

Project Information

Philadelphia Marriott Public Food & Beverage Renovation
1201 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

Project Overview

Please provide a complete and accurate overview of the project. Describe its purpose and scope. Provide specific statistics / details as you like.

CCMH Philadelphia, on behalf of Host Hotels & Resorts, Inc., selected C. Erickson & Sons to helm the extensive renovation of its public seating and dining areas at the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown. The project, valued at just under \$4,000,000, saw the transformation of a tired and under-utilized space into an inviting and contemporary restaurant, bar and lounge at the teeming heart of the hotel lobby.

The four-month project reinvented the existing lobby from the previous century's out-dated design into an engineered arrangement of differentiated areas that offer both open, upscale dining, private, lounge-like social seating, and modern, business-class technical amenities. The orchestration of restaurant, bar, and sitting areas not only caters to the hotel's diverse guest requirements, but provide a flexibility of atmosphere to meet guests' needs as they shift from day to evening.

Three unique zones emerged from the almost 16,000 square feet of open space.

The first encompasses the new lobby bar, a sweeping rotunda with a refurbished and retiled central fountain, with a glowing white onyx bartop, and a multi-soffited ceiling that stands a soaring thirty feet overhead. 48" columns clad in glass mosaic tile reflect small, private sitting areas, artglass pendant lighting, and floor finishes transitioning from carpeting, to marble, to quarry tile in the brand new semi-circular bar area.

After removal of the existing bar, the new wood and glass structure was installed to follow eighty feet of the rotunda's gracefully curving back wall. Appropriately renamed "Circ", the bar is topped by Labrador granite and equipped with new beverage dispensing and refrigeration systems; water, and sanitary lines were specially installed from the hotel basement.

Separated from the raised bar area by marble steps, but within easy sightline, additional lounge seating forms a graceful apron around one curve of the rotunda, extending into comfortable, carpeted seating areas, and transitioning into the more formal, seated dining areas that overlook the hotel's 12th Street restaurant space.

Patterned glass mosaic tile are laid in a basket-weave along one wall, illuminated by unique, beaded light fixtures, and providing intimate semi-circular seating for larger parties. Multi-toned Gammapar acrylic-impregnated hardwood floors lead guests beyond this space and into the lobby's third zone, reserved for a more classic and personal dining experience.

Arranged overlooking shaded patio seating on 12th Street, the new restaurant – formerly "Champions" and revitalized into "13" after the original 13 colonies – reveals a brand new stainless steel and glass street entrance. Comfortable booths share space with both individual tables and banquette seating, and a separate, partitioned banquet room provides a space for meetings and special-occasion parties with up to sixty guests.

An open buffet in the main sitting area brings the gourmet cuisine to guests, and the guests to the gourmet cuisine. Conveniently partitioned behind a curtain wall, the buffet server can easily and seamlessly be concealed from site when not in use.

In addition to the granite-counter bar and matching maitre'd stands, separate stainless-steel clad drinking ledges with softly underlit onyx tops give this area an invitingly intimate luminosity.

Helping to tie the three areas together was the installation of specialty lighting, and an audio-visual system (including numerous flat screen, HD LED, and plasma screens) throughout. Although engineered to keep guests comfortably within reach of the lobby's technological amenities, the perpetuation of audio, visual, and lighting also allows fine control over the atmosphere and guest environments, from mood music to ambient light. In this way, for work or pleasure, business or relaxation, guests can immerse themselves in a different experience depending upon the time of their visit.

Project Management & Timeliness

Please describe how the project was managed. If applicable, explain what best practices were used to manage the project. In addition, tell us how your team (i.e. in-house personnel, engineers, architects, sub-contractors, owners) worked together to get the job done. How were you sensitive to the environment and the community surrounding this project?

Given the extremely aggressive schedule, project and team management was especially crucial.

Time constraint, field coordination and scheduling issues were addressed by the construction team during weekly progress meetings, ensuring that all parties were aware of anticipated delays and scheduling milestone expectations.

Due to previously-scheduled functions within the hotel, any disturbance or delay caused by Erickson's presence and construction could have had serious financial implications for the customer. Communication, not just internally but with hotel staff, ensured that the impact upon hotel employees and guests was minimal.

In addition, Erickson was responsible for receiving and installing all of the restaurant and bar furniture.

Despite the aggressive schedule, the entire project was still completed on time.

Quality of Workmanship

Explain the level of workmanship / craftsmanship that went into the project.

As comes as little surprise, the Marriott renovation required a "cut above" quality of workmanship, materials and finishes.

High end wood paneling, artglass light fixtures, marble, quarry stone and glass tile, and specialty hardwood flooring all went into the design and execution of this project, geared towards a feeling of contemporary luxury.

Designed especially with the tech-savvy business traveler in mind, the space required upscale but practical finishes that would appeal to recreational hotel guests, while still creating a professional environment for productivity and connectivity.

The quality of the materials would be nothing without the skilled labor behind their installation, however. Although Erickson takes pride in its work at all levels, pains were taken to be sure that elements requiring a finer attention to detail were handled with the necessary accountability and pride in workmanship.

This is evident not just in the most "customer facing" of finishes, but in the careful coordination of utility installations, such as plumbing and refrigeration lines in the bar areas, with extremely narrow margins for error.

Innovation in Construction Techniques or Materials

Explain special construction techniques, methods, and/or materials that were used on this project. If specific challenges arose as a result, how were they handled?

Careful and accurate coordination of the new utilities was vital.

Plumbing was installed to miss the post tensioned concrete reinforcing in the existing slab. Additionally, the slabs contained a tremendous amount of conduit that could not be disturbed or damaged.

Plumbing, beer, and soda lines were installed into a 10" cavity beneath the circular bar, with tight tolerances to allow for proper drainage, and locations for critical utilities.

Extensive back-of-the-house work was also required, including cooling systems for refrigeration of the food service equipment.

Meeting the Challenge of a Difficult Job

Explain obstacles/challenges that were encountered during the project (e.g., extreme time constraints, pre-existing conditions, new technologies, community involvement, etc.). Tell us how you overcame these obstacles/challenges.

Nestled at the heart of one of Philadelphia's largest and busiest hotels, connected to the Pennsylvania Convention Center during a busy holiday and convention season, one of the projects greatest obstacles was its very nature and location.

With a project end date tied to a scheduled function that was set in stone, and serious financial implications to the client for any delays, Erickson tackled the full renovation in a mere four months. Additional, unavoidable constraints were placed upon this timeframe: a one-week delay at the outset for which there was no extension, the uncertainty of an unexpected and immediate shutdown of construction, should a priority hotel function arise, and eight "Noise Blackout" days, where work was halted to avoid disturbing pre-arranged functions and events.

Construction also took place while the remainder of the hotel, including the nearby admissions and concierge desks, entrances and egresses, were fully functioning and accessible at all times. Extreme care was taken to minimize interruption to hotel guests, and insulate them from as much disruption as possible.

Owner Satisfaction

Please give a brief description of what the owner / occupants had to say about the project.

The owners have been very satisfied with the finished product, both in terms of quality and client draw. Since opening, activity in the new bar and restaurant have been very heavy.

Being at such a central location in the hotel's main level, it was especially important for the newly renovated rotunda and dining area to make a strong visual impact, and management is pleased that the finished product has done just that.