

Facts & Figures

Owner: Belmont Condominiums, LLC, Boston, MA

Type of Project: Adaptive reuse of a school for condominiums

Architect: The Architectural Team, Inc., Chelsea, MA

General Contractor: Sea-Dar Construction, Boston, MA

Size: 36 condominiums

Cost: \$5.9 million

Construction Time: Completed in June 2004

The Need: Additional residential options for the area

The Challenge: Managing a very tight schedule



Photos courtesy of Sea-Dar Construction

Supportive Team Members

Electrical Dynamics, Inc.
Electrical Contractors

Isaac Blair & Co., Inc.
Specialty Contractors

Marr Scaffolding Company
Aerial Lifts

Pairier Sales & Service Corp.
Major Appliance Contractor

Priority Wall Systems

Sitrace Industries
Kitchen Cabinets & Vanities



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Malden, Massachusetts Belmont Lofts

A Malden, Mass., school was recently converted into 36 beautiful new condominiums that provide additional residential property for the area.

"The school campus consisted of two buildings — one built in 1890 and one in 1939," said Tony Salem, project manager for Sea-Dar Construction, the project's general contractor. "Essentially, we had to maintain two types of structures."

The project included interior demolition and extensive improvements to the original buildings. "Our biggest challenges involved structural design changes after the demolition phase due to what we uncovered during the demolition," said Salem. "We had to change the entire sequence of work to accommodate design changes and maintain a schedule."

In addition, demands were placed on the team regarding material selection and execution. "We had to accommodate, track and apply 36 buyer upgrades, different hardwood floors, granite, carpet and French doors under the tight schedule," said Salem.

For Salem, the project's set closing dates and the buyer upgrades left no room for mistakes. The schedule had to be met. The buyer upgrades had to be tracked properly and documented to avoid delays. The sequence of work was completely changed midway to accommodate for structural design changes. Subcontractors had to work out of sequence and jump through hoops to keep the schedule on track.

Another challenge was that the project was still under construction

in some sections of the building, while in other sections buyers were already moving in. According to Salem, all members of the team found themselves working very carefully around certain areas of the site. As a result of the constant flow of traffic, the team worked closely with the city to schedule building inspectors virtually every week. This made for an even tougher schedule once closing dates were in place.

"Managing all this wasn't an easy task, but in the end it was the extreme level of cooperation from all team members that kept the project moving and on time," said Salem. The result is a beautifully renovated condominium complex representative of the revitalization initiative underway in the Boston area. ■

— Laura Carter

