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55 YEARS

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Ebbrell Architecture completes work at two KS Partners props.

January 29, 2021 - Retail



Boston, MA You only get one chance to make a first impression. And in a tough leasing market, lobby and common areas must provide tenants, employees and their visitors with the look and feel that not only attracts them, but ensures they'll stick around for years to come. So after KS Partners LLC, acquired 15 Court Sq. and 109-115 Broad St. in the city's Financial District they brought in their landlord's architect, Ebbrell Architecture + Design, a certified Woman-owned Business Enterprise, to bring new life to the lobbies and common areas of both buildings.

"Dated," said Rachel Molé, LEED AP, interior designer with Ebbrell Architecture, when asked to describe the lobby at each building. Court Sq. she said, had a long, narrow lobby that was not well lit or welcoming. "The first step was to strip all vestiges of the 1980s – the discolored marble, crown molding, and oversized wooden security desk – they all had to go." Molé noted the owner likes pops

of color and textural features. “We used a textured green wallcovering to accent some walls and selected new clean-looking tile for the floor. We also installed a warm but bold geometric wood wall, decorative lighting, and metal ceiling panels that gives it a ‘Wow factor’ as you come through the door,” she added. The metal panels, she said, are carried through to the exterior of the newly designed entrance, and wood is repeated in the elevator lobby.

“This really is a building repositioning that makes an impact starting at street level,” said Miika Ebbrell, principal at Ebbrell Architecture + Design. “Since we have a team that includes both interior designers and architects, we have the expertise to tackle more architectural elements such as the building envelope that make a design impact on the exterior of the building,” she continued.

As part of the renovation Ebbrell Architecture + Design replaced the storefront doors and windows at street level, painted the exterior of the building a more contemporary dark grey color, added new exterior lighting, and incorporated new metal cladding with new signage that modernizes the building from the curb through the entire lobby.

To increase tenant amenities, on the ground floor they added seating areas in the lobby and redesigned the convenience store. The Ebbrell team also created a meeting room, fitness center and bicycle storage in the first floor basement. Bright yellows make up for the lack of natural light and create inviting spaces while using only a small footprint of the available square footage.

“It looks amazing,” said Jennifer Carrigan, VP, director of leasing for KS Partners. “We work with the Ebbrell team a lot both in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Their style is one we’re drawn to. They use bright colors, clean lines and they work well with our entire team,” Carrigan added. She also said that the Ebbrell team understands what you want and accomplishes it quickly. “They also suggest other ideas that you may not have thought of which is invaluable.”

In addition to the interior design work, Ebbrell also conducted BOMA studies of each building. At 109-115 Broad there were no architectural drawings available. “The Ebbrell team measured the building according to BOMA standards and helped us understand what we should be charging,” said Carrigan.

Molé said that sometimes with interior design it’s not about what you add, but about what you take away as was the case at 109-115 Broad. “We removed the drywall ceilings and half walls to expose the brick and beam features that were there,” said Molé. “We exposed the bones and were able to create an industrial loft feeling. Add in the owner’s great taste in artwork and we constructed a bold and welcoming space that’s modern in design but appreciates the building’s foundation,” she said.

It’s not just the great design work that the Ebbrell team does that keeps KS Partners coming back for more. “The Ebbrell team is incredibly responsive. And when you’re trying to win a tenant that really helps,” said Carrigan. She added, “They always make sure they are never the reason we would lose a prospect. It’s always a positive experience working with them and the tenants love them too.”