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Project of the Month: DeStefano & Assocs. renovates iconic 75,000 s/f Foster's Daily Democrat building

October 01, 2021 - Northern New England



original

after complete

Dover, NH DeStefano & Associates, Inc (DAI) was contracted to execute renovations of the existing 75,000 s/f Foster's Daily Democrat Building in 2018. Foster's Daily Democrat was an iconic former newspaper production and media office building rich in history dating back to the late 1800s.

Since closing of the operation in 2006 the property sat dormant for over a decade and the once vibrant building had become an afterthought to life and business in town. A local family (Kostis family) who are lifelong residents of Dover, contracted the renovation to TMS Architects, MJS Engineering and DAI to deliver a mixed-use building in the downtown.

There were multiple challenges given the original building was built in the late 1800s and subsequently others were added over the course of the next 100 years. Construction materials and methods changed over that time.

original

after complete

We encountered newspapers stuffed in the walls as insulation, seashells in the ground (ground improvements with mini driven piles was added to the scope as a result), brick/cmu or wood framing or structural steel framing or simply a combination of all materials. It was a challenge to meet the current building codes, but the entire project team stepped up and the outcome speaks for itself.

Phase 1 was completed in the Fall of 2019 with 12 apartments (1 and 2 bedroom) and open commercial space ready for fitup. Phase 2 was completed in the fall of 2020 with 18 apartments (1 and 2 bedrooms). Phase 1 apartments retained the original brick construction that offers a unique and historic appearance in contrast with modern upgrades. Phase 2 apartments were designed and built with standard construction materials. Finishes are typical of current high-end multi-family buildings. An added amenity to the project was covered parking on grade.

original courtyard

after complete

As phase 1 was completed and tenants occupied phase 1 apartments, phase 2 was started. At the time we thought it would go smooth given it was new construction built on top of an existing building with less renovation work. However, a few months into construction everything changed with the

COVID-19 pandemic. Fortunately, we had a strong, dedicated and hard-working project team including all subcontractor's/vendors (and existing phase 1 tenants) and we were able to complete Phase 2 on schedule and without incident despite the pandemic.

The Kostis family were able to retain this piece of history in downtown. Some of this history can be seen inside the building where there are some old newspapers, plans and even an original printing press on display donated by the Foster family.

interior after complete

interior after complete

Foster's Daily Democrat building project team:

DeStefano & Associates, Inc. - construction manager

DENRON Plumbing and HVAC, LLC - plumbing & HVAC

Bob Frizzell General Contractor, Inc. - concrete form/flatwork contractor

Martineau Electric, Inc. - electrical

Tri-State Iron Works, Inc. - miscellaneous iron

Caprioli Painting, Inc. - painting

Northeast Flooring Solutions - flooring

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