Industrial Legacy Reimagined: A Comparative Study of Adaptive Reuse at The Factory in Franklin and the May Hosiery Mills Building in Nashville

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Introduction

Adaptive reuse is a transformative idea that reimagines historic structures to serve contemporary needs. Adaptive reuse conserves older buildings' environmental, cultural, and historical value by repurposing rather than demolishing. Advocates for adaptive reuse emphasize that "the greenest building is the one that is already built," highlighting the significant energy and materials saved through reuse.[1] This approach preserves valuable historical spaces and creates unique and interesting community growth opportunities.

In Middle Tennessee, two notable examples demonstrate the potential of adaptive reuse to revitalize industrial structures: The Factory in Franklin and the May Hosiery Mills Building in Nashville. Built in 1929, The Factory was a stove manufacturing facility that later housed other industrial operations, including Dortch Stove Works and Magic Chef.[2] After decades of abandonment and disrepair, the building was first repurposed in the 1990s as a retail and cultural hub. More recently, a $56 million redevelopment has transformed the site into a "little city" of mixed-use spaces, housing dining, shopping, entertainment, and meeting hubs while retaining its historic industrial aesthetic.[3] Similarly, the May Hosiery Mills Building, constructed in 1922, was once a cornerstone of Nashville's textile manufacturing industry and produces socks for everyday people, WWII soldiers, and NASA astronauts. Following its decline in the late 20th

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[1] Kathryn Rogers Merlino, "[Re]Evaluating Significance: The Environmental and Cultural Value in Older and Historic Buildings," *The Public Historian* 36, no. 3 (August 1, 2014): 70, https://doi.org/10.1525/tph.2014.36.3.70.

[2] Wanda Johnson, Lynn Hulan, and Rod Pewitt, "National Register Nomination for Dortch Stove Works" (United States Department of the Interior and the National Park Service, 1997).

[3] Holladay Properties, "Holladay Plans Redevelopment, Revitalization in Franklin, TN," Holladay Properties, October 2021, https://www.holladayproperties.com/the-factory-purchase/.

century, AJ Capital Partners undertook its redevelopment, preserving its historical charm while converting it into a space for offices, events, and businesses.[4]

The significance of these projects lies in their preservation of architectural and historical features and their contributions to community and economic revitalization. Adaptive reuse projects such as these capitalize on the flexibility of industrial buildings, which often feature open spans, durable materials, and abundant natural light.[5] At the Factory, preserving elements like exposed beams and oversized windows allows the space to retain its industrial charm while accommodating modern functions. At the May Hosiery Mills Building, the retention of its brick facade and unique architectural features showcases its historical importance while supporting its continuing role as a hub for Nashville's economy.

Through a comparative analysis of these two projects, this paper explores how adaptive reuse addresses the practical challenges of growing urban development, integrates modern community needs and wants, and fosters sustainability. It will also consider how these redevelopments strengthen cultural identity by linking the past to the future. As noted by Merlino, adaptive reuse not only prevents demolition waste but also preserves the "embodied energy" of a structure, making it an environmentally conscious choice.[6] By analyzing the decisions and outcomes of The Factory and May Hosiery Mills, this study highlights the potential of adaptive reuse to redefine industrial plots as a dynamic resource for innovation and growth.

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[4] Carol Smith, "May Hosiery Mills Property Manager Talks History in Wedgewood-Houston," AJ Capital Partners (Nashville Business Journal, 2024), https://www.ajcpt.com/firm/news/may-hosiery-mills-tom-hodge.

[5] Matteo Robiglio, "The Adaptive Reuse Toolkit: How Cities Can Turn Their Industrial Legacy into Infrastructure for Innovation and Growth." (German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2016), http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19022, 7.

[6] Kathryn Rogers Merlino, "[Re]Evaluating Significance: The Environmental and Cultural Value in Older and Historic Buildings," 73.

Theoretical Framework and Definitions

Adaptive reuse has developed into a major proponent of contemporary architectural theory. It blends sustainability, historic preservation, and community revitalization into a cohesive and adaptable approach to urban development. Defined broadly, adaptive reuse refers to repurposing existing buildings for uses other than their original intent while retaining their historical and architectural significance. As noted by Merlino, this practice is both environmentally and culturally valuable, allowing buildings to serve as "repositories of energy and materials" that reduce the need for new construction and prevent the loss of irreplaceable heritage.[7] Industrial structures offer valuable opportunities as adaptive reuse projects. They often consist of sturdy construction, open layouts, and aesthetic qualities that lend themselves well to redevelopment and interpretation.

At its core, adaptive reuse operates on the principle that reimagining a building's function can preserve its essence while accommodating contemporary demands. By retaining the structural "bones" of a building, adaptive reuse minimizes demolition waste and reduces the environmental impact associated with new construction. For instance, a 50,000-square-foot commercial building contains approximately 80 billion British Thermal Units (BTUs) of embodied energy, equivalent to the energy needed to drive an average car for over 1,300 years.[8] Such figures highlight the urgent role of adaptive reuse in promoting sustainable development while maintaining urban environments' unique cultural and historical fabric.

From a historical perspective, adaptive reuse finds its roots in the early preservation movements of the 19th and 20th centuries. Initially, preservation efforts focused on landmark

[7] Kathryn Rogers Merlino, “[Re]Evaluating Significance: The Environmental and Cultural Value in Older and Historic Buildings,” 70.
[8] Kathryn Rogers Merlino, “[Re]Evaluating Significance: The Environmental and Cultural Value in Older and Historic Buildings,” 78.

buildings with monumental historical or architectural value. However, the rise of vernacular architecture studies expanded these criteria, emphasizing the value of everyday structures and their ability to reflect cultural identity.[9] This shift allowed industrial buildings, often overlooked in traditional preservation frameworks, to gain recognition for their architectural adaptability and historical significance. Economically, adaptive reuse provides communities with a mechanism for revitalization. By transforming often abandoned and deteriorating buildings into vibrant hubs of activity, adaptive reuse initiatives attract investment, generate employment opportunities, and foster local pride and interest.

The theoretical motivations of adaptive reuse also intersect with broader discussions on sustainability and urbanism. Ellis argues that when coupled with adaptive reuse, historic preservation creates a platform for sustainable community development, balancing economic, environmental, and social priorities.[10] Adaptive reuse and historic preservation work well with today's urban planning trends that emphasize the reuse of existing buildings and infrastructure to reduce urban sprawl and promote resource efficiency. Adaptive reuse projects such as The Factory and May Hosiery Mills demonstrate how these principles can be applied in practice, transforming underutilized spaces into community connections and growth hubs.

Despite its many benefits, adaptive reuse has its challenges. Structural limitations, regulatory hurdles, and financial constraints often complicate the process, requiring innovative solutions and stakeholder collaboration. Updating older buildings to meet modern safety and accessibility standards can be costly and technically demanding. Additionally, balancing preserving historical features with integrating contemporary design elements requires an

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[9] Thomas Carter and Elizabeth C Cromley, *Invitation to Vernacular Architecture: A Guide to the Study of Ordinary Buildings and Landscapes* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2008).
[10] S Ellis, "Historic Preservation as a Tool for Sustainable Community Development," *Consilience: The Journal of Sustainable Development*, no. 21 (2019), 2.

approach that respects both the past and the present. One example is that developers worked closely with architects and preservationists at The Factory to retain iconic features such as exposed beams and oversized windows while creating functional spaces that cater to modern uses.[11]

Adaptive reuse also raises important questions about the criteria for determining a building's value. Traditional preservation frameworks often prioritize aesthetic and historical significance, potentially overlooking buildings that lack architectural grandeur but possess cultural or environmental importance.[12] By expanding the definition of significance to include environmental and community value, adaptive reuse offers a more inclusive and sustainable approach to preservation.

Adaptive reuse represents a movement towards preservation, innovation, and sustainability. By reimagining existing buildings' functions, this movement honors the past and addresses the pressing challenges of environmental degradation and urban development. Adaptive reuse projects, demonstrated by The Factory and May Hosiery Mills, can also serve as models for integrating historic preservation with modern functionality that creates spaces as meaningful as they are practical.

Historical Context of the Case Studies

Understanding the historical context of The Factory at Franklin and the May Hosiery Mills Building is essential to appreciating their adaptive reuse projects. Both buildings were integral to the industrial growth of Middle Tennessee. The Factory, originally constructed in 1929 as a stove manufacturing plant, represents Franklin's shift toward industrialization during

[11] Centric Architecture, "The Factory at Franklin Adaptive Reuse: Reimagined," Centric Architecture, 2021, https://www.centricarchitecture.com/work/the-factory-at-franklin.
[12] Kathryn Rogers Merlino, "[Re]Evaluating Significance: The Environmental and Cultural Value in Older and Historic Buildings," 75.

the early 20th century.[13] Similarly, the May Hosiery Mills Building, established in 1922, played a pivotal role in Nashville's textile industry and contributed to the region's economic growth during a period of industrial expansion.[14] By examining these buildings' origins, uses, and eventual decline, we can better understand how their histories informed their transformations' creative and functional strategies.

The Factory at Franklin

The Allen Manufacturing Company of Nashville (AMC) commissioned the construction of the building that would become The Factory in October of 1929. AMC contracted the architectural firm Robert and Company, based in Atlanta, Georgia, to design the building. The firm designed the plant as a horseshoe shape to help connect additional buildings during future growth. During the early days of operation, the community saw AMC as bringers of the new industrial age to Franklin, Tennessee, and once Robert and Co. completed construction, operations began in June of 1930.[15] When the plant opened, it was run by 235 men and could produce about sixty-five stoves per day. Unfortunately for AMC, their timing was ill-advised. In just two short years, they would declare bankruptcy due to the financial ruin common in the Great Depression. However, not all was lost for the plant. In December of 1932, the plant was purchased by the company that it would become most associated with: Dortch Stove Works.

Dortch would bring lasting success to the plant and take them into the modern age. After purchasing the factory in late 1932, Dortch began operation just three months later, in March 1933 (See Fig. 1). In order to increase production, they installed more advanced modern

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[13] Wanda Johnson, Lynn Hulan, and Rod Pewitt, "National Register Nomination for Dortch Stove Works" (United States Department of the Interior and the National Park Service, 1997), 7.
[14] "May Hosiery Mills," AJ Capital Partners, 2015, https://www.ajcpt.com/portfolio/directory/may-hosiery-mills.
[15] Wanda Johnson, Lynn Hulan, and Rod Pewitt, "National Register Nomination for Dortch Stove Works," 8.

machinery and introduced a "Royal Line" of stoves that improved revenue for the company. Over its tenure, Dortch Stove Works would be a major employer in the region. It employed 300 workers who were required to live locally and had a 5,500-weekly payroll.[16] The impact of this scale of industry on the community around it was immense and would continue to boost commerce in the area well into the 1950s.

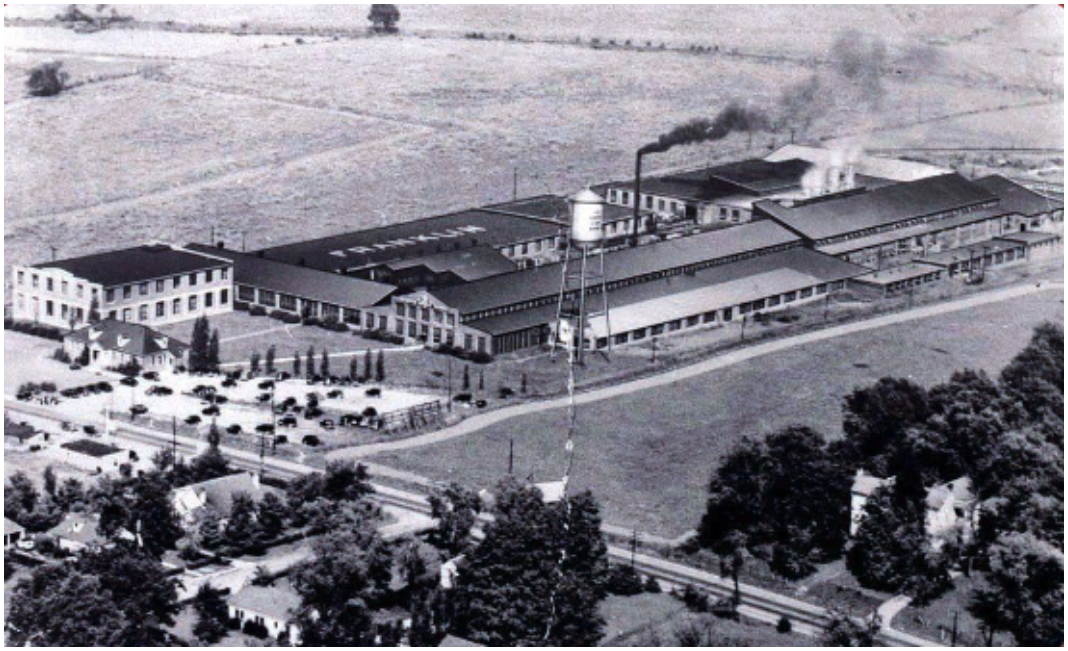

Figure 1. *Aerial Image of the Dortch Stove Works Manufacturing Plant*; The Factory at Franklin, Photo, accessed 2024, https://factoryatfranklin.com/.

Over the next fifty years the plant would come under new management twice. In 1955, Dortch Stove Works sold the plant to Magic Chef, Inc., which continued stove production while expanding into other areas, such as manufacturing Coca-Cola signage molds.[17] However, Magic Chef was successful for less than ten years because, in 1962, Jamison Bedding Company purchased the complex. They experience success at the factory. They produced furniture and used the site for their corporate offices until 1991 when the plant was abandoned and left in

[16] Wanda Johnson, Lynn Hulan, and Rod Pewitt, "National Register Nomination for Dortch Stove Works," 9.
[17] Wanda Johnson, Lynn Hulan, and Rod Pewitt, "National Register Nomination for Dortch Stove Works,"10.

disrepair.[18] In 1995, the factory got its first push into the modern practice of adaptive rescues when the city first began its revitalization by removing debris and conducting structural stabilization. This initial planning paved the way for the current community and entertainment hub it is today.

May Hosiery Mills

Like the Franklin Factory, the May Hosiery Mills building has a rich history and influential ties to local commerce and industrial growth. Originally named the Rock Island Hosiery Mill, the mill was established in 1908 in the Wedgewood-Houston neighborhood. That same year, Jacob May, a German immigrant and textile salesman, purchased and renamed the business. May came to Nashville from New Hampshire to start a hosiery shop inside the state prison that employed 50 inmate workers and paid 50 cents a day.[19] After completing his contract with the state prison, he moved into the Wedgewood-Houston site and began constructing the distinctive six-building brick complex. The building features unique curved corners and black-framed windows and was completed in 1922. The facility included a modern and innovative production system, including spaces for specialized tasks like knitting, looping, dyeing, inspecting, and pairing socks.[20]

May Hosiery produced over a million socks weekly at the height of production. To facilitate this boom in production, the mill embraced modern practices, including using knitting machines for efficiency and introducing air conditioning to improve working conditions (See

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[18] Wanda Johnson, Lynn Hulan, and Rod Pewitt, "National Register Nomination for Dortch Stove Works,"10.

[19] Sandy Mazza, "Once Nashville's Biggest Business, the Sock Mill That Clothed Astronauts and Fought Nazis Is Transforming," The Tennessean, May 27, 2019, https://www.tennessean.com/story/money/2019/05/27/may-hosiery-mill-nashville-sock-factory-readies-tech-future/3692995002/.

[20] "May Hosiery Mills: The Oldest Sock Mill in the South," Wedgewood Village, 2022, https://welcometowedgewood.com/places/may-hosiery-mills.

Figure 2). It also helped to boost workers' quality of life since it could not pay a competitive wage by selling hot lunches for 25 cents, putting in a beauty parlor, barbershop, and health club. Over its first ten years, May Hosiery became the country's largest children's sock manufacturer through partnerships with Disney, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America, Montgomery Ward, and Sears, helping cement its reputation as an industry leader during the Great Depression.[21]

Figure 2. *Workers at May Hosiery Mill when it was Operating*; Sandy Mazza and Tennessee Secretary of State, Photo, 2019, https://www.tennessean.com/story/money/2019/05/27/may-hosiery-mill-nashville-sock-factory-readies-tech-future/3692995002/.

During WWII, the mill continued its reputation as a major production leader. The mill shifted production to support the U.S. military by manufacturing uniforms, mortar fuses, and airplane parts under the Federal Defense Production Act.[22] The May family also used their

[21] Sandy Mazza, "Once Nashville's Biggest Business, the Sock Mill That Clothed Astronauts and Fought Nazis Is Transforming," The Tennessean, May 27, 2019.
[22] "May Hosiery Mills: The Oldest Sock Mill in the South," Wedgewood Village, 2022.

resources to help rescue Jews from Germany. The mill's co-president, Mortimer May, undertook extraordinary efforts to rescue fellow Jews from the horrors of the Nazi regime. In an article in the Tennessean, former mill executive and grandson of founder Jacob May, Jack May, recalls that "Mortimer made six to eight trips to Europe and signed for many, many people," The family estimates that his efforts saved between 230 and 280 individuals, providing them with opportunities to start fresh by employing them at the mill.[23] Through their actions, the May family contributed to the survival of hundreds and demonstrated remarkable humanitarianism and resourcefulness during one of history's darkest chapters.

After the war, May Hosiery Mills continued its national impact through socks. In the 1960s and 1970s, the mill produced all the socks worn by the astronauts on the Apollo space missions, including those worn by Neil Armstrong during the moon landing. Jack May, in the same article, commented on this new industry; "They wanted, for the space program, an all-cotton sock with no synthetics for the astronauts to go to the moon. They did not want the static electricity."[24] By the 1980s, however, changes in the textile industry and cheaper global competition pushed the May family to sell the business to Renfro Corporation. By 1983, the May family shut down the mill. The site was left vacant and susceptible to deterioration until 2014 when AJ Capital Partners purchased the complex with hopes of preserving the site's historical value while bringing it to serve a more modern function.

Adaptive Reuse Processes

The Factory at Franklin

[23] Sandy Mazza, “Once Nashville’s Biggest Business, the Sock Mill That Clothed Astronauts and Fought Nazis Is Transforming,” The Tennessean, May 27, 2019.
[24] Sandy Mazza, “Once Nashville’s Biggest Business, the Sock Mill That Clothed Astronauts and Fought Nazis Is Transforming,” The Tennessean, May 27, 2019.

The adaptive reuse project at The Factory at Franklin is a great example of how a historic industrial site can be transformed into a vibrant community hub while retaining its architectural character and historical significance. The Factory's initial adaptive reuse efforts began in 1995 when Calvin Lehew, a local businessman, obtained preservation tax credits to stabilize the site and adapt it for modern use.[25] Lehew retained the building's distinctive horseshoe layout, exposed brick walls, and large factory windows, showcasing the industrial aesthetic that defines the site (See Figure. 3).[26] As a mixed-use space, The Factory became home to boutique shops, restaurants, art galleries, and event venues, creating a unique experience that integrated Franklin's historical roots with contemporary community needs.[27]

Figure 3. *Historical industrial elements retained by developers of the Factory at Franklin;* Shelby Walker, personal photo, November 30, 2024.

[25] Holladay Properties, "Holladay Plans Redevelopment, Revitalization in Franklin, TN," Holladay Properties, October 2021.
[26] For more reference photos from both sites see Appendix A.
[27] Centric Architecture, "The Factory at Franklin Adaptive Reuse: Reimagined," Centric Architecture, 2021.

The Factory's redevelopment took a significant leap forward in 2021 when Holladay Properties acquired the site with a $56 million revitalization plan. This ambitious project sought to enhance its role as a community destination. Developers emphasized creating a "little city," incorporating courtyards, walkways, and open spaces to foster connections between visitors and the site's architecture.[28] The Factory's current iteration includes a mix of retail, dining, event spaces, creative workspaces, and offices. The site has also hosted events ranging from farmers' markets to concerts, reinforcing its role as a key social gathering point.[29] The renovation also included significant structural updates to ensure safety and functionality while maintaining the building's historical integrity.

One of the most notable aspects of the adaptive reuse project is its careful attention to preserving the original industrial features. Elements like the original steel-framed windows and exposed beams have been integrated into modern designs, creating a space that feels simultaneously historical and contemporary (See Fig 4). These details enhance the aesthetic appeal and serve as a tangible link to the building's manufacturing past by maintaining much of the original structure. The project exemplifies how historic preservation can align with sustainability goals, a crucial consideration in modern urban planning.

[28] Holladay Properties, “Holladay Plans Redevelopment, Revitalization in Franklin, TN,” Holladay Properties, October 2021.
[29] Holladay Properties, “Holladay Plans Redevelopment, Revitalization in Franklin, TN,” Holladay Properties, October 2021.

Figure 4. *Main Atrium at the Factory at Franklin*; Shelby Walker, personal photo, November 30, 24.

Despite its successes, the project has faced challenges that are common to adaptive reuse efforts. Balancing modern safety and accessibility standards with preserving historical features required creative solutions. Developers needed to ensure the site's new functionality would meet contemporary community needs without compromising its historical essence. The adaptive reuse of The Factory at Franklin demonstrates how thoughtful redevelopment can honor the past while creating a vibrant future. By retaining its architectural identity and integrating modern functionality, the project has redefined the role of industrial heritage in a contemporary context.

May Hosiery Mills

The adaptive reuse project at the May Hosiery Mills Building in Nashville showcases how industrial heritage can be transformed into a modern economic hub while retaining its historical elements. Constructed in 1922, with its distinct six-building complex featuring curved

brick facades and large industrial windows, the mill played a pivotal role in Nashville's industrial economy. The adaptive reuse project by AJ Capital Partners, which began in 2014, prioritized retaining these historical features while introducing modern design elements that support its new role as a creative and collaborative space.[30] These historical architectural elements were critical to the building's original function, and AJs has carefully preserved its redevelopment (See Fig. 5).

Figure 5. *Curved Brick Corners of Primary May Hosiery Mills Building*; Shelby Walker, personal photo, December 5, 2024.

[30] "May Hosiery Mills," AJ Capital Partners, 2015, https://www.ajcpt.com/portfolio/directory/may-hosiery-mills.

A central focus of the project was to create a space that could support Nashville's growing creative economy. The building now houses office spaces, event venues, and cultural hubs, including Soho House Nashville, a private club and hotel.[31] These modern uses complement the building's industrial aesthetic, with exposed brick walls, and steel-framed windows that mirror its manufacturing past while meeting contemporary demands for functionality and style (See Fig. 6). Sustainability was another key component of the May Hosiery Mills redevelopment. Integrating energy-efficient systems and thoughtful design showcases the project's commitment to sustainability, ensuring that the building remains environmentally responsible and economically sound.

Figure 6. *Putting Course Nestled in the Center of the Restored May Hosiery Mills Complex*; Shelby Walker, personal photo, December 5, 2024.

[31] Carol Smith, "May Hosiery Mills Property Manager Talks History in Wedgewood-Houston," AJ Capital Partners (Nashville Business Journal, 2024).

Economic revitalization also played a significant role in the adaptive reuse strategy. The May Hosiery Mills Building's redevelopment has redefined its place in the Wedgewood-Houston neighborhood, attracting businesses, events, and visitors and contributing to its cultural and financial growth. This transformation is significant given the building's legacy as a major employer in Nashville's past. By creating a multifunctional space, the project extends that legacy into the present, providing new opportunities for creativity and economic activity.[32]

The adaptive reuse of the May Hosiery Mills Building demonstrates how industrial spaces can be repurposed to serve modern communities while celebrating their historical significance. The project has created a functional and historic space by preserving its architectural features and integrating contemporary uses. It stands as a testament to the potential of adaptive reuse to transform buildings and neighborhoods, ensuring that the legacy of industrial heritage continues contributing to the urban landscape.

Comparative Analysis

The Factory at Franklin and the May Hosiery Mills Building offer two great case studies on the potential of adaptive reuse projects. The two projects, despite having similar missions, to preserve the historic architectural elements and charm and bring each complex into the 21st century by bringing in modern needs and businesses, serve two different functions and people groups. The Factory is a community hub; the May Hosiery Mill is an industry and business sanctuary. Hands-on fieldwork at both complexes offers insights into the different results of adaptive reuse projects and just how much success each project has reached.

My time at the Factory in Franklin was vibrant and full of activity. It is a community and cultural hub in every way. Not only is the complex beautifully restored, but it perfectly blends

[32] Laura Faber, "May Hosiery Mills," Tennessee Crossroads, 2022, https://tennesseecrossroads.org/may-hosiery-mills/.

the new with the old. Everywhere you turn, there is another historical element or space (See Fig. 7). The interior of the space is eye-catching. Families were roaming through the halls of stores, restaurants, and bars. The Factory gets thousands of visitors a week and they have planned for them. Outside the complex are massive parking lots that are often filled to the max. It is easy to see the appeal of making this site a destination. This site is at the heart of the community, and they take that role seriously.

Figure 7. *Large industrial door incorporated with modern business advertising and building elements*; Shelby Walker, personal photo, November 30, 2024.

The experience at May Hosiery Mills, while being just as historically beautiful, has a different mission and feel than the Factory. Instead of a family and community destination for leisure, the Mill is mostly a restricted office space. When I visited, substantial construction was

being done around and in parts of the complex. It was not easy to navigate and not open for exploring inside. The entrances were locked with keypads, and the lots were restricted for cars of company employees, meaning visitors had to navigate narrow streets to find legal parking. May Hosiery seems like a corporate business paradise (See Figure 8). Catering its design and marketing to business rather than the community. For example, AJ Capital Partners, the firm in charge of the revitalization project, moved into one of the site's spaces as one of its corporate offices. Also differing between the two was its preservation tactics. Unlike the Factory, which was committed to blending the modern with the historical both on the exterior plans and interior, the Mill project only preserved the exterior historical components and gutted the interiors in favor of modern design. The May Hosiery Mills building is a great example of how pre-existing structures can compete with today's modern corporate campus while creating unique work environments and business opportunities.

Figure 8: *Walkway at the May Hosiery Mills Complex with a Small Coffee Shop with Keypad Entry*; Shelby Walker, personal photo, December 5, 2024.

Comparing the adaptive reuse strategies of the Factory at Franklin and the May Hosiery Mills Building in Nashville offers two great examples of two different uses for industrial heritage. On the one hand, the Factory has prioritized community engagement, blending the historic with the modern and promoting high-traffic spaces. On the other hand, the Mills project prioritized corporate spaces, historic exteriors, and exclusive low-traffic spaces. Both are correct in their design and purpose; they serve two different audiences and serve two different causes.

Adaptive reuse is not a one-size-fits-all idea. At its heart, it promotes historic preservation, sustainability, and economic growth; the result is adaptable.

Conclusion

Adaptive reuse is more than a practical approach to preserving historical structures; it is a powerful intersection of architectural innovation, sustainability, and cultural heritage. Through the revitalization observed at The Factory in Franklin and the May Hosiery Mills Building in Nashville, this paper has demonstrated how industrial relics can be repurposed to meet the demands of contemporary society while honoring their past. These projects illustrate the ability of adaptive reuse to retain the essence of a building's history while creating functional, economically viable, and environmentally responsible spaces.[33]

At the heart of these projects is preserving existing energy and materials, a critical consideration in the sustainability movement. Developers reduce environmental impact and conserve resources by reusing existing structures rather than demolishing and rebuilding them. The Factory's integration of open public spaces and preserved industrial features showcases how adaptive reuse can create vibrant community hubs while maintaining architectural integrity. Similarly, the May Hosiery Mills Building demonstrates how historical character can coexist with functionality, fostering a creative economy in Nashville.

Comparing these two adaptive reuse projects in the middle Tennessee area highlights the range of opportunities possible. One is community, and the other is corporate-focused; both are valuable additions to the urban landscapes they inhabit. Looking ahead, adaptive reuse offers a model for rethinking the relationship between the built environment and the communities it serves. This practice transforms historical spaces into community assets that contribute to

[33] Matteo Robiglio, "The Adaptive Reuse Toolkit: How Cities Can Turn Their Industrial Legacy into Infrastructure for Innovation and Growth." (German Marshall Fund of the United States, 2016), 5.

identity, sustainability, and innovation by linking the past to the future. As The Factory and May Hosiery Mills exemplified, adaptive reuse redefines heritage as a dynamic resource, ensuring that the story of these buildings continues to evolve in meaningful and impactful ways.

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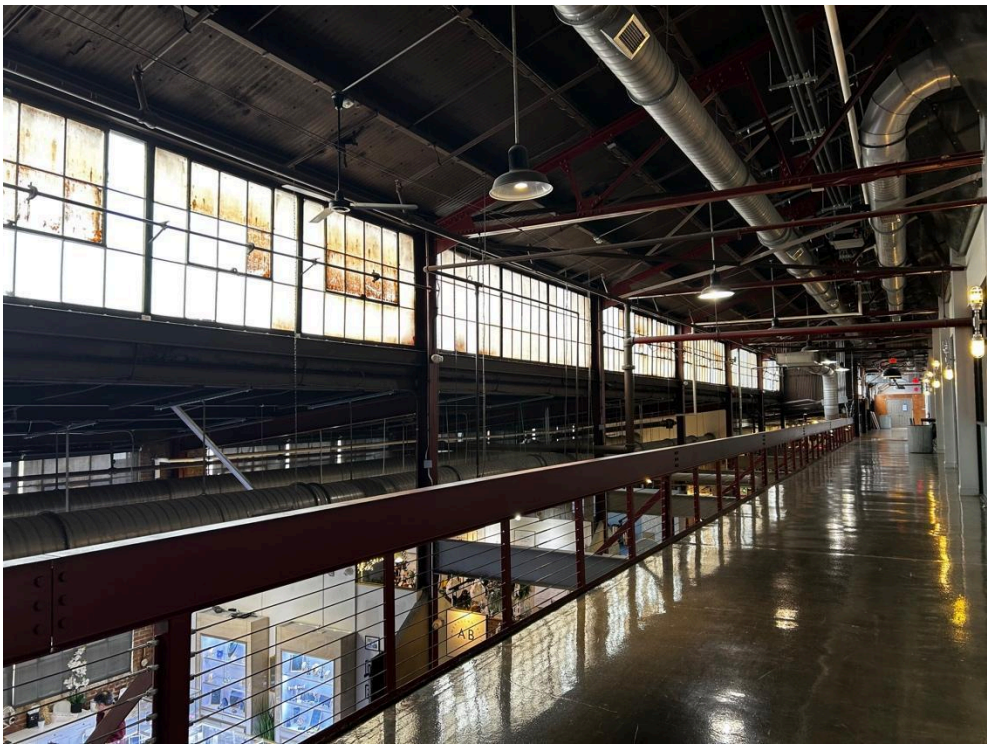
Appendix:

The Factory at Franklin

Stained glass window with historic water tower logo

Curved brick work and industrial elements

Inside of One of the Corridors of Building 11

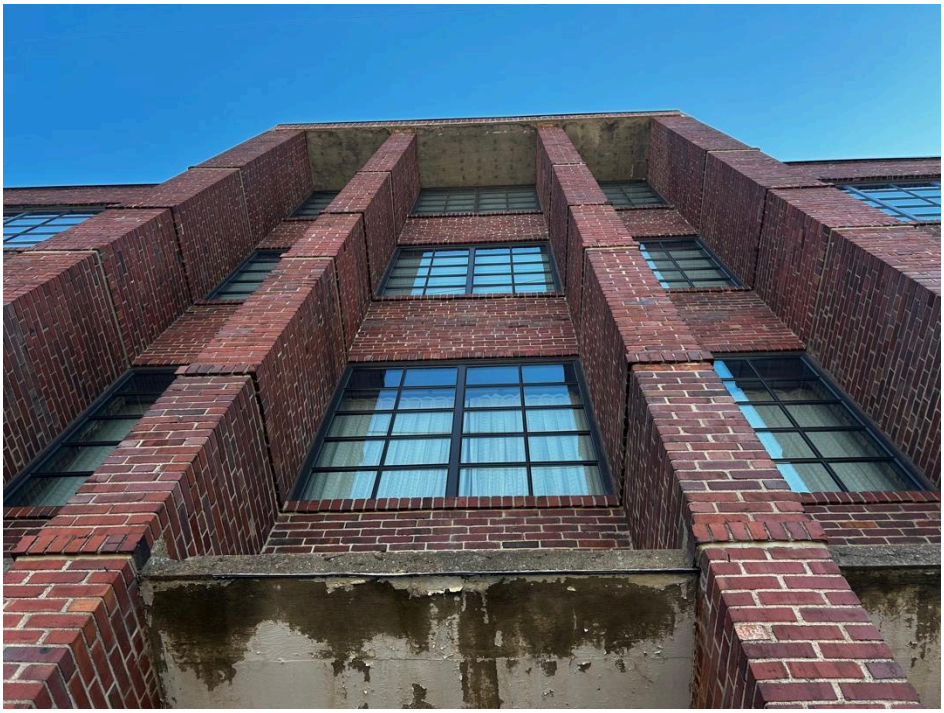


Upstairs View of Retained Industrial Elements in Building 11

May Hosiery Mills Building

Original May Hosiery Mills Building

Retained Metal Placard



Vertical View of the Front of the Original May Hosiery Mills Building

New Logo for Wedgewood Village Business Park that Incorporates Historical Use of Complex