



Architect Jack Pyburn of firm Lord Aeck Sargent shows city council members exposed beams and girders in high ceilings of the Jones Building's second floor. / Staff-Margaret Waage

# RENOVATION

## Jones Building presents future possibilities

By Margaret Waage

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**CANTON** — City council members toured downtown's historic Jones Building last week to see cleanup work in progress since the project began last October. Personnel from the Garbutt Construction Co. and from the architectural firm Lord Aeck Sargent took officials through the expanse of space that is now awaiting a revival of purpose.

The goal was to redevelop the building in two phases, first addressing the building's structure and secondly, an operational renovation. The first phase included replacing the roof, cleaning the facade, repairing and/or replacing windows, and masonry and keeping historic aspects of the commercial storefront design intact. Dropped ceilings and non-load bearing interior walls were removed, exposing

joists and about 45 beams.

The building located at 130 E. Main Street first opened its doors as Jones Mercantile in 1879 and was a general goods store selling everything from hardware, sundries, food, furniture, toys and caskets. Jones Mercantile accepted mill currency and store credit making necessity shopping convenient for workers.

Architect Jack Pyburn previously identified four separate additions/renovations that were made to the building's original footprint over time that included second and third floor additions in 1921, a store renovation in the 1950s and an exterior aluminum and stucco facade added in 1973.

Cherokee County purchased the building in the late 1980s and used it for administrative office space. In January 2017, the city of Canton took ownership of the facility from Cherokee County as part of

an asset swap through the consolidation of fire services.

The basement of the building has approximately 14,350 square feet, the second level 14,500 square feet, and the upper level 13,500 square feet. The entire project was estimated to cost \$2.2 million and was paid by Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax money, according to Billy Peppers, City Manager. For the current Phase 1, scope is averaging \$70 per square foot at \$2.9 million based on 42,900 square feet according to LAS.

The group reviewed development possibilities and costs for the Jones Building's next phase now that it is empty. Julie Arnold of LAS presented three comparable projects: Ennis Hall at Georgia, Tifton City Hall, and Old First National Bank with final costs to illustrate potential options for the



**Above:** Council member Bill Grant, left, looks at exposed ceilings in the basement level of an interior tour of the Jones Building. **Below:** Jones Building original windows were taken offsite for lead paint removal and reinstalled. / Staff-Margaret Waage



# BUILDING

**From A1**

Jones Building. Any choice or combination of residential, office, assembly event space, arts, museum, retail or educational/academic space would determine price structures according to use. Reinforcement of thicker beams, girders and columns would be required, for example, if the third floor became a dance venue versus if it were used for condominiums.

Additional remedial work is needed, after discovering some wood floors were covered with tiling where black mastic (containing asbestos) was used as an adhesive. Removing that wood is recommended as opposed to sanding it. There were sections of splined flooring visible as a sub floor that

looked in solid condition. The street level has some punched openings that will need steel reinforcements estimated at \$12,000 to \$15,000 to repair. The current Phase 1 scope is averaging \$70 per square foot based on 42,900 square feet, and the Phase 2 structural costs were approximated at \$540,000.

Pyburn suggested applying for Historic Preservation tax credits which could offset some of the costs. The city would require more research on this process, and officials expressed interest, particularly if the city proceeded with development on its own versus partnering with developers. Chief Financial Officer Nathan Ingram said if the city were solely paying for Phase II, to the estimated costs of \$6 million, it would require the city to find additional funding.

Councilmember Jack Goodman said feedback he's heard is there isn't anything to do in Canton and the development of this main downtown historic building represents an opportunity to bring people into Canton.

Council members have mixed ideas as to the vision for the building. Goodwin and Nick Estes agreed surveying council for potential uses and comparing it to community feedback would help to identify what the best use for the building might be. Councilmember Bill Grant said that the main goal was to save the building, and that has been accomplished. With so many considerations, Estes said the city would have to structure the decision making process. Officials are exploring all options before Phase 1 is expected to be completed by July.