

# Clem Labine's Traditional Building

AUGUST 2008 THE PROFESSIONAL'S RESOURCE FOR PUBLIC ARCHITECTURE

## RECENT PROJECT: ADAPTIVE REUSE



Built in 1908 and added to over the years, the 1,000,000-sq.ft. Lazarus building in Columbus, OH, has been revived as a mixed-use structure with components for offices, retail, science and the arts. In addition to restoring and cleaning the façade, the architects replaced the windows, dramatically improving the appearance of the building and bringing in more natural light. They also created a Galleria topped with a skylight in a former alley that had bisected the building. All photos: Brad Feinknopf, Feinknopf Photography, courtesy of Schooley Caldwell Associates

## A Million to One

WHEN THE DOORS of the Lazarus building in downtown Columbus, OH, closed in August, 2004, it marked the end of an era. Built in 1908, the 1,000,000-sq.ft. former family-owned department store had been a landmark for many years, a desti-

nation point for shoppers throughout the Midwest since the early 1900s. Over the years, it had undergone a number of renovations and additions. The building's most recent tenant was Macy's, part of the Federated Department Stores chain that do-

## PROJECT

Lazarus Building, Columbus, OH

### Design Architect

Elkus Manfredi Architects, Boston, MA; David Manfredi, AIA, Principal in Charge

### Architect and Engineer of Record

Schooley Caldwell Associates, Columbus, OH; Thomas R. Matheny, AIA, Principal in Charge

### Construction Manager

Turner Construction, New York, NY

nated it to the city when it left in 2004. Now, a new and very different era has begun.

A three-year, \$60-million restoration and renovation of the Lazarus building has changed it into a mixed-use project that includes offices, restaurants, retail space and artist and exhibition space. It has become an important part of the

“We have completed phase one and are just about finished with phase two, the lower floors,” says Thomas R. Matheny, AIA, principal in charge at Schooley Caldwell Associates. “Our project involved the core and the shell, the exterior work, building envelope, roof, infrastructure, vertical circulation, fire protection and the mechanicals. This was an adaptive reuse project. It is now a mixed-use building. We kept some of the architectural features of the department store, such as ornamental plaster ceilings, but there are many new elements as well.”

“The goal was to create office, science, retail and arts components,” says Matheny. “The office component has been wildly successful; that part of the building is almost full. The arts component has been successful as well. The Ohio State University has gallery and studio space. The science component is still being explored and we are working on the retail component. Three sides of the building on the street level have been reserved for retail and food services, although there are no commitments yet.”

When Elkus Manfredi and SCA came to the project, they found an eight-story eyesore with most of its windows filled in. It occupies most of a city block bounded by Town St. to the south, Front St. to the west, High St. to the east and State St. to the north, in a downtown area known as the Riversouth District. Renovation projects completed during the history of the building had used a hodgepodge of approaches and construction techniques, resulting in various construction types and floor levels that didn't match. In addition, there is a two-story grade change from the east to the west sides of the building.

On the exterior, the brick and terra-cotta façade on two sides (Front St. on the west side and Town St. on the south) was cleaned, repointed, restored and repaired by H.K. Phillips Restoration of Columbus, OH. More than 150 windows that had been filled in for retail purposes were reopened and replaced with metal windows. “This was the biggest visual change to the building,” says Matheny. “Over the years the department store

city's downtown renewal program, and, on top of that, it has received a gold Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design – Core and Shell (LEED-CS) certification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC).

Elkus Manfredi Architects of Boston, MA, and Schooley Caldwell Associates (SCA) of Columbus, OH, were brought in by the new owner, the Columbus Downtown Development Corp. and their developer, The Georgetown Company, to direct the project. The bulk of the work has been completed and some tenants such as the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the Ohio Environment Protection Agency have already moved in. Columbus mayor Michel B. Coleman welcomed the change, noting, “We not only renovated an historic Columbus landmark, we created space for 1,800 jobs downtown in the most significant ‘green’ building in the Midwest.”

“We were brought in to figure out what was the best reuse of the building,” says principal in charge David Manfredi, AIA, of Elkus Manfredi. “It had been one of those grand old traditional department stores. It was actually an accumulation of buildings that had grown up over time. There's a great deal of nostalgia for these traditional department stores. Many of them started out at the turn of the century and then grew into larger buildings and became little cities with many different uses such as tailor shops and restaurants.”

The first order of business, he explains, was to “try to understand the building and how the client and the marketplace could use it. The most obvious use was for traditional larger offices. We looked at residential, but it didn't make sense. The market wasn't there.”

“The second order was to think about how it fits into the streetscape, and the overarching mission was to contribute to the revitalization of downtown Columbus,” says Manfredi. “The building does occupy an important intersection and a big part of the project was thinking of how we enhance pedestrian traffic downtown.”



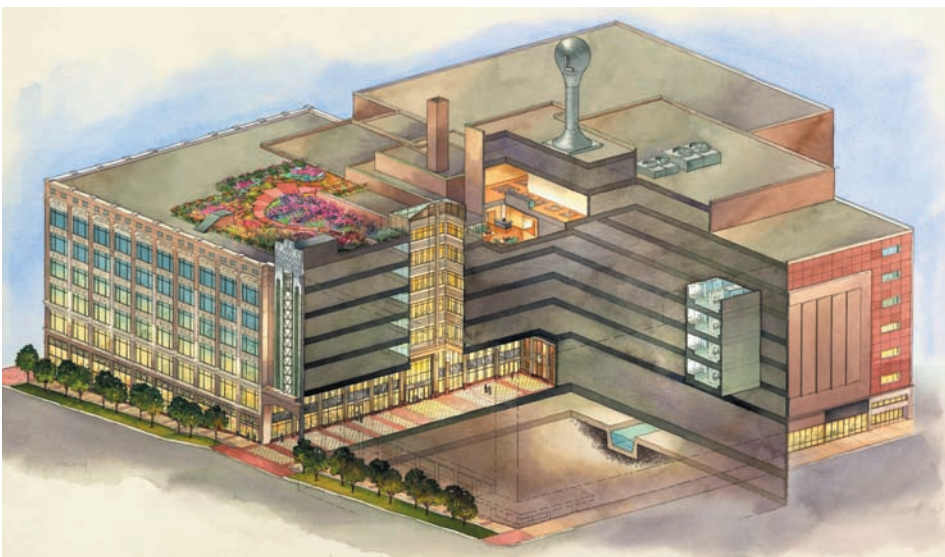
**The Lazarus building fills an important part of Columbus' downtown and its history. To promote development to the south, the main entry was moved from High St. to Town St. The Galleria runs north/south from Town St. to the mid-block alley (approximately 185 ft.) at Chapel St. There is a two-story grade change from High St. to Front St. Site plan: courtesy of Schooley Caldwell Associates**



**A new approximately 36x40-ft. skylight tops the lightwell in the center of the galleria, bringing natural daylight into the building.**



**Light entering the Lazarus building through the skylight filters down into the pedestrian galleria.**



**This cut-away rendering shows the position of the new entry on Town St., the galleria with the skylight and the 15,000-sq.ft. rooftop garden. Glass along the sides of the lightwell and the galleria brings light into the inner reaches of the building.** Rendering: courtesy of Elkus Manfredi Architects

had filled in the windows, so it had a blank face on the exterior. The new ones are essentially storefront windows, but with the same proportion and divisions as the original windows. It was a dramatic change, not only to the outside but also to the inside of the building.”

Another major change was the creation of the galleria and lightwell. A portion of a service alley that had bisected the building was converted into a two-story window-lined pedestrian galleria. This extends approximately 185 ft. from the new entrance on Town St. approximately halfway through the building to Chapel St. The remainder of the service alleys on Chapel St. and Wall St. are still open.

A skylight in the center of the galleria that is approximately 36 x 40-ft.



**The entrance to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services is located in the gallery under the lightwell.**

covers a lightwell, bringing natural light into the gallery and into each of the seven tenant floors. Thomas Glass Co. of Westerville, OH, built and installed the glass skylight and also did the glass work at the entry of the building. The firm was also responsible for the new windows.

This gallery is now the central organization element of the building. “This was formerly a service alley and lightwell for the building,” says Manfredi. “We saw it as an opportunity to create a front entry on Town Street and to bring pedestrians downtown. There are future plans for a park along the river and some residential development is happening. We wanted to put the entrance in a location where we could take advantage of this development.” With the creation of the gallery, the main entry was moved from High St. to Town St. on the south. Individual lobbies for major tenants open off the gallery.

Other new features include the 15,000-sq.ft. rooftop garden on one section of the building and the rainwater harvesting system. Matheny explains that the rainwater system captures water and stores it in a 50,000-gal. tank that already existed on the roof (a landmark on Columbus’ skyline) and also in a new 40,000-gal. tank that was added to the basement. It is used to flush toilets, to provide drip irrigation to the roof garden and for the cooling towers. “All of these factors together – the rainwater harvesting system, low-flow



**Abandoned in 2004 by the Federated Department Stores chain, the building was in danger of demolition. With its windows filled to make room for interior displays, the Lazarus building looked like an abandoned warehouse.**

faucets and plumbing and waterless urinals – have dramatically decreased the amount of domestic water the building uses,” says Matheny.

Another part of the sustainability strategy involved recycling materials from the building and using materials with high recycled content. “We set out from the beginning to recycle as much of the waste as we could,” says Matheny. “More than 50%, all of the debris – concrete, steel, carpet, ceiling tile – were recycled. That was a big effort. You have to find entities that will take these materials and actually recycle them and the debris had to be sorted and weighed before they left the site.”

In total, the debris that was recycled included 2,000 tons of steel, 1,000 tons of concrete, 300 tons of used carpeting, 100 tons of ceiling tile and 50 tons of wood – more than 11,000 tons of material that would have otherwise gone into landfill. If the entire building had been demolished, it was estimated that it would have created enough construction debris to fill the Ohio Stadium three to four stories deep.

High recycled content materials were also used. “For example, we used flooring made of tires, terrazzo containing recycled glass, bathroom partitions made from pop bottles, carpet with recycled backing, and all of the drywall has recycled facing,” says Matheny. “There was a huge effort to select materials that are sustainable and rapidly renewable, such as bamboo flooring. We also used cork flooring and cork baseboard, and some wood flooring that was recycled from other buildings.”

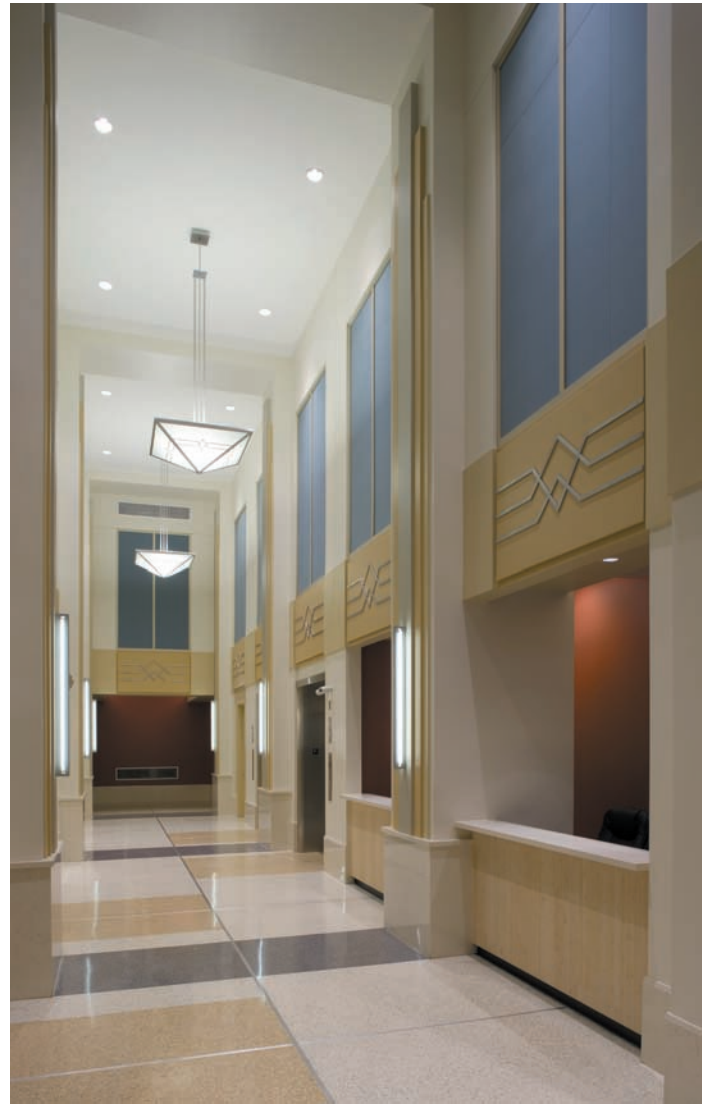
Energy efficiency was also the goal in selecting mechanical and ventilation equipment. In fact, all of the LEED planning began very early in the process. “LEED certification was the goal from the beginning,” says Matheny. “We were actually a pilot project in the LEED-CS program. Achieving the gold status was quite a feat considering the size and nature of the building.”



The main entry is now on Town St. This side of the building is lined with storefronts.

The USGBC has said that building to LEED standards can increase the cost of construction by 3-5%, but adds that the pay-off comes in the operation. Matheny says the Lazarus project came in on budget and that building to LEED standards didn't add significantly to the timetable. "It may have taken a little longer to sort and weigh the debris," he says.

Matheny laments that many of the big downtown department store buildings have been lost. "They are blank slates, basically big warehouses that can be adapted. Those of us in preservation have always said we should recycle existing urban buildings instead of building out in greenfields. Recycling historic buildings is inherently sustainable; you are recycling embodied energy instead of tossing it into landfill."



A new lobby was created for the Ohio EPA, one of the first tenants. Materials containing recycled components such as terrazzo made with recycled glass were used throughout the building, along with renewable materials such as bamboo and cork.

"I give a lot of credit to our client and to the city," says Manfredi. "Reusing these historic buildings to reinvigorate the streetscape and to do it in a sustainable manner are big and worthy goals." - *Martha McDonald*