

## **Hezner Corporation Completed Restoration of a Historic Building**



*"Working with older structures requires diligence and organized thinking, and breaking this project into a series of smaller projects helped us determine our approach"... Scott Hezner, Architect*

Greene Bros' Holdings, Inc. worked through the process of developing an adaptive re-use project involving the original Greene's Tobacco Warehouse, 207 N. Academy St., Janesville. The goals for this project included; establishing a commercial facility that could accommodate a variety of uses, was in compliance with the National Park Service (NPS) and Wisconsin State Preservation Architect, compliance with the City of Janesville zoning and code requirements, and compliance with all other known codes, life safety issues and requirements mandated for a project such as this.

The 207 N. Academy Street site is located within the "Look West Historical District" and is on the National Register of Historical Places. The property has been blighted and had not functioned to its full potential for a very long time. Green Bros' Holdings was committed to restoring and re-using the existing facilities for commercial uses. Their belief was that increased activity on this site will contribute to the future resurgence of activity in the Look West Historical District.

### ***The Project***

**Project Name and Address:**

**Owner:**

Greene Bros' Holdings, Inc.

**Architect:**

The Hezner Corporation

### ***The Builder***

**General Contractor:**

Corporate Contractors, Inc.

### ***The Scope***

**Project Totals:**

The building is a 4 story  
23,600 sf structure

## The strategy was to break it down into manageable sections



*before*



*after*

### Structure

This structure was originally designed to be strong in a vertical orientation but not in a lateral orientation. A primary goal has been to reinforce the lateral strength of this structure while not changing or hiding the original approach. The general structural opinion was that the building must have significant reinforcing methods applied.

### Building Interior

The building interior exhibited the results of many uses over the years. Tobacco storage was the initial reason for constructing the building but many things had been stored and produced out of this building. We were only able to confirm some of what had occurred. Farm produce and other types of food, machine parts, tools, etc. were stored through the early and mid 1900's. Later, golf carts were built in the building. Recently there has been antiques and collectables stored, and levels 1 and 2 were turned into a "haunted house."

### Masonry

The building exterior is primarily composed of large expanses of brick veneer with varying applications of rubble stone, concrete, and brick at the lower levels. The building had been painted and the paint was coming off in varying degrees. There is evidence of structural reinforcement at the building corners, and other indicators that the building had survived several close calls over the years.

### Windows & Building Shell Openings

The approach we took regarding windows and other building shell openings was to not create new openings in this building shell. Some existing window openings were modified to accommodate new doors but the original window widths and head conditions were not altered.

### Roof

The existing roof had asphalt shingles on it with no insulation, and were replaced with new architectural thirty year asphalt shingles with energy code compliant closed cell insulation.

### Wall Treatment

Walls had been painted, white washed, and stained over the years. Our approach was to reapply the wood planks after the walls had been insulated and reinforced and allow the tenants to make a choice. They could paint the walls, use an opaque stain, or leave them as they are. As the existing walls have had so many different coatings applied over time we felt that applying new paint would be consistent with what exists.

## Floor Treatment

Each floor Level now has a varied degree of finished and unfinished floor treatments. The finished floor treatments were installed in building core areas and spaces, which are the responsibility of the building owner. All unfinished floor areas will be chosen later by the tenants occupying the each floor/space. It is our intent to keep the original flooring composition for levels 2, 3, and 4 in this building visually accessible from the levels below.

## Vertical circulation

This project consisted of two new circulation stairs and one new elevator. The new stairs and elevator connect all levels of the building to the exterior grade level and are located in the same locations as the existing (original) vertical circulation elements they replaced.

## Level One / “Basement”

We concluded that the lowest level of the building was originally used for general storage and some form of office functions associated with the tobacco storage business. The lowest level is much more humid than the levels above and we attribute that to the lack of general ventilation at this lower level and the evidence of ground moisture migrating through the rubble walls. There was no concrete floor at the first two column bays at the East end of the building. The existing condition had 2” x wood floor framing with plywood over gravel. We felt that the lower level functioned and felt more like a basement. For this level to be occupied by people there needed to be climate control equipment, insulation and some form of vapor barrier.

## Finishes

The goal of this project was to complement, enhance and /or replicate the historic nature of the existing materials found throughout this building. In some areas such as the new building core, new finishes were required due to life safety, structural and modern day building function requirements. New finishes are intended to compliment the aesthetics of the existing finishes that are remaining such as the interior wall planks and the exposed underside of the floor structure. Other building elements such as the new exterior wood windows were designed to replicate the windows they are replacing by matching the material profile and finish.

## New Engineering infrastructure

The modern day office and retail facility requires a high level of occupant comfort and safety. The mechanical, plumbing fire protection and electrical layout for this project is designed to provide each tenant with their own electrical panels, plumbing fixtures and environmental controls which are independent from the remainder of the building.

### Request for Certification of Completed Work

Photo documentation of the building and site restoration requirements were achieved and is compiled in this work summary.



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