

Plummer Senior Living

192 Middle Road, Falmouth



Gawron Turgeon Architects

Significance

The Colonial Revival Samson D. Plummer School was built in 1931 to a design by Portland architect John P. Thomas to serve as the town of Falmouth's first high school. With an addition in 1936 that completed the architect's original design, the school represents the transition in Maine's educational system from a curriculum based on classical studies to one emphasizing the manual arts and practical studies. The school would later serve as a junior high school and ultimately as an elementary school from 1965 until its closure in 2011. A few years later, the town sold the school for redevelopment.

Project Scope

The adaptive reuse project vigorously follows the Secretary of the Interiors Standards which allowed the project to qualify for historic tax credits. The school's wood windows have been restored and fitted with exterior storms. On the interior, original plaster work was retained and the original hardwood floors were restored after being revealed beneath layers of carpeting and linoleum. The former gymnasium is now a spacious common area for the building's residents. On the exterior, the school's slate roof was repaired and the iconic clock tower was restored, scraped, and painted. A new addition provides supplemental space for residential units at the rear of the building site.

Recognition

Developers Collaborative and Seacoast Management led the conversion of the school into moderate-income senior apartments. They overcame political and financial challenges, as the first attempt to establish the building's eligibility for historic tax credits failed. The development team persevered and the credits were later approved. Working with the Town of Falmouth, they were able to develop a financially viable project that preserves one of the town's most important and beloved historic landmarks.