

Keystone Lofts

951-953 Liberty Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA

“The renovation of this old loft building is needed to complete the newly refurbished neighborhood fabric”



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Description: An adaptive re-use renovation for new urban residential condominium units above street-level retail space.

Developer: Vista Development Group

Contractor: Arriba Construction

The Challenge: The developer wanted to transform a 1880-era four-story loft building in Pittsburgh's Penn-Liberty Historic District into 12 affordable condominium shell units above 2 street-level retail spaces. There was only sufficient space for one central exit stair tower within a layout accommodating 4 residential units per floor.

The original historic cast iron façade, one of only four iron faced building in the region, was to be properly renovated, and approvals from the Penn Liberty Historic district and the City of Pittsburgh Review Commission for all exterior work were required.

The Solution: Our efforts focused on creating smart, trendy space, while designing with budget-conscious priorities. The design of a new elevator and exit stair tower, with life safety upgrades beyond minimum code requirements, facilitated a variance from the Board of Standards and Appeals for a solution with one very safe means of egress.

We investigated and specified the proper materials and methods to properly take care of the unique cast iron cladding, and detailed new storefront construction that imitates the copper-clad framing perceived to be original. The renovations were a welcomed improvement to the building fabric of the building's neighborhood context.

