

Breaking Ground

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MASTER BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016

Trends in Architecture

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**New Overtime Rules
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The main dining area in Roost takes advantage of floor-to-ceiling windows to bring in light and provide Market Square views. Photo by Craig Thompson.



REVEL + ROOST RESTAURANT

If necessity is the mother of invention, it appears that desperation can be the mother of better design. In the case of Revel + Roost, the new dining and drinking establishment at the Tower Two-Sixty, the last-minute loss of a deal prompted a reboot that ultimately created a more elegant solution.

One of the anchors of Tower Two-Sixty, an 18-story mixed-use building that is the crown jewel in Millcraft Investment's Downtown Pittsburgh development, is a Hilton Garden Inn. As a full-service hotel, the Hilton requires a restaurant that serves breakfast at minimum. Because of the different access points of the three main components to the building, the second floor was the logical position for the breakfast restaurant. Millcraft secured an agreement for Burgatory to locate on the first floor beneath the hotel's restaurant, with access on Forbes Avenue. ThenDesign Architects was commissioned to design the spaces, which were put out to bid in early spring 2015. Before a contractor could be selected, however, the deal with Burgatory fell through. The hiccup in plans turned out to be a blessing.

"That opening allowed Millcraft to think further about the space," recalls Lauren Scioscia, who leads ThenDesign's hospitality practice in Pittsburgh. "They didn't really want a hotel restaurant. They wanted a restaurant that would draw people in from the street. The hotel opening was delayed slightly so it was decided to redesign the space. The whole team kicked into high gear."

Burgatory's leaving provided the designer and owner with a clean shell. Both the hotel and restaurant would be operated by Millcraft Hospitality and brothers Marcus and Lucas Piatt wanted to aim for something higher and

more in line with the kinds of restaurants that were populating Pittsburgh, especially since they would be competing with dozens of destinations in the adjacent Market Square. What they and ThenDesign came up with was a multi-level bar/restaurant that would have different ebbs and flows of customers. Their vision was that the clientele would change as the day progressed.



A folding aluminum window system was used in place of fixed storefront to bring the outdoors into Revel. Photo by Craig Thompson.



Revel opens up to Forbes Avenue and includes dining space and a lengthy bar. Photo by Craig Thompson.



Conference and meeting rooms located adjacent to Roost's kitchen and the access to the Hilton Garden Inn lobby can be opened up to serve as dining or banquet rooms. Photo by Craig Thompson.

Revel is the ground-floor casual dining space, which includes a large bar. Open for lunch, Revel competes with the other fine casual restaurants and watering holes in Downtown. Roost is located on the second floor, connected by a central open stairway. It is designed for fine dining in the evening, with an ambience that is geared towards quieter meals and drinks after dinner, especially for those late-arriving hotel guests looking to unwind.

To achieve the setting that Millcraft was seeking, there were some design obstacles to overcome. The two restaurant concepts were meant to be integrated into one, two-level space but there was no physical connection between the two floors. The configuration of the building meant that much of the 6,000 square foot space was not adjacent to the exterior windows and

ThenDesign took advantage of the size of the connecting hallway to give Roost some additional dining space and flexibility. Just beyond the main dining room, several rooms were placed that can be partitioned separately or opened up to create a banquet room.

there was a long section of the footprint that adjoined the hallway that serves as the connection to the second-floor hotel lobby.

"It's a long space that goes pretty far back into the block," notes Scioscia. "We wanted to access as much natural light as possible. The design did a good job of integrating the restaurant interior to the entrance and the outdoors."

Floor-to-ceiling windows allow natural daylight to flood the interior and the layout of Roost, which also has windows on the Market Square side to the west, puts as many of the diners within a few tables of the exterior as possible. That gives all of Roost's diners the feeling that they are right at the street, although there was one problem with that solution.

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"The building is in a great location but the view of Market Square from Roost is of the roof of Moe's Southwest Grill," says Scioscia. "To shield diners from the view of the roof-top equipment and a dirty roof we debated putting gypsum board up or some sort of half-wall. We ended up using a red film applied to the window to screen the lower half."

ThenDesign took advantage of the size of the connecting hallway to give Roost some additional dining space and flexibility. Just beyond the main dining room, several rooms were placed that can be partitioned separately or opened up to create a banquet room. The connection to the hotel provided that opportunity.

"That area was needed for conference and meeting rooms for the Hilton Garden Inn, but they can be private dining rooms when the hotel isn't occupying them," Scioscia says. "That makes sense if it's a Steelers weekend and the restaurant is

"Logistically, this was going to be tough because we have a general contractor in the building that is dealing with a difficult schedule, with its own team of subcontractors to manage and now we have to work side-by-side with them," McCormack chuckles.

overbooked. People could be seated in the front room with the large doors open and not feel like they are in a meeting room."

When the revised design went back out to bid again, the three low bidders from the first bidding round were asked to price the new concept. That group included Facility Support Services (FSS) and Turner Construction, which was the construction manager for the core and shell of Tower Two-Sixty. The project involved a lot of high-end finishes but the work was fairly straight-forward. During the bidding it became obvious that the challenges of the job were going to be managing the logistics of accessing and supplying the project. When he was informed that FSS was the successful bidder, Michael McCormack, the company's vice president of operations, feared that those logistical challenges could become worse.



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"Logistically, this was going to be tough because we have a general contractor in the building that is dealing with a difficult schedule, with its own team of subcontractors to manage and now we have to work side-by-side with them," McCormack chuckles.

"There were access issues with two contractors on the same site but we already had two contractors on site because Scalise was a prime mechanical and electrical contractor on the tower," notes Brandon Guy, project manager for Millcraft. "The two superintendents for FSS and Turner were really good guys and worked well together. We had to do a little bit of babysitting at first but there weren't any problems."

"To Turner's credit they ended up working well with us but it was definitely a [logistical] struggle," says McCormack.

Most of the logistical problems stemmed from the fact that the core and shell portion of the building was not done. The contract for Revel + Roost was executed in September 2015 and the hotel had to finish in December. As the core and shell contractors worked feverishly to complete their scopes of work, FSS wouldn't have access to their material hoists. The elevators weren't yet working and there was no access to the second floor. FSS saw an opportunity to take advantage of part of the design to solve some of the access issues.

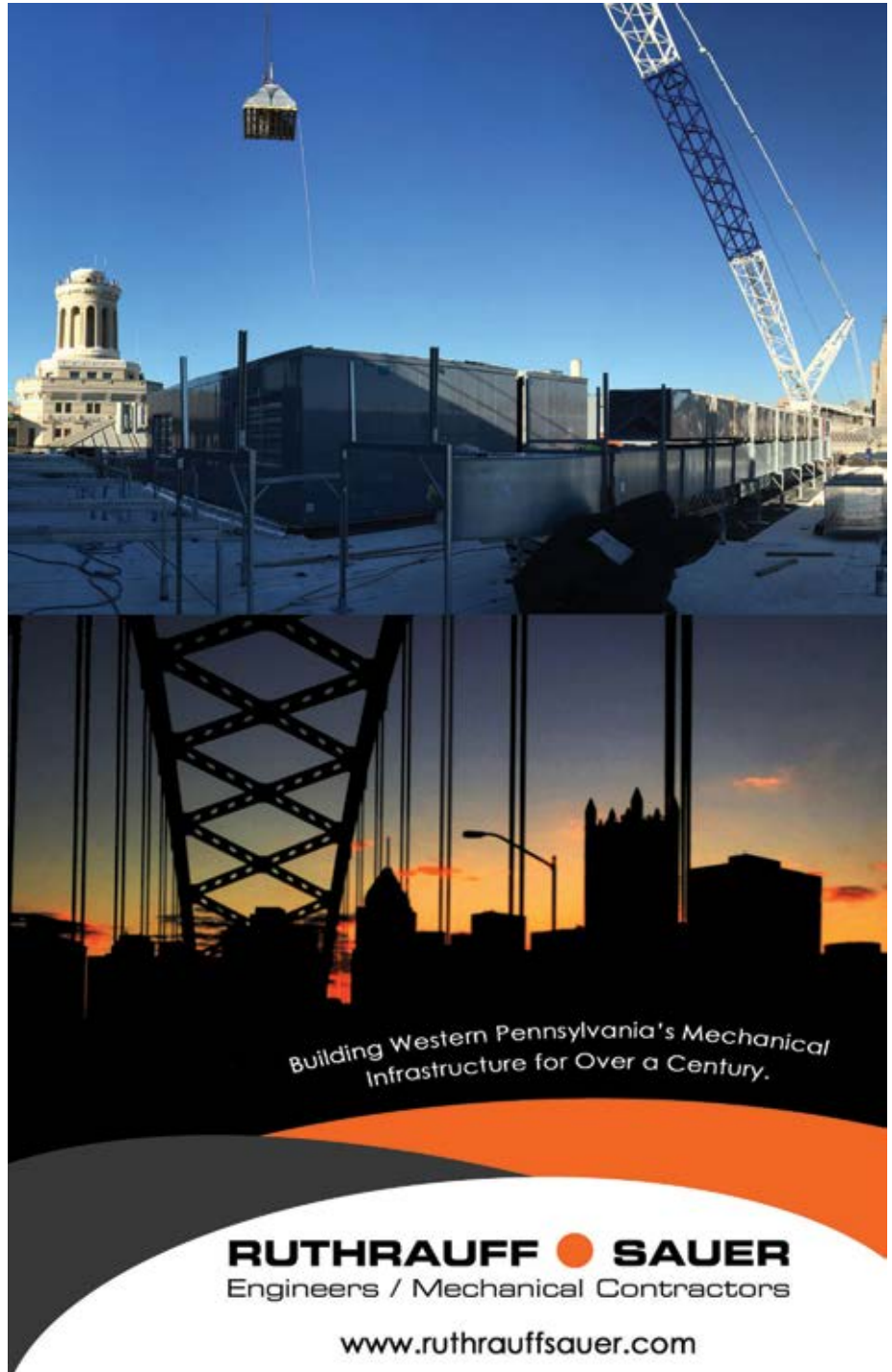
"Part of the scope was to build a separate stairwell inside the space. One of the first things we did was to saw cut the slab at night and drop that slab down" explains McCormack. "We had Universal Scaffold come in and install a scaffold and material hoist for our project. That was pretty much day one. The other problem was that it was now October and we needed to be done in December or January."

McCormack says that virtually all normal aspects of a project required extraordinary measures. Any movement of people or materials had to be coordinated with the core and shell team. FSS couldn't assume that a means of access that was available one day would be there the next. Lay down space was minimal and shared. One of the more mundane parts of a construction job – trash removal – became one of the most maddening because of the limited facilities.

"There were no dumpsters on site so all trash had to be collected a couple times per week and then delivered to a dumpster out here [at our offices]. That included all the concrete from the 20 foot by 20 foot saw cut," McCormack says. "We'd arrange to have a trailer at

the site at 2:00 in the afternoon on a Tuesday so we could hurry and load it to get it out of Downtown without getting in the way."

The exterior of Tower Two-Sixty was another area that required regular coordination. The façade was not closed in when work on the restaurant began so FSS had to build a temporary enclosure to keep the restaurant site dry. The enclosure had to be removed and rebuilt several times to allow work on the core and shell that was outside the scope of FSS's work. The temporary enclosure was hardly energy-efficient, however, and there were days when



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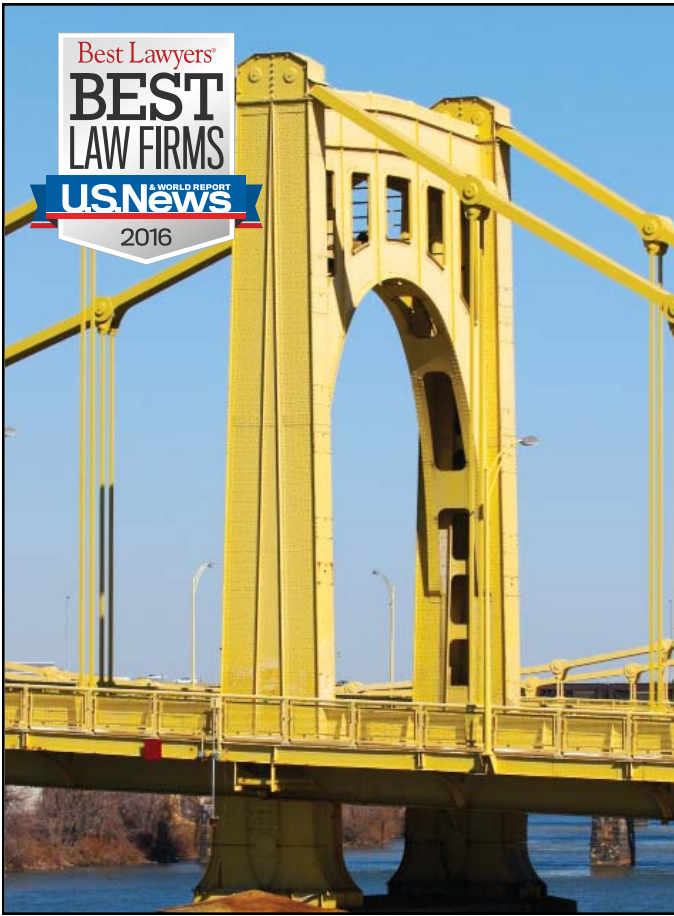


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“It was a great project. It certainly got a little stressful as we got close to the wire but for the most part we stayed ahead of the schedule; we stayed on top of the wave,” McCormack recalls. “We’re really proud of it and the owner is really happy with it.”

the ambient temperature was below freezing, making finish work impossible. That was another complication in a schedule that called for drywall finishing in December.

“It was one of those things that Jim DeWitt – our superintendent – and our carpenters took care of, but it wasn’t easy,” McCormack points out. “We were able to work with Scalise to expedite the roof-top air-handling unit so that we could get the building’s heat operating sooner.”

Like with the core and shell, EMCOR Scalise had a prime contract directly with Millcraft for the HVAC, plumbing, electrical and fire protection for Revel + Roost. McCormack says that relationship worked very well, eliminating one potential headache. But others still remained. Market Square was closed down as an access area on December 15 when the Christmas festival began. At the same time, Forbes Avenue reopened to traffic for the holidays, eliminating another area where FSS had been able to lay down materials and equipment.

An earlier design decision also added stress to the project. The storefront was not originally part of FSS’s scope but in October, Millcraft decided to use a NanaWall – a folding glass wall that could open to the street in warm weather – and shifted that responsibility from the core and shell to FSS. That meant field measurement and shop drawing approvals for a product that wasn’t part of FSS’s planned schedule and it was a product with a 17-week lead time. Manufacturing and delivery of that wall system was a crucial milestone in the critical path before opening.

PROJECT TEAM

Facility Support Services	General Contractor
Millcraft Investments.....	Owner
ThenDesign Architecture	Architect
EMCOR Scalise	Mechanical/Electrical/Fire Protection
Testa Concrete.....	Concrete
RAM Acoustical Corp.....	Drywall/Ceilings
Thomarios Coatings Corp.....	Painting/Wallcovering
Surface Technologies	Concrete Staining
Davis Fetch.....	Doors
Phoenix Roofing	Roofing
Giffin Interior & Fixture.....	Casework
Dan Taylor Interiors.....	Flooring
PGC Contracting.....	Glazing
Massaro Industries	Ceramic Tile
Universal Scaffold Systems	Scaffolding/Material Hoist
Engineered Products Inc.	Steel Stairs
Marsa Inc.	Masonry

Despite the slow start and setback from the long lead time on the exterior, the restaurants opened as planned. When the Hilton Garden Inn opened in December 2015, Roost served the breakfast for the hotel while the final touches on Revel were being done. FSS completed most of its work before February ended and once the NanaWall was installed, the two-story Revel + Roost opened officially on March 11, 2016.

“It was a great project. It certainly got a little stressful as we got close to the wire but for the most part we stayed ahead of the schedule. That’s a tribute to the collaboration between us and Brandon and Chad Wheatley from Millcraft and ThenDesign,” McCormack recalls. “We’re really proud of it and the owner is really happy with it.”

Millcraft’s satisfaction with the project is demonstrated by the fact that FSS has been brought back to bid and build other projects at Tower Two-Sixty and other Millcraft properties. Having never worked with Millcraft Investments prior to Revel + Roost, FSS will be building the developer’s new offices in Tower Two-Sixty.

“I think the final product turned out great. A lot of the design was done in house. Lisa Surmacz and Lucas Piatt himself picked the finishes and the layout,” notes Guy. “I think they did a really good job of creating space that is attractive and comfortable. So far, it’s been a great success.” **BG**