
CASE STUDY

McQuay Hi-Line Fan-coil Units Bring Modern Comfort To A Classic Hotel Restoration

Rescuing an abandoned hotel from vagrants, vandals and imminent demolition is no easy task. But the task of restoring that same hotel to its original grandeur is enough to frighten away the bravest developer. Despite the challenges, Developers Steve Dopp and Greg Lenox, of Packwood Management in Charleston, South Carolina, were determined to give the Westin Poinsett Hotel another chance.

Originally built in 1921 for \$1.5 million, the Poinsett Hotel was designed by New York architect W.L. Stoddard, and named after prominent South Carolinian Joel R. Poinsett. While it was an extraordinary example of comfort



and style in its time, it did not meet the comfort and amenity demands of the 21st century traveler. Thus the once well-known Southern hotel was been abandoned in the 1980s and had since fallen into a sad state of disrepair. If Dopp and Lenox hadn't stepped in with plans to refurbish, the Poinsett would surely have been demolished.

The challenge for the Westin Poinsett Hotel project was to provide modern amenities without losing the integrity and beauty of the original architectural features. Phase one included the removal of all the previous wiring, plumbing, heating and air conditioning systems and elevator services. Only the basic structure and layout, and the excellent architectural details from the original hotel remained.

The new HVAC system had to fit it within the constraints of the original structure. To maintain the hotel's original integrity, the rooms had to be kept rather small, leaving little space. A further constraint was that the ceiling height in each hotel room left no room for ductwork. Packwood Management and the general contractor, The Harper Corporation chose McQuay Hi-Line fan-coil units, which were the basis of design from the



mechanical engineer, Delta Engineering, Inc., on the advice of the project's mechanical contractor, Freeman Mechanical. To save space, McQuay Hi-Line fan-coil units are designed to be furred into the wall in the corner of each room — blending in to minimize impact on the historic integrity of the room.

These units, along with two air-cooled chillers and 10 indoor and roof mounted air handlers from McQuay were designed, selected and furnished by the local Greenville, SC McQuay Representative Hoffman and Hoffman.





Another challenge was the lack of accurate records on the original construction of the hotel. While tearing out the walls, they discovered the about 20% of the 230 fan-coil units used on the project would require a special offset piping package to work around structural interference. Joe Capitan and Sam Stephens of Delta Engineering, along with David Hensley of Freeman Mechanical

and McQuay Representative Hoffman and Hoffman, developed the offset solutions and worked with McQuay representatives to factory-supply the special piping packages, saving time and money on the installation. McQuay was able to factory-furnish automatic flow control valves to set the flow rate on the Hi-Line units to further reduce installation costs and help bring the project in on budget.

Thanks to the determination of Packwood Management and their restoration team, the Westin Poinsett Hotel is once again a premier hotel in historic Greenville. Decorative plasterwork, crystal chandeliers, mosaic tile terrazzo floors, marble work, sconces and more take visitors back to the elegance of the Roaring 20s. At the same time they re able to enjoy the comfort and convenience of modern air conditioning.

