

The Mill Girl Stair Improvements

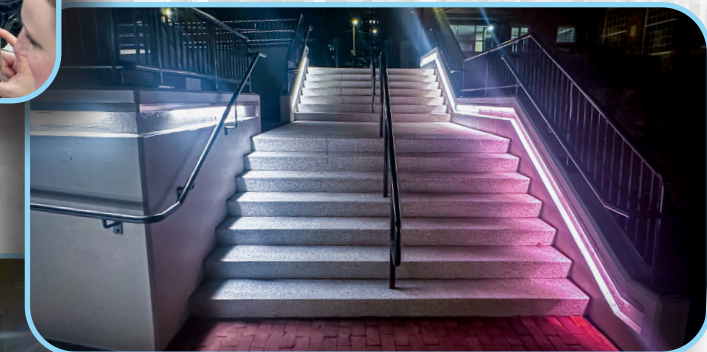
in historic downtown

Manchester, New Hampshire

Over time, the Mill Girl stairs from Stark Street to Commercial Street deteriorated, requiring replacement and **prioritizing ADA access**. This unique challenge involves balancing historical preservation, sustainability and social inclusivity.



The public joins stakeholders to celebrate the opening of the new “Mill Girl” Stair Landmark. The completion of the project now provides a crucial ADA accessible **connection** between the Millyard and downtown, ensuring **inclusivity** and convenience for all residents and visitors.



The new stairs are illuminated by white lighting, and the color changing LED lighting scene selected for the ramp in celebration of the holidays in December 2023. The new lighting adds vibrancy to the community space, while the intricate design elements enhance the aesthetic appeal and **functionality** of the area.



The “Mill Girl” statue has been a landmark in Manchester since its installation atop the stairs on Stark Street in 1988 and pays tribute to the women who worked in the city’s historic textile mills. Over time, the Mill Girl stairs connecting Stark Street to Commercial Street deteriorated, prompting the need for replacement and prioritization of ADA access. Manchester Connects, in collaboration with Hoyle Tanner and Lavallee Brensinger Architects, developed a conceptual design for a new ADA accessible ramp and stair structure. In partnership with the City, the Hoyle Tanner design team which also included Yeaton Associates, Inc. and Fieldstone Land Consultants, PLLC, successfully delivered the \$1.1 million project which revitalized the Millyard streetscape, featuring innovative lighting, anti-graffiti coating, and intricate design elements.

During the demolition of the existing stairs, the Mill Girl statue was carefully removed for refurbishment. A new reinforced concrete ramp and stair structure, designed with unique geometry to meet ADA requirements, replaced the old stairs. The project also included a vendor pad, lighting innovations, and an accessible brick courtyard. Through collaboration with the City, the project was delivered on schedule. The ribbon-cutting ceremony in July 2023 marked the completion of the project, providing an important ADA accessible connection between the Millyard and downtown, showcasing the statue, and creating a vibrant community space for local vendors and patrons.

