

Preservation Buffalo Niagara Honorees

Rehabilitation/Adaptive Use

257 Lafayette Center, Buffalo

Karl Frizlen, Architect — Paul Johnson, Contractor

Located between the Elmwood Village and the Grant Street commercial corridor, the Catholic school building at 257 Lafayette was for over 80 years a vital part of the community.

Despite its three years of vacancy and state of disrepair, architect/developer Karl Frizlen recognized the enormous potential for adaptation provided by its nine-foot tall double-hung windows with state-of-the-art technology that flooded rooms with light, state-of-the-art exhaust system, terrazzo floors, and splendid craftsmanship ensuring durability. Contractor Paul Johnson turned vision into reality.

Today, the building houses lawyers' offices in the former cafeteria, architects' offices, twenty loft-style one- and two-bedroom apartments in

former classrooms, and a 2,000 sq. ft. early childhood center in a former central bathroom facility.

Much material was reused. Where demolition was unavoidable, salvaged or recycled materials were used. Marble toilet partitions became a reception desk countertop, slate blackboards were left in the apartments, all windows were retrofitted, all doors either left in place or reused elsewhere in the building, and all furnishings reused.

The building highlights the compatibility of historic restoration with green technologies. Existing iron radiators are heated by high-efficiency boilers; a solar electric PV system provides one-third of the electric demand, and a rainwater collection system drains water off the parking lot into a



rain garden.

Privately financed through sources including the CPC, historic tax credits, energy credits, and private investors, the \$3.5 million project also demonstrates the financial feasibility of restoring a neglected facility .

With one hundred percent occupancy, the project has been well supported by the community and is expected to help stabilize the Grant Street neighborhood.

PBN is pleased to add to the number of awards the project has already won with our award for Rehabilitation/Adaptive Reuse.