



TRIAD
COMMERCIAL
PROPERTIES

R E L A T E D N E W S A R T I C L E

FURNITURE COMPANY BOOSTS PIEDMONT January 30, 2002

By Richard Craver, Business Editor

A prominent California manufacturer has joined the trend of home furnishings importers planting their domestic roots in the Triad. Powell Furniture has begun bringing in its bedroom, dining room and accessory products into its 300,000-square-foot distribution warehouse off Lawndale Drive in Greensboro. The site once served as a Sears warehouse facility that contained 3 million square feet of space.

The Greensboro warehouse will serve as the consolidation site for Powell's distribution centers in Baltimore, Dallas and Los Angeles. The center will have a work force of 30 employees.

Jerry Ruff, Powell's chief executive officer, said Tuesday he expects to be in full operation at the site by fall. The company has signed a five-year lease for 150,000 square feet each on the first and third floors. The third floor is only accessible by elevator.

Ruff said the Greensboro site was the right place for Powell for three main reasons.

"It was located very near High Point, the hub of the home furnishings industry," Ruff said. "The price for the square footage (\$1 per square foot on the third floor and \$2.50 to \$2.75 on the ground floor) was very attractive.

"It was also a key to be able to locate our distribution center in an area that's very accessible to interstates and centrally located for our customer base. We depend on freight haulers - so being close to some of their home locations was a key as well."

Powell is the third home furnishings importer to open a major distribution/warehouse center in the Triad.

Universal Furniture said in November it is building a 345,000-square-foot building at Eagle Hill Business Park in Piedmont Centre. Legacy Furniture has a distribution facility in the Rock Creek Industrial Park near McLeansville.

"There are certainly an increasing number of manufacturers outsourcing," Ruff said. "I believe the same factors that made the Greensboro site attractive to us will make that area attractive to other manufacturers."

Both Ruff and Tom Townes, managing partner of Triad Commercial Properties, said Powell has the option to lease another 450,000 square feet if needed.

Andy Burke, president of the Forward Greensboro Economic Development Corp., said Powell's decision is more proof that the Triad is a growing transportation infrastructure area.

"The Triad offers a very attractive location for those companies who distribute product by rail, road or air," Burke said.

"The furniture industry is certainly an industry that benefits from that transportation access - so we expect to see more of these moves in the future."

Powell said the Triad distribution center also signifies its long-term commitment to the International Home Furnishings Market. Powell has a S. Main Street showroom presence on the first floor of the National Furniture Mart.

"We have absolutely no plans to leave the High Point market because we are absolutely committed to the market," Ruff said.

"From what we saw at the San Francisco Market, there is a lot of optimism among buyers for 2002 and the April market. This step toward this distribution center is just one way we're hoping to benefit from returning sales at retail."

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