



Brookfield Properties & WatermanClark complete \$100 million redevelopment

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Manhattan, NY Brookfield Properties and WatermanClark, LLC have completed the \$100 million redevelopment of Lever House, Park Ave.'s landmark trophy office tower. The 21-story, 260,000 s/f tower has been restored and reimagined, introducing a boutique office experience featuring a revitalized lobby, ground-level public plaza, and modernized building systems. The tower's third floor and 15,000 s/f of terraces overlooking Park Ave. have been transformed into The Lever Club, an indoor-outdoor hospitality suite featuring a central bar, private and open gathering spaces for meeting, entertaining and networking, and day-to-night food and beverage service from culinary partner Sant Ambroeus Hospitality Group.

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), the original architects of Lever House, led the landmarked building's restoration. Wide-ranging in scope but with attention to craftsmanship and detail, the architects and developers together executed a plan to maintain the integrity of Lever House's original design while restoring its materials and upgrading its infrastructure. Over the past year, the teams transformed the building's exterior plaza and pavers, interior lobby, plaster ceilings, stainless steel columns, and marble planters. Acclaimed landscape architecture firm Reed Hilderbrand curated a new landscape program across the property, introducing distinct mini-forest groves of single-spire and multi-trunk Whitespire birch trees on the plaza level and third floor terrace respectively, paired with woodland-like flowering and herbaceous vegetation, shrubs and flowers. Cosentini Associates was enlisted to update Lever's mechanical systems, replacing outdated induction units with a Dedicated Outdoor Air System to deliver 100% filtered, outdoor air to tenants. The modernized systems permitted more efficient floorplates and increased ceiling heights, all without altering the exterior appearance of the building.

The plaza area has been replaced by a durable cast-in-place concrete matching the design of Lever House's original exterior paving; the water-damaged ceiling has been replaced with new higher performing plaster; and throughout the site, the original stainless steel-clad columns have been refinished, alongside the champlain black marble. In collaboration with TM Light, energy-efficient, long-lasting LED lights have replaced the original lighting to maintain the aperture and look throughout.

The developers partnered with Los Angeles-based architecture firm Marmol Radziner to design The Lever Club, taking cues from its luxury residential and hospitality practice. Originally a cafeteria and recreation room for Lever Brothers employees, the space has had multiple uses over the years, including office space. Following the repositioning, The Lever Club will serve as a multi-use hospitality suite, with a stylishly designed central bar, open gathering spaces for work and entertaining, dining rooms, private reservable conference rooms for small and large gatherings, and an outdoor terrace and gardens. Design details include honed soapstone and marble walls and floors, both a mix of soft greens inspired by the historic façade of the building. Specialty installations include hand-stitched leather wall panels, a custom cast glass screen, and rich rosewood paneling and cabinetry.

Bespoke furniture in mohair, leather, and rosewood serve to soften the architecture and extend a sense of comfortable luxury. The Lever Club's day-to-night food and beverage program and hospitality services are managed by Sant Ambroeus Hospitality Group, along with concierge dining service to tenant floors.

"We are very pleased to unveil Lever House and to see our vision for this iconic building come to life," said Ric Clark, co-managing partner of WatermanClark. "The renovated Lever House displays an unwavering commitment to architectural stewardship while integrating the qualities of a future-forward workplace, from high-end dining and five-star hospitality to elegant design and state-of-the-art infrastructure."

"When Lever House first opened its doors, it redefined the modern workplace and set a new standard of excellence. Today, we raise the bar even higher, building upon that legacy through an impeccable restoration and reimagination of this Park Avenue icon," said Callie Haines, executive vice president, Northeast Region Head, Brookfield Properties. "We are immensely proud of this project, both ambitious in scale and exacting in detail, and we look forward to welcoming our tenants to the new Lever House experience."

"This renovation reactivates Lever House for the 21st century," said SOM Partner Chris Cooper. "We've restored the plaza and podium to its original 1952 glory while comprehensively overhauling the mechanical systems. The result is a landmark that is both renewed and reminiscent of its midcentury splendor—with revamped outdoor spaces, more natural light inside, and an efficient use of energy."

"As architects who have restored many midcentury modern buildings, we have long admired the

simple beauty of Lever House. In New York City, its architectural relevance has few parallels,” said Ron Radziner, FAIA, design partner at Marmol Radziner. “In conceptualizing a modern interior for the new Lever Club—housed in a space that originally served as an employee cafeteria but that had been altered for various other uses over the years—we wanted to create a clear aesthetic insertion that would also be sympathetic to the architecture. Experientially, it was important that Lever Club feel warm, almost residential in feel. This translated to our intentional color-blocking of interior materials, the basis of which was the iconic green of the building facade. From there, we layered rosewood, leather paneling, and plush upholstery on silhouettes that soften the beautifully hard edges of the architecture. We are honored to have had the opportunity to bring a new level of luxury to this iconic building.”

Completed in 1952 as the U.S. headquarters of soap company Lever Brothers, Lever House has been globally recognized for its architectural influence at the time of its completion and in the decades following. It was one of the earliest examples of a glass curtain wall facade, revolutionizing Park Avenue, which had exclusively featured buildings of brick and masonry to that point. The facade, along with the positioning of the building’s slim tower along the north end of the site, allow for ample sunlight on all floors. The remainder of the site is covered by a podium which appears to float on stainless steel columns, giving the ground floor over to public space rather than retail – a decision that redefined the relationship between the private and public realms. Lever House is hailed as an icon of the shift to modern skyscrapers, and later became one of only 50 buildings globally to win a Twenty-five Year Award from the American Institute of Architects (AIA).

Lever House is targeting the highest health and sustainability standards including LEED Gold, WELL, WiredScore Platinum, Energy-Star and GRESB. With series of sweeping changes to the mechanical systems, contributions to new LEED Gold and WELL Platinum certification is targeted. SOM, in collaboration with Cosentini Associates, equipped the building with a modern, dedicated outdoor air system, new chillers, HEPA filters, and an automated building management system. This new mechanical equipment, along with a 500-kilowatt generator, improved security systems, and modernized elevators, will maintain the landmark’s place as a Class A office space for decades to come.

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