

CONSTRUCTION TODAY

PUBLISHED BY THE GENERAL BUILDING CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE 1 | 2017



Leadership Rising:
Viewpoints from
the New Class
in Construction

DIVINE INTERVENTION:

A RENOVATION OF BIBLICAL PROPORTIONS

by Erik Highland, Marketing Director, Superior Scaffold Services, Inc.

This gorgeous abandoned building from the Gilded Age is coming back to life. And what a life it's had. This is all part of the economic revitalization of the North Broad Street corridor. Built in 1892, the Divine Lorraine is going back to its original function — apartments. It once housed some of Philadelphia's wealthiest residents.

There certainly is a rich history with this building. I would love to do an entire article devoted strictly to the Lorraine and how it ran as a hotel from 1900 to the Great Depression. Then in 1948 it became Philadelphia's first racially-integrated hotel under legendary cult leader Father Divine, founder of the controversial International Peace Mission, who declared himself God Almighty here on earth (oh my), or how after Divine's death in 1965, his worshipers continued to run the property until it closed in 1999. But we are a scaffold company so we will stick to the part we played in this revitalization — Scaffolding! And there was a ton of it!

Superior Scaffold was brought in by the general contractor as part of the \$44 million redevelopment to provide the scaffolding and shoring support to give crews complete access to the exterior of this 10-story structure. The plan is to create over 100 luxury apartments and 20,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space. Developers have been working with a historical consultant to ensure that all of the architectural details are restored to their original grandeur. It's awesome that they are keeping as much of this original as possible.

There are several cool parts to this so we will have to break this down into areas.

Let's start with the massive amount of scaffolding all over the building and then talk about shoring and then move into the courtyard.

The West side went up first. Approximately 120 lineal feet of system scaffold. It was roughly 128' high by 120' long and runs the entire length of the building on Broad St. It has a work deck for crews every 6'6" and a Beta Max Maxial Track hoist to lift equipment. The scaffolding was completely covered in debris netting. The scope is essentially the same on each of the sides.

Our Scaffold is providing restoration crews complete access to the exterior for renovations, repointing, surface cleaning, parapet and soffit work, brick replacement, balcony repair and window painting and replacement. This entire façade should look incredible once crews are finished. Check out the decorative gargoyles and balconies!

What you can't see is the shoring underneath the sidewalk on three sides. These post shores and aluminum beams are from under the East wing. They support the weight of our scaffold, crews and equipment that sit above.

This West wing sits on top of aluminum beams on top of the sidewalk/canopy and it's supported by post shores and hi-load shoring frames underneath where the subway runs along Broad St. This is a very cool job! We also have a stair tower to access two sides. Another one was added when we moved to the East side of the building.

Let's talk about our work in the courtyard. It's roughly 90' long by 80' high. But the cool thing is that we couldn't rest our scaffold on what appears to be the second story roof area because it's really a false skylight. So our guys had to bridge the gap with 21' aluminum beams that rested on the window sills and then erect the scaffold on top of that! Those large aluminum beams had to come out of windows every third floor to support the weight of the scaffold.

Some of the other challenges included loading materials into the courtyard area (see the photo of the crew loading in by hand, bottom right) up and over the canopy, also building the scaffold and stepping back into the balconies in the courtyard.

Not only does it look awesome but it's amazingly stable. It allowed renovation crews incredible access.

There is so much to this job it's very hard to put it all into one article, but I wanted to give you an idea of just how complex it really was and show you some of the great architecture.

This has been one amazing project, and Superior Scaffold is proud to be a part of this divine renovation. The finished project should be heavenly. ■



“ This has been one amazing project, and Superior Scaffold is proud to be a part of this divine renovation. ”

