

# BUILDING<sup>®</sup> BRIEFS

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## New Haven Country Club Renovations Up To Par

Renovating a one-hundred-year-old building poses remarkable obstacles and daily challenges, especially when the building hasn't been updated in several years. The New Haven Country Club in Hamden, Connecticut was founded in the horse-and-buggy days of 1898. It is one of only twenty golfing clubs in Connecticut to trace its history to the 19th century. Connecticut Magazine reported in 1900 that "A handsome stone clubhouse was erected in the Old English pattern,

similar to clubhouses of England and Scotland." The Club recognized the importance of selecting the right partner for its recent renovation, and chose Petra Construction Corporation for this important assignment. An aggressive construction schedule to accommodate the membership's use of the Club, and a definitive budget from the owner, set the framework for Petra Project Executive, Al Pacelli, and the project team.

The project called for renovation of several interior spaces of the clubhouse, expansion of the locker room, upgrading of mechanical and electrical systems, replacement of floor and wall finishes throughout the entire building, installation of new decorative lighting, repair of the roof, replacement of

doors, windows and rain gutters, and improvements to site drainage.

The architectural design for the renovation, completed by Brian Ameche of Ameche Architects, and the mechanical system upgrade, designed by Aztech Engineers, Inc., offered significant challenges, due to the lack of any drawings of the existing clubhouse. Petra Project Manager Glenn Stevens was on site every day to coordinate the construction and to help develop solutions to the inevitable unforeseen circumstances that are encountered when renovating an older commercial facility. "Early in the project, we were surprised to discover a steel support column when we opened the walls to expand the bar in the dining room. This open area was really a critical part of the design," said Glenn. "After analyzing our options, the best solution was to fabricate and install a new overhead steel carrying beam to span the new opening. This wasn't anticipated in the original budget or the schedule."

Sloping floors required some creative detailing and installation by Petra's custom millshop, to allow replacement doors and windows to operate properly. In fact, the new wooden lockers that Petra fabricated and installed in the locker room included a crackled finish and treated hardware, to identically match the existing lockers. "It's the best replication I've ever seen," said the club's General Manager, Sean McLaughlin. "Additionally, the beautiful Arts and Crafts style millwork, decorative lighting, stained glass panels, and new



*The New Haven Country Club renovation provided significant improvements to the prestigious facility*

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colors make the spaces feel much brighter and inviting. Our staff and our members are really impressed with the quality of Petra's work and their attention to detail."

"We couldn't have done such an outstanding job without this great team," said Al Pacelli. "Everyone was passionate about identifying solutions and cost saving opportunities, to help the Club achieve their goals in the most cost-effective manner. For example, we researched alternatives to identify an attractive and functional rain gutter system, to help the club reduce their costs. We were also challenged to help solve numerous issues, such as new cove lighting that required additional decorative trim to conceal the lamps, and new decorative metal exterior railings that required additional strengthening to prevent potential weakening from years of future use." Glenn Stevens added, "We worked with the Fire Marshal to conceal fire sprinkler heads and use drop-down exit signs where appropriate. We looked for opportunities to help the Club retain its heritage. We found an effective way to refinish and reinstall several areas of existing millwork, to keep that history alive. We helped create a new pocket door system to allow the decorative paneling and member plaques to remain visible when the doors are open. In fact, an old golf shoe, golf pants, blank score card, and invoices, all from around 1912, fell from the ceiling as we were demolishing one area."

Dr. Kevin T. O'Brien, chairman of



*The beautiful Arts and Crafts design and craftsmanship reflected in the dining room*

the New Haven Country Club Building Committee, remarked how thrilled the membership and the Board of Governors are with the outstanding renovations. "The project management team was outstanding. As owners, we were always informed, our questions answered succinctly, and leadership was consistently strong," said Dr. O'Brien.

"We all anticipated that the twenty-four months of planning and sixteen months of construction would be challenging. However, with Petra, there were no problems, only solutions."

The New Haven Country Club has a long and prestigious history, dating back to 1898. Now they have an updated,

vibrant, highly functional clubhouse to carry them through many more years of rich experiences and enjoyment for members, their families, and guests.

To discuss construction management or construction services for your next project, please call Guido Petra, President or Terry Wooding, Executive Vice President at 203-865-6043.



*Beautiful millwork and quality construction in the lounge area*

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