Subject is out of the 100% district on a side-street/alley. With its retail and office space the Subject incorporates elements of the Highest and Best Use.

The Subject is a two-story brick building that began life as a warehouse. Its construction is good while its condition is average. Second floor space is oddly divided such that there is no connection between the east and west sections and in order to move between them one must traverse the first floor.

Gross Floor Area:	2,603 Square Feet
First level:	1,330 Square Feet
Second floor:	1,273 Square Feet
Height:	12-16 Feet, ground to eve
Basement:	Full
Basis Structure:	Post and Beam
Foundation:	Rubble
Exterior Walls:	Solid Brick
Fenestration:	Store Front
Roofing:	Rubber Membrane
Interior:	Ceilings - Gypsum
	Walls - Gypsum and Exposed Brick
	Floors - Carpet
Kitchens:	Employee's
Plumbing:	Two Restrooms
Lighting:	Adequate
Electric:	Circuit Breakers and Plastic Wires
Heat:	Forced Warm Air
Hot Water:	40 Gallon Electric
Air Conditioning:	Central
Sprinkler:	None
Security System:	Individual

\*The above information obtained from recent appraisal in 2015