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Gilbane's Special Projects Group completes construction management services for corporate headquarters of Retail Convergence

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Gilbane's Special Projects Group recently completed construction management services for the corporate headquarters of Retail Convergence, an ecommerce business. The new space is located in the Channel Center in the historic Fort Point district.

Gilbane completed this build-out and restoration project to emphasize the building's historic characteristics and traits, while also constructing the space to accommodate Retail Convergence's novel "office-free" model.

Designed by Spagnolo Gisness & Associates of Boston, the 35,000 s/f space seamlessly combines the turn-of-the-century architecture with the functionality required for a fast-paced internet-based retail business.

The fit-out allows for a collaborative environment with a bright and airy floor plan, boasting of large windows and soaring ceilings. The original warehouse use is emphasized throughout the space with exposed brick, beams and wooden columns. The open floor plan with moveable work stations offers flexibility for reviewing and moving significant amounts of merchandise as required by the online retail tenant, while the conference and meeting rooms offer a more structured space with demountable glass walls and floor to ceiling white boards. A convenient in-house photography studio provides Retail Convergence an area to display and photograph models and merchandise, and the carefully constructed built-in curved Cyc wall eliminates shadow and glare for professional photographs.

Other unique tenant features include a tempered glass monumental staircase that connects the 2nd and 3rd floors for easy access within the space. Installation of the steel and glass staircase required intricate design and construction with complex coordination and detailed quality management to install properly due to the sensitive nature of the historic building. The building also features Bolon Flooring, a woven vinyl product from Sweden that helps muffle the sound of merchandise carts being wheeled from one area to the next. Despite the long-lead time of this material, Gilbane completed the installation throughout the 35,000 square feet within one week, successfully delivering the space within the timeframe demanded by the tenant. The desirable exposed ceiling, perpetuating the warehouse-like feel, created another challenge as the team navigated the placement of the new and architecturally-pleasing mechanical, electrical and HVAC climate control systems.

Despite the challenges faced by the Gilbane team, the project was completed within budget and with no safety issues. The project completed on time and the client moved into their new space on August 1, 2009.

This is the third project that Gilbane has completed at the Channel Center. The first two projects

were the exterior and interior renovations to The Channel Center building and the tenant fit-out for Cengage Learning.

About Gilbane

Recently named to FORTUNE Magazine's 100 Best Companies in America to Work For, Gilbane is a full-service construction and real estate development company comprised of Gilbane Building Company and Gilbane Development Company. The company (www.gilbaneco.com) is one of the nation's largest construction and program managers providing a full slate of facilities-related services for clients in the educational, healthcare, life sciences, mission-critical, corporate, sports and recreation, criminal justice and aviation markets. Gilbane's full-service office in Boston employs over 130 personnel and was named one of the 2009 Best Places to Work in Massachusetts by the Boston Business Journal.

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