



Levien & Co. completes first phase of 27,000 s/f renovation and expansion

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Levien & Company has completed the first phase of a comprehensive renovation and expansion project at the historic Friends Seminary, a 220 year old Quaker school in Manhattan that is the oldest continuous K-12 co-ed institution in New York City, according to Kenneth Levien, president of Levien & Company, Inc., the project management firm representing the owners.

The first phase of the multi-million-dollar project encompasses about 27,000 s/f of the school and affected four of the eight historically-significant buildings within the complex. Friends Seminary, situated on East 16th St., lies within the Stuyvesant Square Historic District.

Shortly after construction began, Friends Seminary decided to purchase another building, a townhouse adjacent to two of the school's existing townhouse structures. The construction team converted the residence to classrooms, with administrative offices on the lower levels. This purchase expanded the original plan for the phase one construction. Â

Renovations included the addition of a new consolidated library, five new classrooms, a science lab, new bathrooms, and a new vertical circulation core.

"The renovation greatly improves circulation within the school, providing accessibility and making it easier for students and staff to navigate through all of the different properties," said Denise Ferris, the Levien project manager for the renovation.

"Because the school was founded in the 18th century, this assemblage of buildings presented many unique design challenges. One example is an elevator that serves six floors in three separate buildings, making at least 17 stops. It connects the adjacent buildings and has three doors, each of which opens into a different building. Since each structure has a different floor height, some elevator stops are only six inches apart."

In addition to the newly purchased townhouse, the four buildings involved in the first phase of construction include 222 East 16th St. (the "new school," constructed in 1964), 226 East 16th Street (an old schoolhouse, which dates to the 1860s), 15 Rutherford Place (also constructed in the 1860s) and the townhouse at 216 East 16th St.

Much of the construction was completed during one non-occupied summer session and the winter and spring breaks. The design and construction team phased the project to allow minor work during the school year.

Plans for the next phase are under development.

Levien & Company managed the project team, which included: Helfand Architecture, (now Tinmouth Chang Architects), architect; Robert Silman Associates, structural engineer; Lilker Associates, mechanical, electrical and plumbing engineers; and Lehr Construction Corp., construction manager. New York City-based Levien & Company, Inc., was founded in 1992 by Kenneth Levien, AIA, to satisfy the need for the highest quality project management services for complex projects. During

the past 15 years, the firm has completed more than 300 assignments of various types for more than 100 clients, serving not-for-profit educational, cultural and religious institutions; property owners and tenants; public corporations; and private firms.

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