

Seaboard completes 2-year job at the Plaza Hotel

Seaboard Weatherproofing and Restoration Company recently finished its two-year exterior renovation of the legendary Plaza Hotel, located at Fifth Avenue and Central Park South in New York City. The Plaza's co-owners, Elad Properties and Kingdom Holdings, commissioned the exterior work from Seaboard as part of a lobby-to-roof renovation of the 101-year-old landmark.

Working in conjunction with the Plaza's façade restoration architect, David V. Abramson of Newark, NJ, and construction manager Tishman Construction Corporation of New York City, Seaboard had the task of maintaining the integrity of the original architecture while restoring the building to its original pristine condition. Since the hotel was designated a New York City Landmark in 1969 — the only New York City hotel ever to receive this distinction — The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission oversaw the entire process.

The exterior restoration consisted of many different efforts. New white-glazed-brick, provided by Belden Brick in Canton Ohio, was installed to match the historic white-glazed-brick on the street façade, mainly at air conditioning vent locations. Loading bays at the hotel's southeast corner were rebuilt with limestone to match the original design. Also, the entire façade was washed with a chemical restoration cleaner to brighten its appearance.

The Plaza boasts four marquees, one on each side of the building. Seaboard rebuilt the southeast marquee, which was damaged by a truck many years ago, and restored the other marquees with new cast-iron pieces, adorned with ornamental birds and faces, using supplies from Allen Architectural metals of Talladega, Alabama. The base of The Plaza is constructed with limestone, and Old World Stone in Burlington, Ontario supplied Seaboard with the new limestone needed to replace the old.

The Plaza required replacement of its terra cotta stone exterior on the 16th, 17th, and 18th floors.

Seaboard is well known for their restoration of historic buildings with terra cotta façades. Some of these include The Woolworth Building, 55 Liberty Street, and their award-winning work at 90 West Street and at the Eldridge Street Synagogue — all located in New York City.

"The terra cotta stone around the window sills, dormers, and lintels was very dirty," said Michael Ahearn, president of Seaboard Weatherproofing and Restoration. "We used cast stone to replace the old terra cotta and now it looks brand new."

Ahearn went on to say that rigging the building for restoration was most challenging. "We had a steep, sloping mansard roof with dormers...it's the kind of roof that's a tricky thing to rig

with cables that need to fall straight down," Ahearn said. "So, we had to erect 17 exterior masts from the ground up and then hang from a platform to move the scaffolding around...It was a

very challenging job in that respect."

The hotel's 282 guest rooms, which include 152 luxury suites, had been closed during its interior and exterior restoration and re-opened on March 1.