



The Resurrection of Whiskey Row: SALVAGE

A year ago, we ran the first in a series of exclusive photo essays chronicling the transformation of Whiskey Row, that collection of former bourbon warehouses on Main Street, between First and Second, that dates to the late 1800s. We've shown you deterioration (August 2012) and stabilization (December 2012) and introduced you to several members of the construction crew (February 2013). In part four of the series, we show you some of the stuff workers have pulled out of the buildings.

Photos by Ted Tarquinio



“**N**ever thought I’d see the day when somebody would pay to store rotten wood. Some of it won’t even take a nail anymore,” says Jackie Davis, the 54-year-old in charge of this 20,000-square-foot warehouse off East Woodlawn Avenue not far from the airport. Davis works for a commercial relocation company (it helps law firms switch offices, for example), and Honey Baked Ham-branded stand-up coolers and weightlifting equipment also occupy space in this structure with sky-high ceilings. It’s one of the sites — in addition to a lot not far from here, and Woodland Farm in Goshen — that stores materials saved from Whiskey Row. Giant door frames, leaded glass, windows with counterweights, cast iron, some 35,000 bricks. “Guess that makes it worth storing, if you can refurbish it,” Davis says. “Especially the old hardware. Pretty sure some of those nails are 200 years old.”

Ron Carmicle, who has been overseeing the resuscitation of Whiskey Row, says, “Two years ago, we walked into those buildings and said, ‘Holy (expletive).’ We didn’t know what we’d be able to save. We’ve salvaged everything we could inside the buildings and taken out everything else we could save.”

21c-ers Laura Lee Brown and husband Steve Wilson are among the investors who, in 2011, purchased 111 to 119 W. Main St. from developer Todd Blue for \$4.85 million. At Brown and Wilson’s Woodland Farm, Tony Harp, the construction manager on these 1,200 acres, leads our photographer and me down a windy and wooded narrow road to a secluded “pile of logs” hidden by a massive blue tarpaulin. I ask Harp how many pounds of poplar and pine we’re looking at. “You mean *tons*?” he asks. “Thousands of board feet, probably easily 20 tons of wood. They used to be floor joists, beams. The pieces that aren’t rotted are still hard as a rock.”

Carmicle says many of these materials would need to be used for aesthetic, rather than structural, purposes. Much of the materials — from the cast iron to the sheet metal — would need to be restored to its original condition, the lumber re-milled. “Everything is here so it could be used in a to-be-determined redevelopment plan,” Carmicle says. “There’s nothing glamorous about this. It’s just the magnitude. Whatever the next phase for these buildings, the owners are making sure there’s an opportunity to use materials from the period. If somebody wants to use it, we’ve got it.”

— Josh Moss



