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Coming full circle - A recurring theme

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Abbot Building
Restoration

Coming full circle is defined as returning to the origin of a project or situation. In terms of the service industry, coming full circle can refer to hiring a contractor back after successful earlier work. In its rich history as a successful masonry contractor, Abbot has been hired back on many occasions to work on new projects by existing clients. In some cases, this goes back a long way.

Harbor Loft Apartments

A common theme in Abbot's 76-year history has been performing work several times on the same building for different owners. Take Harbor Loft Apartments as an example. Harbor Loft is an elegant 8-story brick high-rise building located at the corner of Washington and Broad Sts. in downtown Lynn. When the building was converted to public housing back in the 1960s, Abbot became involved with some minor repairs at that time. Coincidentally, Abbot has come full circle some 50 years later, and was recently contracted by the current building owner to perform maintenance on Washington St. elevation that was experiencing severe water penetration around the windows and masonry.

The contract called for Abbot to cut out and repoint the masonry on the top five floors where the most severe water damage had occurred. Also, as a previous



Harbor Loft Apartments - Lowell, MA

contractor has resealed the windows improperly, Abbot removed the defective sealant around multiple joints on each window -- metal to masonry, metal to metal, and metal to glass -- and removed all of the remaining residue. Abbot then resealed the affected locations with a high-grade polyurethane sealant to match the original color around the exterior of the windows. Finally Abbot applied a clear water repellent to help protect the masonry surfaces.

76 Batterymarch

Another instance is 76 Batterymarch, a 4-story brick building located in downtown Boston. Originally a commercial property, the building was converted to condominiums back in the mid-1980s. During that conversion, Abbot had performed limited masonry work to repair various defects as directed by the owner. After the construction, the units were sold for private residential and some commercial usage.

Since that time, the building had



85 Devonshire Street, Boston, MA

experienced increasing water infiltration problems, primarily around the top two floors. Coincidentally, in the spring of 2012, Abbot was contacted by the condominium association's management company, Sun Property Group, to address the water infiltration issues.

After a comprehensive investigation by Abbot and Sun Property Group, Abbot was contracted to repoint all of the brick on the top two floors, caulk the perimeter of the windows in that area, and apply a water repellent coating to the brick surfaces. One of the complexities of job was to match the red color of the original mortar used on the building. The new mortar used by Abbot was manufactured to meet these original color specifications.

85 Devonshire St.

85 Devonshire St. is a high rise brick and limestone office building located in downtown Boston. Over the years, Abbot had done several routine maintenance projects for the previous owners, including caulking, pointing, and crack

stabilization. Recently, Abbot was contracted by the current owner to perform a major restoration to the building façade.

Phase 1 of the restoration project involved the 12-story south, west, and east elevations where Abbot repaired various perimeter wall defects as indicated in a report by the engineering firm (D.M. Berg Consultants) contracted by the building owner. The repairs consisted of pinning defective stones and sealing numerous cracks to bring the building in compliance with the city of Boston Façade Ordinance Code.

On the 5-story north elevation, the brick wall that corresponded with the elevator shaft was experiencing severe leakage likely attributed to the multiple dislodged bricks and deteriorated windows. The contract called for Abbot to repair the dislodged bricks, install new brick in place of all of the windows, repoint the entire brick wall and seal the wall with two coats of an elastomeric protective coating. The project was complicated by the need for Abbot to move its equipment over an abutter's roof by crane, erect the equipment, and then remove the equipment by crane after the job was completed.

A masonry contractor's reputation can be built by years of solid performance, a strong work ethic, and good relationships with clients and engineering/architectural firms. However, perhaps the utmost compliment that can be paid to a contractor is to be hired back on new projects by new building owners. This recurring theme throughout Abbot's 77-year history is a key factor in separating Abbot from many of its competitors.

Michael Norman is president of Abbot Building Restoration, Co., Inc., Boston.