

By PATRICK HALL

The Wilson Post

Samsonite International is selling the Hartmann Luggage facility in Lebanon and Nashville-based XMi Commercial Real Estate is working closely with local officials to find a new tenant for the building when the facility closes in December.

XMi President and Principal Broker Stan Snipes said the asking price for the Hartmann facility is \$2.65 million and the 160,000 square foot building includes office, manufacturing, warehouse and distribution space.

Samsonite International purchased Hartmann in August for \$35 million and in September, documents filed with the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development showed Samsonite would close the Lebanon facility in December.

The 160,000 square foot building includes 16,885 square feet of office space, 72,000 square feet of manufacturing space, 11,000 square feet of warehouse/receiving space and 56,000 square feet of distribution space.

The sale also includes the Hartmann Luggage retail store on the property, which is approximately 3,000 square feet. While the entire property is being sold together, Snipes indicated Samsonite may have interest in keeping the retail store that currently sells Hartmann's luggage.

"The seller (Samsonite) said they would like to lease that back from the purchaser," he said.

Snipes said while XMi is putting the facility on the market, he is working in conjunction with city and county leaders to find a new tenant. Snipes noted he's had meetings with the Joint Economic and Community Development Board of Wilson County as well as city officials.

“We’re working very closely with Lebanon and the county and we’ll be working especially close in the near future,” Snipes said.

The facility offers potential buyers an ideal mix of office and manufacturing space, which Snipes said makes the property a very appealing piece of real estate. He said the building is functional for various companies and investors and said they will target a range of businesses.

The building is a mix of old and new facilities as Snipes said Hartmann Luggage expanded its original facility to include warehouse and distribution space. The majority of Hartmann’s manufacturing was done in Lebanon when the company moved here in 1959.

“The office and manufacturing areas are the original portions of the building, but the warehouse is newer,” Snipes said.

Over time Hartmann moved most of its manufacturing out of Lebanon and located its management here while shifting work in the facility to distribution and logistics.

When Hartmann performed all of its manufacturing here, it employed 350 workers. Documents filed with the Department of Labor indicate the facility’s closing will affect 93 employees.

JECDB Executive Director G.C. Hixson said the building is ideal for light manufacturing companies and said the fact that it has both manufacturing and warehouse space is a unique feature.

“It’s tough to take a warehouse or manufacturing building and put the infrastructure in there, but it’s already there,” he said.

Hixson said the JECDB will list specifics about the property on state websites and will not only

market the building but will also note a skilled labor force in Wilson County. He said local skilled workers are a key factor in selling a location to a business.

He said the JECDB plans to “do everything we can to help” XMi and Snipes sell the property and bring new jobs to the area.

“With Hartmann leaving, we’re hoping to take something that’s not good news and have a positive outcome,” Hixson said.

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