

Restoration Completed At The Jewish Museum

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Like so many older buildings, The Jewish Museum was losing its battle with the weather and grime in New York City. Stones on its limestone façade were broken or loose; its finials were tarnished and broken; and its slate mansard roof was leaking.

Seaboard Weatherproofing and Restoration Company, a leading metro New York restoration and alteration construction firm, recently completed restoration work on the façade, finials and roof of the 1908 French Gothic structure originally known as the Warburg Mansion.

The Jewish Museum was founded in 1904 when Judge Mayer Sulzberger donated 26 objects to the Jewish Theological Seminary. The seminary's collection grew over the next 40 years, inspiring Frieda Schiff Warburg to donate the family mansion in 1944 for use as a Jewish museum. The Jewish Museum opened its doors in the Warburg Mansion in 1947. The addition of a sculpture court in 1959 and expansions of gallery space in 1963 and 1989 brought the museum to its current size.

The extensive restoration project, under the direction of Walter B. Melvin Architects, LLC, lasted approximately one year. Members of the Seaboard team took out damaged limestone blocks and replaced them with milled or hand-carved stones that matched the original size and shape of the façade. They removed the finials and sent them to Petrillo Stone Corp. for repair or replacement. The slate roof tiles on the original mansion were removed, and then reset with minimal slate replacement after repair of the underlying roof structure. Seaboard cleaned the building's exterior of dirt and carbon using a chemical-free fine water mist and then waterproofed the structure to help protect it from the elements.

"The most challenging aspect of the project was the roof repair," explains Jim Gradt, senior project manager of Seaboard Weatherproofing & Restoration. "We had to pipe off the tiers and set-backs so that we could reach and remove the slate and do the necessary repairs to prevent further water seepage into the building."

"Seaboard takes great pride in returning historic buildings to their original grandeur," says Michael Y. Ahearn, president of Seaboard Weatherproofing and Restoration. "Frieda Schiff Warburg would be pleased with the preservation of her important cultural gift."

Seaboard Weatherproofing and Restoration is located in Port Chester, NY. The company recently celebrated its 60th anniversary.