



## **Earl Company Factory**

The Earl Company Factory, located at 34 Tremaine Street in downtown Leominster, was constructed in 1899 as a comb factory and served in industrial and manufacturing uses for over 100 years. The building's production history reflects the evolution of Leominster's plastics industry, with a wide range of products made and sold, from horn and celluloid combs to clerical collars and cuffs. Prior to Cougar Capital Management's acquisition, the building had sat vacant for over a decade after the departure of its final manufacturing tenant. The building had extensive condition issues including deterioration of windows, roofing, masonry foundation walls, and the roof structure. The exterior brick walls of the factory's Power House were failing, and the building's original wood clapboard siding was obscured by asbestos siding, posing environmental and health hazards.

The successful rehabilitation of the building by Cougar Capital Management to house 17 new residential units preserved and enhanced this significant building, contributing to on-going revitalization efforts in Leominster's downtown area. The rehabilitation project restored the historic appearance of the building's exterior, installing new historic replica windows, replacing non-historic asbestos siding with wood clapboard siding, and rebuilding the brick walls of the Power House, preventing the loss of this important element of the factory. At the interior, all new building systems were sensitively inserted and the roof structure reinforced with new structural steel. New residential units were constructed while maintaining the property's historic industrial character. The Earl Company Factory project exemplifies the ways in which underutilized historic buildings across the Commonwealth can be repurposed to provide critically needed new housing.