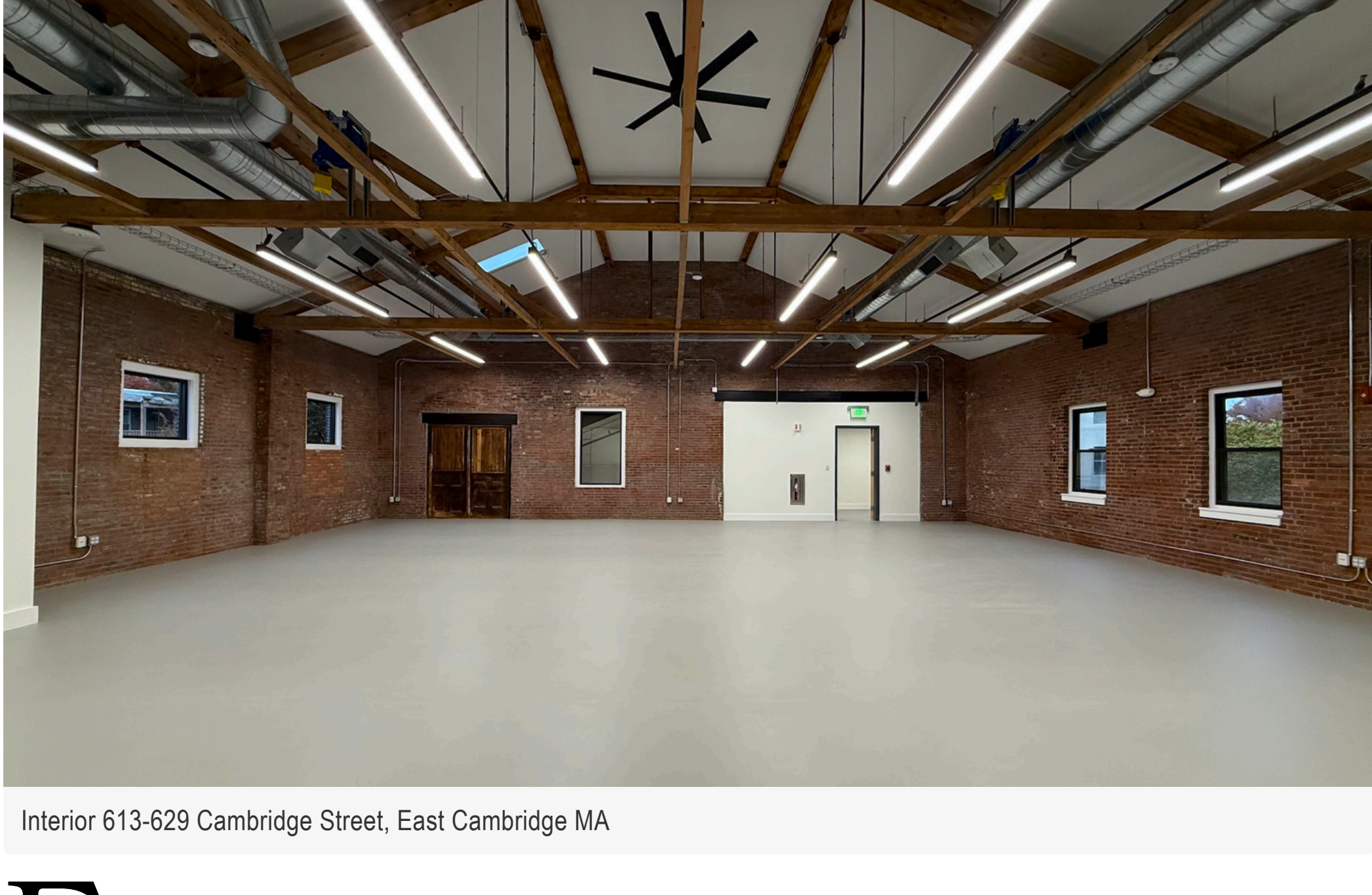


New Life for ‘Fresh Killed’ Site; Riverside Revitalizes Landmark

December 12, 2025 — By Joe Clements



Interior 613-629 Cambridge Street, East Cambridge MA

EAST CAMBRIDGE —This town’s ‘Live Poultry, Fresh Killed’ sign known for brusquely cutting to the quick has left the building, though not too far away; the six-foot shingle adorning 613-629 Cambridge St. for decades inspiring tote bags and similar merch now hawked by an East Cambridge business association who bought LPFK after

Riverside Properties paid \$5 million for its host block in spring 2021, that deal prompting displaced tenant Mayflower Poultry Co. to auction its sign and merchandising rights, the summer 2021 gavel won by the East Cambridge Business Association intent on finding a visible venue to display the talisman, one informed observer indicating prospective sites are still being evaluated.

“We look forward to it,” Riverside President Brett H. Levy tells Real Reporter of the day the sign does find a forever home in the neighborhood where it became a full-fledged signpost and adored anomaly. Levy recalls attending the auction where Riverside and others helped fund backers after he first planned to bid on it, doing so with preservation in mind, recounts the Bay State native, well aware of the sign’s celebrity prior to acquisition of the multi-building property.



Says Levy: “We were excited, as everyone was, when the coalition outbid aggressive competition that drove pricing to \$14,500 and another \$8,000 for the merchandising rights, sale of the caps, t-shirts etc., being used to finance the planned relocation, which is pondering suitable locations. The business association did not respond to inquiries as of press deadline.



Brett H. Levy

There is no waiting any more on the future for the sign’s erstwhile stomping grounds, however, with Riverside recently announcing completion of the “core and shell” overhaul sweetened by inking Robotics and AI Institute ahead of that milestone, the anchor tenant a Cambridge group needing R&D fitup leasing all but 1,000 square feet of the 17,500-square-foot space Mayflower had plucked bucks from since 1935 until current President John Gould joined other food-related businesses in Boston’s Newmarket District about five miles south from the bright lights and fortune he enjoyed beginning in 1996

acquiring Mayflower from the Silver family who held onto the real estate when bought out by Gould, the Silvers kin transferring title to Riverside the first week of May 2021 backed by \$5.25 million in financing from the Institution for Savings in Newburyport and its vicinity.



613-629 Cambridge Street, East Cambridge MA

Core and shell work on the restoration commenced in January 2023, with Riverside serving as developer and construction manager, guiding a crew including Stack + Co. as general contractor;

Peter Quinn Architects its Architect of Record and

RMF Engineer of Record. Trilogy Law attorney Sarah Rhatigan Esq. handled permitting, while

Lincoln Property Co. Senior VP Christopher Scott secured Robotics and AI Institute as exclusive agent for Riverside.

“We are thrilled to have partnered with a leading R&D company who shared our vision for a flexible space in a prime location near their headquarters in Kendall Square and the vibrant mix of restaurants, bars and shops in East Cambridge,” Levy states, adding to Real Reporter: “We could not have been happier with how the leasing turned out.”



Christopher Scott



Sarah Rhatigan



Peter Quinn

Scott and other parties assisting on lease-up were unavailable for comment, but Riverside offers praise to the variant disciplines for keeping the process moving. “We had a great team who worked hard to get things done under challenging conditions,” recounts Levy, marveling at roping in such a

prized user at a time when lab space has never been more plentiful, even in the country’s oldest and most recognized life sciences submarket. “It was huge for us,” he says, lauding Scott for “pounding the pavement” against fierce competition for such an up-and-coming group.

“There were some things we could not control along the way that set us back, but we were able to adapt when we needed to and just kept going and everything worked out in the end,” with the lease deal signed quickly enough RAI had a chance to interject its own final touches better suited for its needs.

“Riverside’s vision for redeveloping 613-629 Cambridge Street was to create highly flexible R&D space for locally founded companies with teams in and around Kendall Square/MIT,” states Levy.

With parts of the property on the National Register of Historic Places, Riverside did have to consult with Cambridge’s historic commission and get Board of Zoning Appeals approvals. Experienced in restoration, Riverside was prepared to address permitting and other oversight; in one case the historic commission was called to see whether a decaying section could be preserved, the determination being it was too deteriorated. Historically, most of the attention was adhering to standards in a part over 150 years old which did get “substantial” TLC keeping its heritage intact.

Levy relays the Covid conundrum was manageable and stresses community input from business leaders and preservationists “was really helpful” in meeting Riverside’s aim to keeping historical leanings and desire to have a given project’s impact extend beyond the building’s internal rent roll. One request was to craft street-side retail to enliven the block and entice further foot traffic, and Levy says the firm eagerly agreed, that piece the only part not taken by Robotics and AI Institute.

“We listen and learn from (community members) . . . because we have similar goals in mind,” says Levy, both inside and outside a given holding. “We always want to contribute to the economic viability and well-being of the entire area we are involved in. . . and here it made sense to do what the community requested,” adding he is “very hopeful” the space will be leased and enhance project income.

When it comes to addressing trouble, Riverside has a solid foundation, the operation launched in 1992 helping landlords and financial groups manage owned properties troubled from the Savings & Loan crisis that exploded regionally in the 1990s. Co-founders Edward Bell and the late Mark Levy, Brett Levy’s father who passed in 2019, later expanded services when the crisis ebbed but Brett Levy agrees possessing a problem-solving approach plays useful in its development and investment business which have grown since he arrived in 2010. “You have to look at things very closely,” he says.

The development arm is diverse—past ventures include Weymouth industrial and presently the company is retrofitting a Needham office building into which its headquarters will be relocated.

The East Cambridge opportunity became a chance to spotlight its various disciplines with a multitude of property types on less than a half-acre, elements that included a carriage house and faceless facade where the 1,000-sf retail slot is located. The biggest and most historic portion is the 1869 structure that was a car barn for horse-drawn trolleys of the day with both the animals and the trolleys stored in the structure and other elements such as bales of hay upstairs for the horses. Besides carefully restoring the facade, the team took care to preserve an upstairs part that had no columns supporting the space.

“It is really impressive,” Levy recounts of the engineering required to build the structure and the vast open space it affords. “We paid a lot of attention on making sure we (accurately preserved) that part,” he outlines.

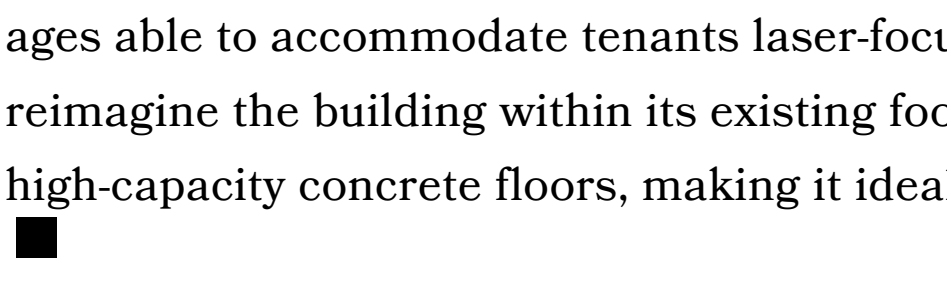
As to completing the Cambridge Street undertaking, Levy says the firm was able to implement its concept “with very few surprises” one might expect from such old buildings. “We have seen much worse,” recounts Levy.

During Brett Levy’s tenure, the firm has done 15 different major projects, the commercial portion topping 650,000 sf. “We do see a lot of opportunities to expand,” Brett Levy says of a hoped-for improved second-half to the 2020s even while reflecting on the most recent endeavor that required more than its share of patience, but more of the external variety as opposed to tackling gremlins hidden in the buildings themselves.

As indicated, the restoration began in January 2023, some 18 months after buying the block, but the delay was not internal or from the approval process that included blessings from the Board or Appeals and Cambridge Historic Commission. Just as work was commencing, a city council bid was made to ban future laboratory construction or conversions across Cambridge, forcing Riverside to hold off the project start by over six months. “It was pretty scary,” Levy recounts on a plan he says was initiated by a few councilors who ultimately were shot down, critics noting the incredible impact it would have on Cambridge staying above an increasing lineup of life sciences clusters across the land. Interestingly, Levy notes, his space was not even being occupied by a lab doing potentially dangerous pathogen research, but rather the Roomba/dancing dog technologies of which Boston is fast becoming known for, as well as in other markets.

Problem resolved and project complete, Levy chose to take the high road on the logic which would seem akin to Hershey Town banning candy production or Ipswich outlawing fried clams. Levy focused more on the end results that brought out the best in buildings constructed for the ages able to accommodate tenants laser-focused on the future. “We saw a unique opportunity to reimagine the building within its existing footprint by maximizing the use of its tall ceilings and high-capacity concrete floors, making it ideal for the use of large and heavy equipment,” says Levy.

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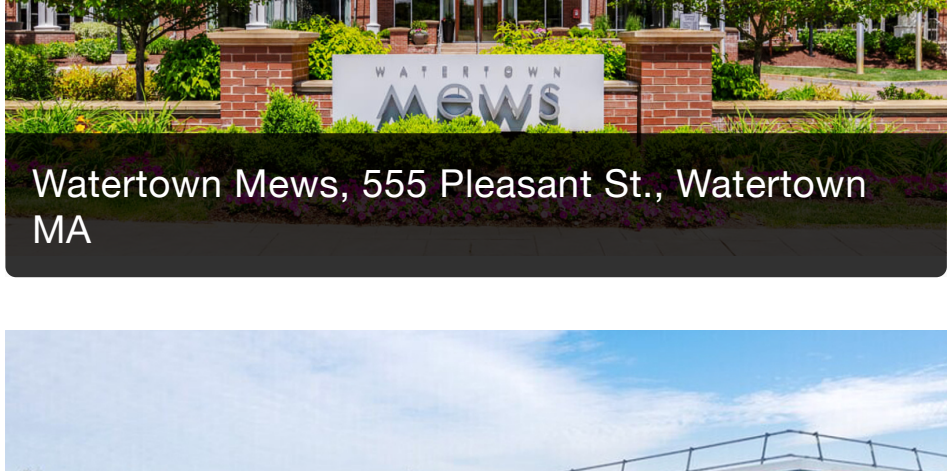
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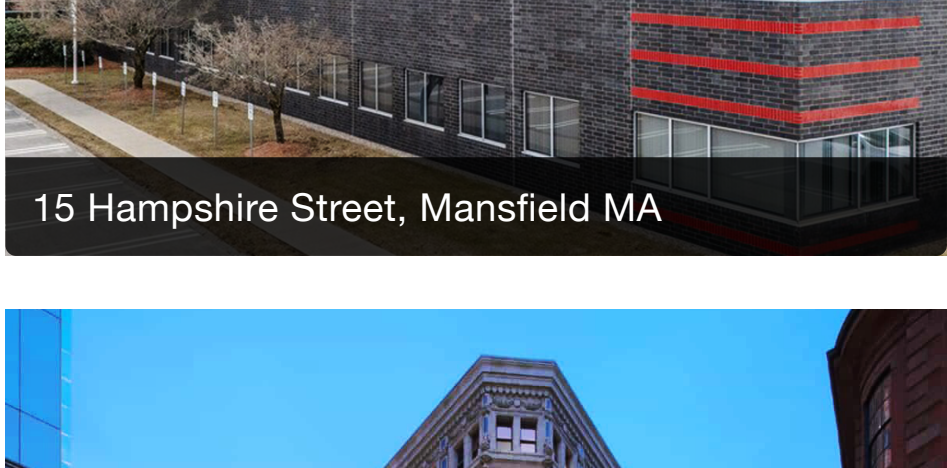
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