



**BUFFALO**  **SCHOOL**  
OF CULINARY ARTS & HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

HISTORICAL ADAPTIVE REUSE PROJECT OF FORMER C.W.  
MILLER LIVERY BUILDING TO BUFFALO PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Emerson Huron, LLC**  
*Owner/Developer*

**M/E Engineers, Petrilli Structural**  
*Engineers*

**Buffalo Construction Consultants**  
*Construction Manager*

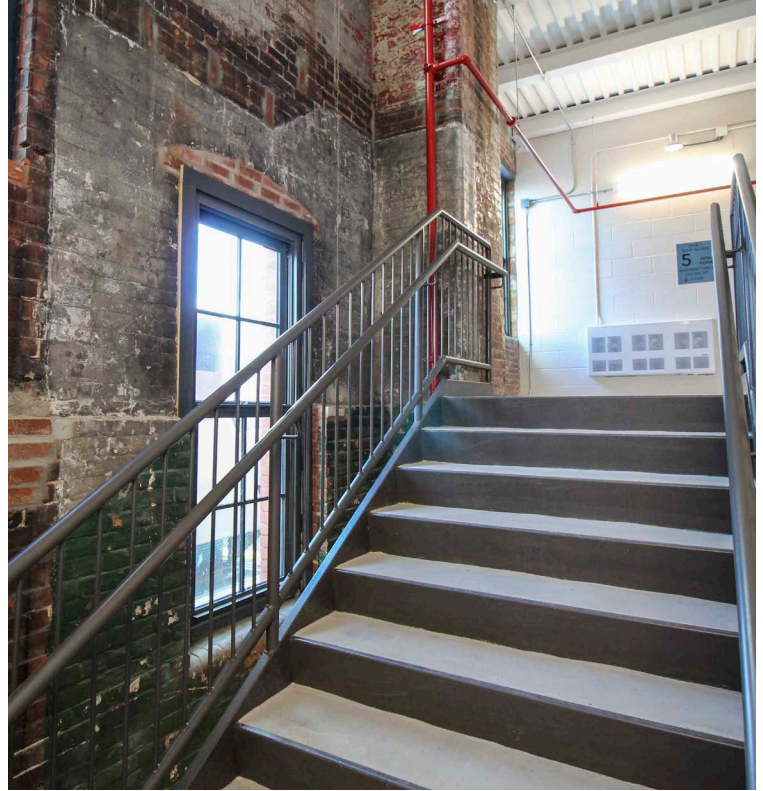
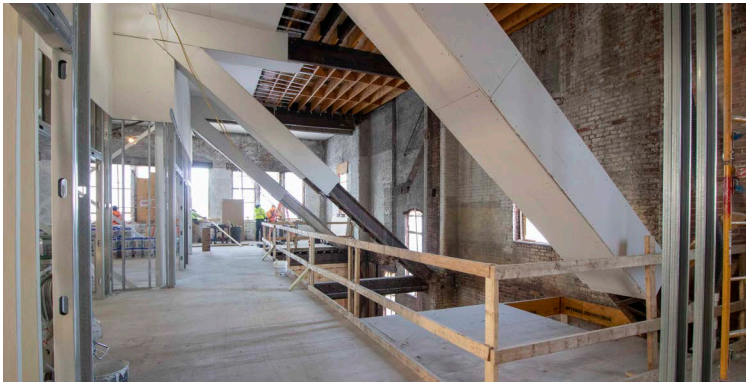
**Kideney Architects**  
*Architects*

**McGuire**Development Co

See the Difference at: [McGuireDevelopment.com](http://McGuireDevelopment.com)

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**SIZE OF PROJECT:**

102,000 SF

**ADDRESS:**

75 W. Huron Street, Buffalo NY

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

McGuire Development spearheaded development of the new Buffalo School of Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management (“BSCAH”). Located in the former 5-story C.W. Miller Livery building on W. Huron Street, the concept involved renovation of the historic Miller Livery building, a National Register of Historic Places.

The addition and expansion of educational programs is a major asset to the Downtown Buffalo community and surrounding neighborhoods. Designed for approximately 500 students, the programing includes a full academic High School, working commercial training kitchens, a full restaurant, retail shop, and full gymnasium addition built over the parking area.

*Project timeline: June 2018-December 2019*

The McGuire Development team’s role in the BSCAH team delivered the new Buffalo School of Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management **on time and under budget.**

75 West Huron Street is one of the last large parcels in recent history calling out for redevelopment in downtown Buffalo. The parcel is situated in Buffalo’s Hospitality Corridor and in the heart of the central business district. In January of 2017, McGuire Development, James Jerge, and Mark Croce joined forces to respond to an RFP issued by the Buffalo Public School District (“BPS”). The RFP requested proposals for a new leased facility for a “Hospitality High School,” which would replicate the existing and successful “Culinary School” model. A robust RFP response was prepared, and in July of 2017, BPS selected 75 West Huron to house the new hospitality high school. A major factor in BPS’s decision was 75 West Huron’s proximity to the existing Emerson Culinary High School, providing many opportunities to gain efficiencies between the two facilities.

75 West Huron has long been recognized in the community due to the unique design and engineering concept used to build the structure. Built originally as a livery stable, the building’s structure is based on a suspended strap system hanging from trusses on the 6th floor. This engineering design allows for minimal columns and structural supports throughout the building, creating open and easily adaptable spaces. Initially used as a storage facility for carriages, the building evolved into an automobile parking garage supported by a ramp system. These unique, historic design

elements both challenged and enhanced the ultimate design needs for the school.

The adaptive reuse of a nationally recognized historic structure into a multi-purpose commercial facility brings vibrancy and economic investment to this critical central neighborhood. The Buffalo School of Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management builds upon the existing culinary school programs by adding hospitality and hotel management disciplines. The new facility accommodates rapidly growing interest in the BPS’s hospitality programs, and provides a gymnasium for both schools to utilize, in addition to classrooms, kitchens, dining open to the public, and a bakery.

Notable design highlights include: a full-sized 2nd floor gymnasium built on piers, ample state-of-the-art kitchens and bakery space, library, cafeteria, and multiple banquet spaces, restaurant and retail areas which will be open to the public.

## OWNERSHIP AND PROJECT TEAM:

### Emerson Huron, LLC

The building owners are comprised of three separate entities each owning 1/3 of the project. MDC Huron, LLC (McGuire Family), Buffmark Holdings, LLC (Mark Croce), and 1JCrew Holdings, LLC (James Jerge).

### Project Team

Being selected by BPS as the developer for this project meant finding the ideal team of architects, engineers, and construction management to move the development process forward and to meet the extremely tight delivery timeframe set by BPS. Through a competitive selection process, the development team led by McGuire Development Company as the owner’s representative, joined forces with Kideney Architects (“Kideney”), and Buffalo Construction Consultants (“BCC”) as the Construction Manager, with input from the building owners throughout the project, to rehabilitate this amazing Queen City asset.

Other notable project participants are listed below with a brief description of the work completed.

- Benchmark Environmental Engineering Consultants- Environmental testing and consulting
- Bousquet Holstein PLLC- Emerson Huron, LLC project attorney & Brownfield Tax Credit consultant
- Berkshire Bank- Construction/Permanent Lender
- Erie County Industrial Development Agency- Mortgage & Sales Tax Exemption
- Evans Bank- Bridge loan lender
- Grossman St. Amour- HTC Tax Credit Accountant
- Lawley Insurance - Insurance Broker (Property, General Liability, Builders Risk)
- Lynn Stievator- HTC Consultant
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)- Brownfield Clean-Up Governing Authority
- Pay2Park- Parking Operator for BPS Parking Spaces
- Preservation Studios- Historic Tax Credit Consultant for HTC application process



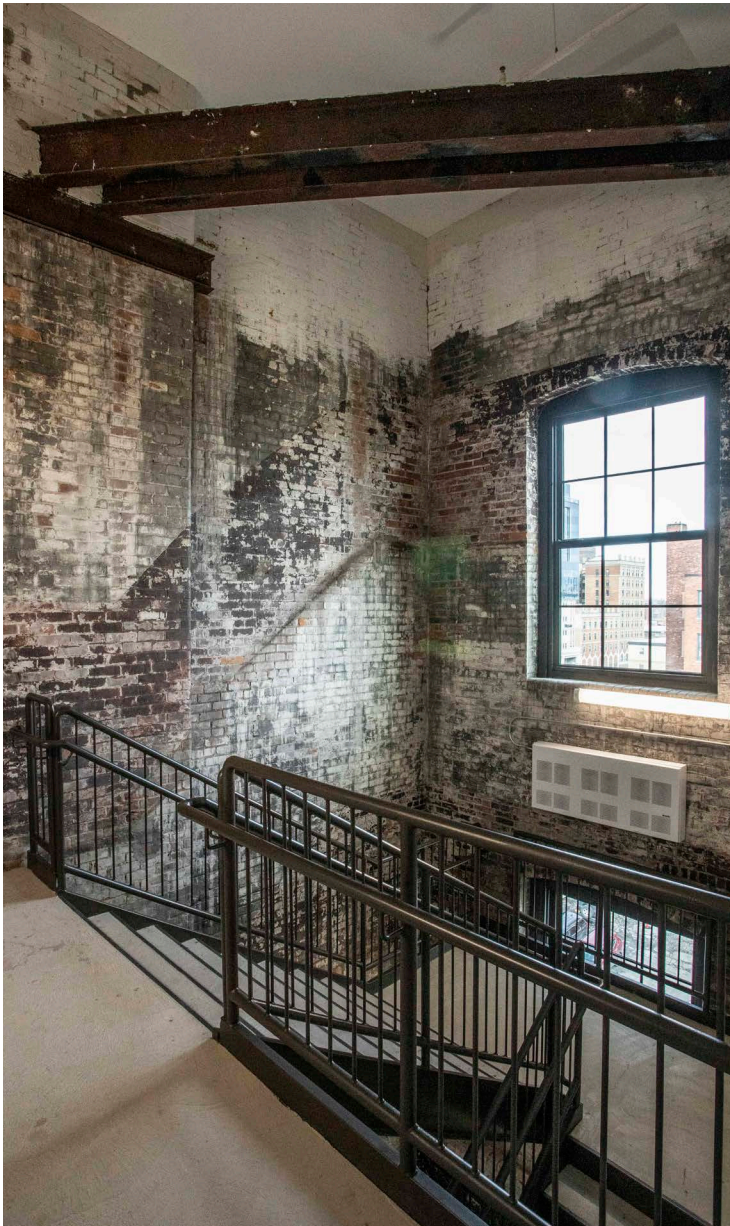
*“We are very proud of this incredibly successful project. The project team assembled was diligent and met the challenge of short turnaround expectations with budgetary restraints. A well rounded project team was a great support to the McGuire Vision, Budget, and Timeline: VBT Process™, which ultimately provided BPS with a fantastic new educational facility under budget.”* –David Von Derau, President and Chief Operating Officer, McGuire Development Company

## BUFFALO PUBLIC SCHOOL'S PROJECT VISION:

The historic C.W. Miller Livery at 75 West Huron Street was reconfigured to satisfy the programmatic needs of a state-of-the-art Hospitality High School for a population of approximately 500 students. The project required a full re-development to make it habitable for The Buffalo School of Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management. This included: Historic Building Restoration, ADA Accessibility, Code Evaluation, Interior Design, Food Service Design, Selective Demolition, Core and Shell improvements, HVAC Upgrades, Updated Plumbing, and Electrical Systems. A floor by floor description of the building's program is listed below:

**Basement Level** – Mechanical/electrical support space, plus available space for food and program storage.

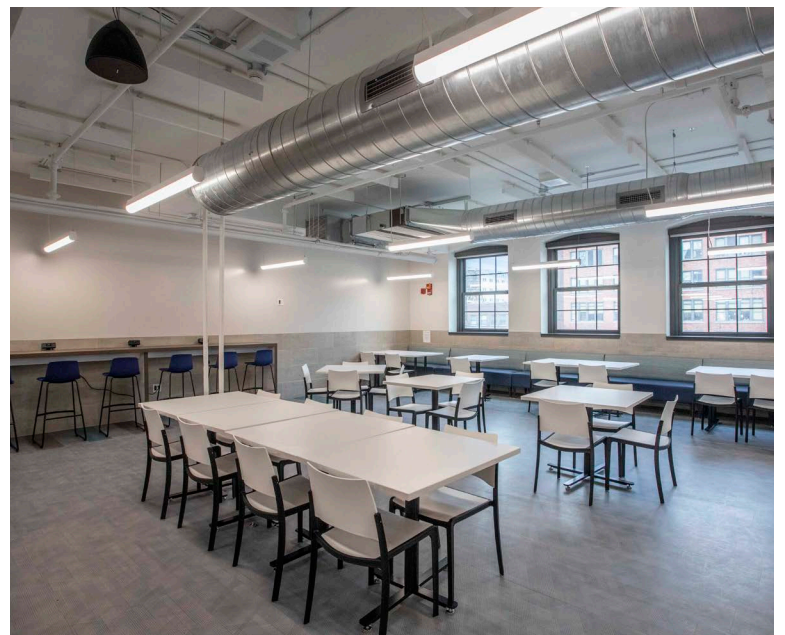
**First Floor** – An expansive lobby/concierge space fronting on West Huron Street acts as an upscale hotel-like entry point serving both a public restaurant space and as the school's main entry. The restaurant features a private dining room that can be rented for private functions. The north/rear side of the building will accommodate deliveries and distribution space for food supplies entering the building, with direct access to a freight/service elevator serving all floors. The balance of the floor is dedicated to a teaching kitchen/culinary lab, prep, and support space.

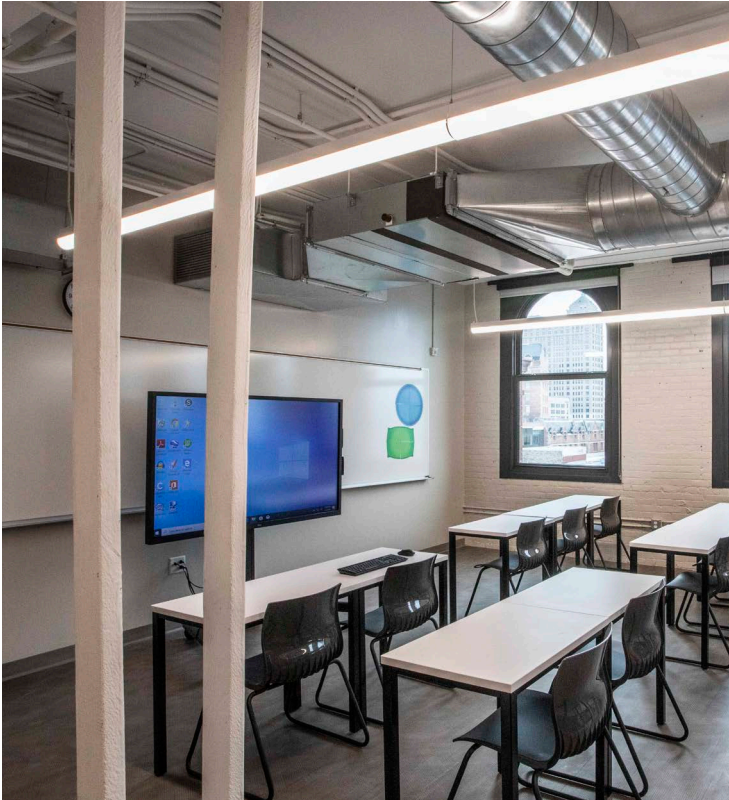


**Second Floor** – The main administrative office for the school faces West Huron Street. In addition, this floor hosts a large and divisible banquet/special event space along with back-of-house teaching spaces for food prep/serving and a bakery. This floor also provides access to the newly constructed full-size gymnasium, built as an addition to the building, including locker and toilet rooms. The gymnasium is built on piers to accommodate staff parking and building access below.

**Third Floor** – This floor accommodates traditional interchangeable school classrooms, including a dedicated art room, as well as offices for guidance and the school nurse.

**Fourth Floor** – Traditional interchangeable and special education classrooms.





**Fifth Floor**– Traditional interchangeable classrooms including dedicated science rooms, as well as office space for SST and the assistant principal.

**Sixth Floor** – This space is the most striking in this historic building due to the exposed structural trusses and strap bracing. This floor accommodates large open-plan spaces including the cafeteria and library. Computer and resource rooms serve to divide these two, large sky-lit spaces from each other. Suspended panels and glass partitions highlight the unique character of this space.

**Residential** – One self-contained residential dwelling unit, with separate access.

The team held a series of weekly meetings throughout the project’s design and construction:

- Weekly Design Meeting
- Bi-Weekly OACM Meeting
- Weekly Owners Meeting

These meetings were instrumental in meeting the delivery deadline of December 2019 (16-month construction schedule, including pre-construction). **The project team worked tirelessly on the development resulting in successful completion of the school on-time and about \$300,000 under the project budget of \$37 million.**

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS:

### Removal of Abandoned Cars

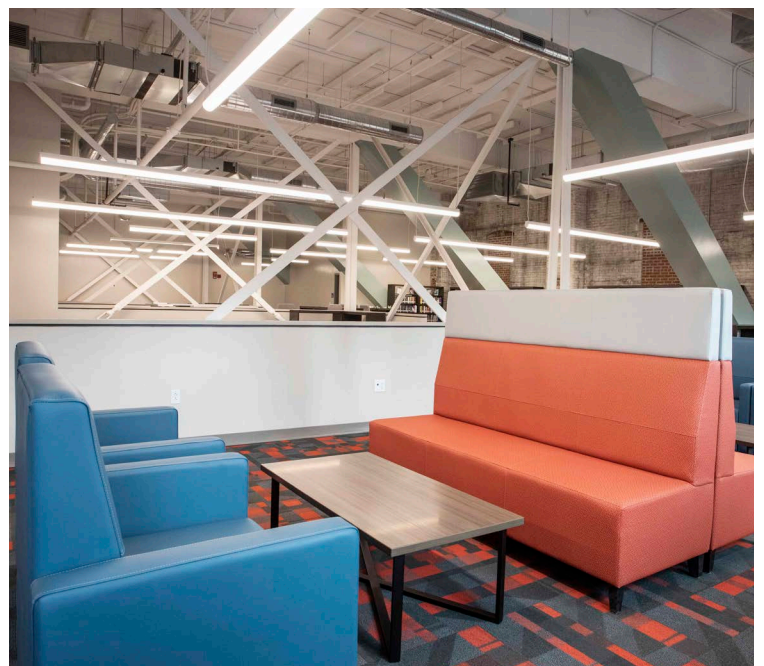
This project included several unique factors, one of which was the removal of two abandoned vehicles from the 4th and 5th floors of the building via crane. The vehicles had been abandoned in the building when it last served as a public parking ramp. Upon removal, the vehicles were sold and the proceeds donated by the building owners to BPS.

### Large Dynamic Team & Complex Group of Stakeholders

Executing this project successfully required navigating the various ownership entities, design and construction teams, BPS’ design and operation teams, and ensuring each entity’s project requests were respected. The team met weekly while remaining agile for rapid decision making, all while navigating the various required approvals and notification needs. This allowed for strict adherence to the district’s budget and timeline.

*“An excellent experience on the ownership/design/construction management team pulling together for the success of the project. Extremely proud and grateful to have been a part of this.”* –**Raymond Bednarski, Principal, Kideney Architects**

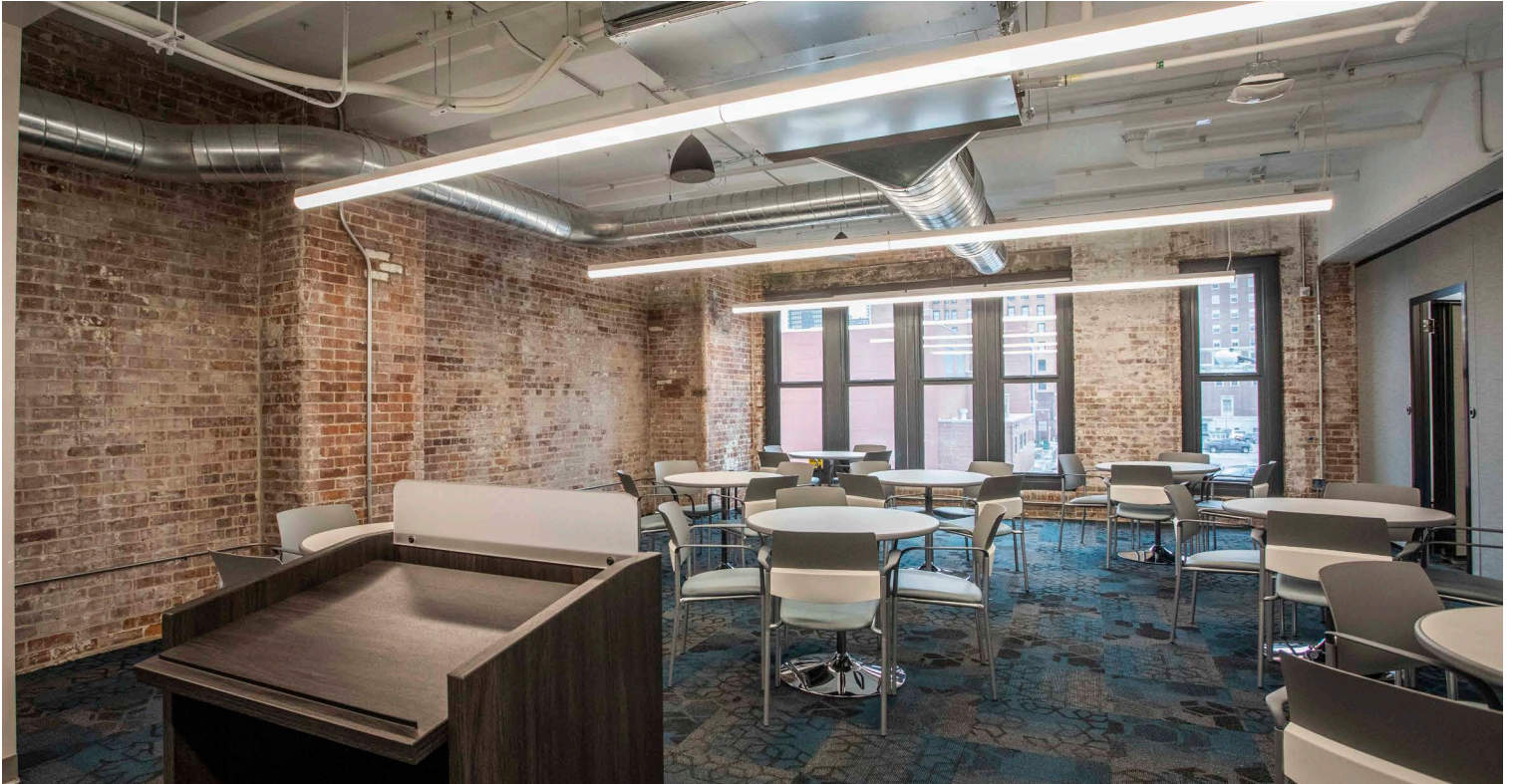
*“One of my favorite parts of the project is the history of the building, the story of its original construction, and the appreciation of the craftsmanship throughout the structure. Also, the view from the 6th floor is outstanding!”* –**Mark Wendling, Project Superintendent, Buffalo Public Schools**



## Complex Sources and Uses of Project Funding

The Project was structured with equity, conventional financing, and a small grant from National Fuel. Use of Federal and New York State Historic Tax Credits, as well as Brownfield Tax Credits, strongly supported the Project by facilitating a market-based return on the equity investment, as well as a lowered rent realized by the BPS.

The project team displayed effective collaboration alongside robust communication, while remaining agile and creative despite the project's many variables and challenges. The team also produced effective documentation, engaged critical problem solving, and offered sophisticated legal assistance. The complex design required for conversion to a modern technical school concept needed effective navigation of tax credit programs and financial elements, while maintaining the budget and scheduling needs of various parties.



## PROJECT CHALLENGES:

### Historic Rehabilitation

The building was originally a livery stable (CW Miller Livery Stable) and is listed on the national register of historic places after approval by the State Historic Preservation Office (“SHPO”) in 2007, Part I of the Historic Tax Credit (“HTC”) application. The building was constructed between 1892 and 1894 and was deemed significant in the areas of architecture, engineering, transportation, and commerce. Its original use was for carriage storage for Buffalo’s elite at the turn of the century. By the end of WWI, finding parking for cars was becoming a serious problem in most American cities and in 1920, the building was converted into a parking garage, later known as the Hertz Garage.

Both Kideney and BCC reported that one of the challenges of this project was to design a contemporary educational facility in this historic structure, while maintaining the historic character and fabric of the building, both as a cultural asset for the community but likewise for compliance with the project’s Historic Tax Credit application.

Approval by the HTC governing authorities (National Park Service and NYSHPO) was critical on this project, because, as discussed below, these tax credits were a critical component to making the project financially feasible. Critical to the project, was maintaining the distinctive façade which combined “elements of the Romanesque Revival style with neo-classical details inspired by the Renaissance Revival” (Approved Part I HTC Application – November 2007)

Due to the collaborative work of the project team, the design and construction challenges with respect to historic rehabilitation were overcome, and the building was approved for Part II of the HTC application in 2018 and Part III in 2020.

Another element associated with the building's historic construction, was achieving current-day code compliance. The former Hertz Garage was eventually abandoned and sat vacant for nearly 20 years. Kideney Architects led the charge in making sure that the building's historic elements were not sacrificed while simultaneously upgrading the facility to meet the highest safety standards in constructibility for future students. Furthermore, the building had become known as the "Hertz Building" in recent years, given the large "Hertz" sign affected to the west façade. Tremendous discussions were had with all team members discussing what to do with the Hertz sign once it was removed from the Building. Ultimately, BPS did not want to pursue conserving the sign as an option.

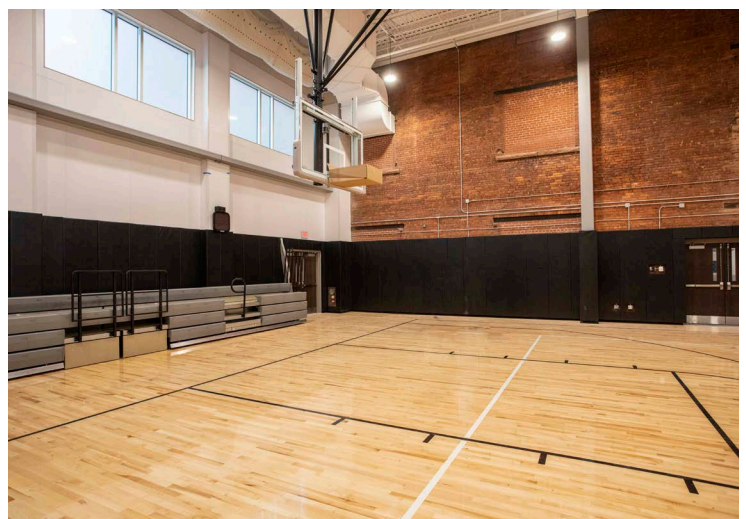
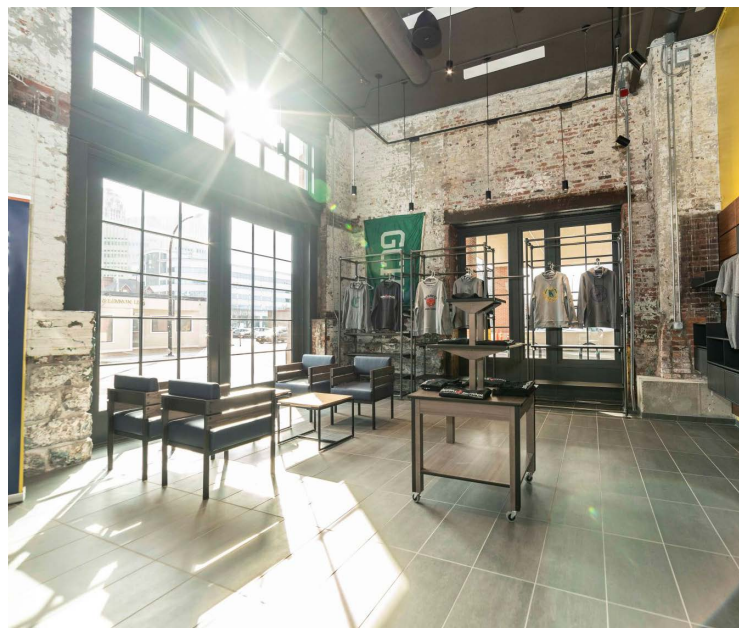
### Site Location

The above as-built survey illustrates the challenge presented with respect to the location of the site in a tight urban setting. Adding to this challenge was BPS's requirement for a gymnasium to be added to the building. The gym not only created a challenge for the site, but also for the HTC approval process. BCC reported greater difficulty in working through the logistics of the construction of the gymnasium and some required work on the East elevation of the building, given that it abuts the Curtiss Hotel.

Property line constraints created the need for easements, requiring the cooperation and consent of various neighboring property owners. The development team's collaborative effort allowed for these site location challenges to overcome with little to no effect on the overall success of the project.

### High School Facility and Unique Educational Program

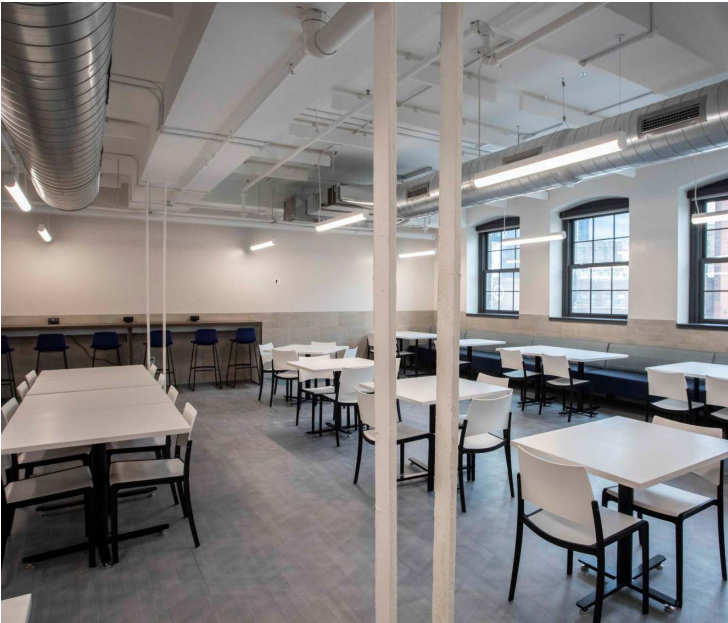
Designing a high school facility focused on hospitality that would meet the needs of a distinctive educational curriculum, yet also compatible with its sister school, Emerson Culinary School, comes with many challenges. The New York State Education Department ("NYSED") has stringent design guidelines and requirements which also governed the amount of funding allocated to fitting out the school. Kideney Architects, with a wealth of experience in designing education facilities, noted unlike traditional K-12 projects typically owned and occupied by a particular school district, a leased facility receives its building permit from the





local authority having jurisdiction – in this case the City of Buffalo. However, a NYSED review process is undertaken in order to “approve” the facility for use. Thankfully, Kideney’s relationship with both local and NYSED permitting entities brought additional value to the project and made negotiations on aid and space requirements that much less complicated.

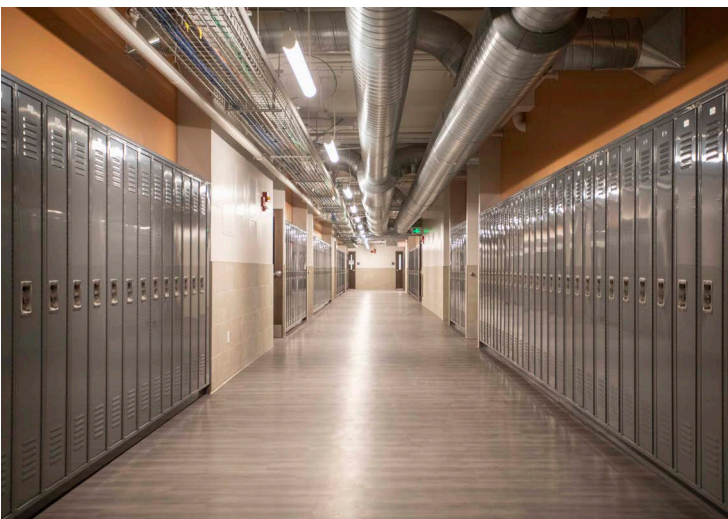
With many different stakeholders sitting around the table, design took place on a continuum as the school continued to refine the educational program for the building. Nevertheless looking at the project outcome, the additional time and money spent on various design enhancements contributed to the extraordinary project outcome and exceptional program planning that resulted.



### **Brownfield Clean-Up Basement Rehabilitation Work**

The presence of water flowing beneath the building posed a further problem, requiring replacement of the basement structural slab. This aquifer required the placement of 1,000 wooden piles to be installed in the dead of winter, to create the foundation that supports the 6th floor trusses. The subterranean stream also created logistical problems when attempting to excavate to install the elevator pit and transformer vaults.

Effective teamwork and problem-solving allowed for a timely and cost-effective solution. The Development Team faced challenges with the commitment to meeting the established delivery deadline and bringing the project to successful completion under budget.



The previous use of the building, particularly the basement, caused environmental contamination. The basement previously contained a blacksmith shop, power plant, sump pump system, and an area for storing heavy wagons. The basement also contained two hydraulic pumps that operated two elevators. These semi-industrial uses, together with automobile run off and other pollution created by the Hertz Garage, caused extensive environmental contamination resulting in extensive clean-up and remediation work.

This project was not only reliant on Historic Tax Credits, but also on Brownfield Tax Credits, to maintain financial feasibility. With the clean-up of the site and due to its use as an educational facility, the building is now subject to annual and semi-annual testing and reporting to NYSDEC.



## CONCLUSION:

This project was ultimately successful and was completed on-time and under the established budget. The owners as well as BPS as the single tenant in the building are all extremely pleased with the outcome of the building, and the project overall. The construction was fairly smooth with few unexpected issues. Investors achieved an average economic return on their equity.

The McGuire approach streamlines the project life-cycle from conception to completion, making this a model project that expertly carried out the vision set forth by BPS. We create adaptable strategies for clients of all sizes by maintaining critical tension between the three pillars of business: Vision, Budget and Timeline: VBT Process™. At McGuire, our process from start to finish insures our clients and community feel supported, heard, and set up for success.