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## Special master seeks to remove mills at 258 Pine St.



The property at 258 Pine St. (Breeze photo by Ethan Shorey)

### Property near future train station would then be marketed

By **ETHAN SHOREY**, Valley Breeze Managing Editor

PAWTUCKET – The court-appointed special master charged with defining the future for the burned-out mill property near a coming new commuter rail station has outlined steps he plans to take with the city.

Attorney John Dorsey, appointed interim special master in July, noted in his Aug. 27 interim report on the property at 258 Pine St., formerly occupied by Robert's Chemical Co. and other businesses, that its ownership history is a complicated one.

Dorsey said he agrees with city officials that the property presents an imminent danger to public health, particularly as squatters and trespassers make their way into unsecured areas. He said he's taking steps to re-secure the property as a deterrent. He said the property is in a "severe level of damage and disrepair."

Two mill buildings on the property total approximately 99,206 square feet of space. There are also remnants of paved parking and a rail spur on the property damaged badly by fire last October.

At a minimum, says Dorsey, the waste and debris left by the earlier fire must be removed immediately and remaining buildings demolished. The city has obtained a judgment to enforce demolition of the property, he

noted in his report.



Dorsey said he's also communicating with the Pawtucket Redevelopment Agency to seek funding for the demolition and clearing of debris, working also with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, and he's also working on developing marketing materials to present the opportunity to acquire the property after its buildings are removed.

Wil Arboleda, spokesman for Mayor Donald Grebien, said this week that the property remains a public safety hazard for residents. Dorsey, previously appointed interim special master, was made the permanent special master last week.

"We will continue to go through the court proceedings in order to ensure that the property is cleaned up, as has been long overdue, and ultimately demolished as it is clear danger to abutting properties," he said.

He noted that the special master intends to work with the city to demolish and market the unused property for future development. Any bids for work will be presented to the court.

City officials said in July that the cause of a fire at the mill last October was never determined. There was originally evidence of a possible meth lab in the building. Two people were arrested on outstanding bench warrants after the fire, one after he caught on fire himself and was found near the scene.

The mill at 258 Pine St. is within a stone's throw of the former Union Wadding Mill, which burned to the ground in a massive arson fire back in 2010.

The Pine Street mill property is located within a block of The Guild brewery.

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