

Request for Proposals: Redevelopment of the Marble Block, Biddeford Maine

Marble Block Redevelopment Corp. (MBRC), in conjunction with its partners Genesis Community Loan Fund and Engine, is interested in engaging a Development Partner (Partner) to assist in the redesign and development of the Marble Block, a historic mixed-use building located at 129 Main Street.

BACKGROUND: MBRC was formed for the purpose of redeveloping the Marble Block Building in Biddeford, Maine, (the "Marble Block" or the "Building") in accordance with the charitable purposes of Engine, Inc. ("Engine"), a § 501 (c) (3) public charity that initially acquired the Building in 2011. The Building was transferred to the Marble Block Redevelopment Corp. in 2016.

ACQUISITION: In December 2011, the R.H. Reny Company—owners of the Reny’s department stores located throughout Maine—generously sold the Marble Block to Engine, a nonprofit entity focused on revitalizing the downtown via the creative economy, for \$1. The founder of Reny’s, Robert H. Reny, was born and raised in Biddeford. The building consists of just under 20,000 s.f., and is of rare Italianate architecture circa 1880s and is a keystone to downtown Main Street.

THE VISION: Engine, a non-profit, was founded on the belief that artistic expression and creative vibrancy are the gateway to cultural, social, and economic revitalization, Engine is committed to designing, launching, and promoting community-based arts programming. Engine aspires to be a driver of artistic expression, creative industry, cultural vitality, community connections, and socially responsible practices. The organization’s mission is to connect and inspire the community through art, design, and education.

In 2011, while researching viable storefronts, Engine developed a relationship with Bob and Mary Kate Reny, whose family trust still owned the Marble Block . The Renys sold the vacant building to Engine for \$1 in 2011, in support of Engine’s mission to create a space for the arts on Main Street. The building was not fit for occupancy at the time, due to years of vacancy and deterioration.

Engine went through a visioning process which resulted in ideas for the building use. Possible activities in the facility included:

- Exhibition areas
- S.T.E.A.M. education center
- Urban rooftop farm and gathering space
- Community cafe
- Performance and event space
- Artist studios, residencies, artist live/work housing
- Retail shop
- Multiple revenue generating streams
- Incubator for creative entrepreneurialism

In considering the development, Engine considered a number of “green alternatives” within the building envelope. Additionally, the structure was thought of in terms of sustainable value to the community, to be maintained in the future. For example, the development of studio space rentals, co-location of other nonprofits, artist live/work space, green roofs, and renewable energy options are all worthy of consideration in the development of a final plan.

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Because the building contained considerable hazardous materials, and Engine was not eligible to apply for brownfields funding, Engine transferred the property to MBRC in 2014. MBRC applied for and received a brownfields grant through Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission and received a VRAP on the street-level commercial space as well as the basement. In 2016, MBRC received a second \$200,000 grant from the EPA to finish remediation on the 2nd and 3rd floor. Completion of the second grant's work plan is depending on the programming and design of the property.

Finally, the original building may be redeveloped in accord with historic standards and Part I approval has been gained. There is no preconceived determination of space but would be part of the scope of work of the Team.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES: Engine seeks a Development Partner (Partner) to assist in the redevelopment of the Marble Block. Engine has a strong preference for a Development Partner who will consider and plan for Engine's space needs in the building and Engine's mission of supporting the arts community in Biddeford. Engine would like to have a permanent home in part of the Marble Block and is seeking a Development Partner with expertise and financial capacity to make this happen. Engine has stabilized the value of the property at roughly \$485,000 (see the municipal assessing records), a value that should be considered in the development of a supporting financial development plan.

SCOPE OF WORK OF THE TEAM: The Team is asked to:

- ✓ Evaluate and incorporate, where appropriate and feasible, Engine's existing vision;
- ✓ Create concept plans for architectural improvements, inside and outside the building, supporting the proposed land use mix for the property and culminating in a comprehensive development plan for the property;
- ✓ Clearly articulate the future vision and use of the property;
- ✓ Identify the improvements necessary to accomplish the vision;
- ✓ Consider how an artist live/work environment could be incorporated into the design plan.
- ✓ Provide financial plans and proformas supporting the implementation of the development plan;
- ✓ Identify financial resources that might come into the project, to include, but not limited to:
 - o Historic tax credits;
 - o Low income housing tax credits;
 - o New market Tax credits;
 - o TIF financing;
 - o Private financing;
 - o Equity investments;

PRE-BID INTERVIEWS AND/OR SITE VISITS: While not required, MBRC, its partners, and the City of Biddeford which is providing technical assistance, are willing to hold individual pre-bid interviews with potential Teams. The interviews would include a tour of the site.

CONSIDERATIONS: In exchange for the deliverables above, MBRC, along with its partners Genesis and Engine, will consider:

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- Proposals from Development Partners to purchase the entire Marble Block building, retaining Engine as a tenant at a greatly reduced rent in perpetuity. The square footage of Engine's space should include no less than 50% of the linear feet of the Main Street Storefront and a negotiated amount of the 12,000 s.f. first floor.
- To purchase and establish a condominium arrangement for the property that includes Engine as a condominium owner within the building;
- Proposals to build market-rate live/work artist housing on the Franklin Street addition using Engine or the Marble Block Redevelopment Corp. nonprofit as a partner.
- Proposals to separate and purchase all or part of the Franklin Street addition(s), with an approximate 8000 s.f to be developed without Engine's involvement.
- Proposals to purchase and redevelop the building with no future Engine involvement. MBRC and Engine have stewarded the building with Engine's mission and revitalization of downtown Biddeford in mind; Should the building be sold for a use not involving Engine, Engine and MBRC will require that the building be sold to a buyer mindful of that with a solid development plan that contributes to downtown revitalization.

Progress to-date includes the following, most available as a PDF:

- Existing \$200,000 EPA brownfields grant, partially expended.
- As-is schematics from Caleb Johnson Architects
- New power/meters installed.
- VRAP for first floor and basement (\$200,000 grant from Southern Maine Planning & Development Commission
- Building Envelope Specialists envelope inspection
- Approval of Historic Preservation Significance Application Part I—Evaluation of Significance from the Department of the Interior National Parks Service.
- Conceptual renderings from NADAAA, Boston.
- Estimates from Zachau Construction for first floor only.
- Financial modeling scenarios.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS: Submissions should include:

1. Partner's philosophy and approach
2. Key personnel, including partners
3. Recent or applicable experience
4. Proposed/Preliminary programming for the building
5. Preliminary Project Schedule organized by phase (ie. Design, Permitting, Construction, etc.)
6. Preliminary Project Budget/ Pro-Forma

SELECTION CRITERIA: Engine shall select a Development Partner whose development approach most closely matches Engine's vision for the building. In addition, Engine shall consider the proposed purchase price and proposed role of Engine in the project.

AGREEMENT: MBRC will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding and/or contract with the selected Partner.

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DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS: All responses to the Request for Proposal must be received by MBRC no later than **March 8, 2019** at themarbleblock@gmail.com or delivered in person to Tammy Ackerman, % Engine, 128 Main St., Biddeford, ME. Phone: 207-229-3560.

POST-SELECTION REQUIRED DELIVERABLES: Once selected, the Partner is expected to produce the following work products within three (3) months from MOU:

1. Inventory and assessment of the condition of the structure beyond existing documentation, as needed;
2. Concept development plan, including options or phasing where appropriate;
3. Project Budget;
4. Financial Plan and Proforma, as applicable;
5. A sources and use plan, where applicable, including dates to secure said resources;
6. Proposed development schedule, to extend no further than two and one half years from the award to proceed; and,
7. Key factors in the development program to its success (e.g. likelihood to receive low income housing tax credits).

COMPLETION: In the remaining process, MBRC will work with the Partner to meet appropriate deadlines for obtaining necessary resources (for example, low income housing tax credits). The project will be expected to be completed by **April 2021**.

RIGHT TO REJECT PROPOSALS: MBRC reserves the right to reject any or all submissions received, for any reason, and to negotiate proposal terms in order to best serve the interest of the organization.