

# Project Profile



## Historic Hotel Gets Facelift With the Help of Innovative New Wallboard

**Application/Building Type:**

Mixed-Use

**Project Name:**

Hotel Lafayette

**Location:**

Buffalo, NY

**Contractor:**

R&P Oak Hill

**Featured Products:**

SHEETROCK® Brand UltraLight  
Panels FIRECODE® 30

SHEETROCK® Brand FIRECODE® Core  
Gypsum Panels

SHEETROCK® Brand PLUS 3® Lightweight  
All Purpose Joint Compound

SHEETROCK® Brand UltraLightweight  
All Purpose Joint Compound

STRUCTO-LITE® Basecoat

RED TOP® Gauging Plaster

TheWeightHasBeenLifted.com



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renovated...”*

— Bryan Asci

More than a century ago, the Hotel Lafayette opened its doors in Buffalo, NY. In its prime, the seven-story, French Renaissance-style building was considered one of the 15 finest hotels in the country. Rare for the time, the hotel boasted elevators and featured hot and cold water, as well as a telephone in every room. That, however, was not its only claim to fame. The hotel's designer, Louise Blanchard Bethune, was the first female architect in the country. She was also the first female member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the first woman to be made a Fellow of the AIA.

Unfortunately, time was not kind to the Hotel Lafayette. After years of neglect, it fell into disrepair and many of the unique features of the building's interior were gradually covered by paint, low-cost tile and drop ceilings. By the turn of the century, only a portion of the first floor was still occupied.

All of that changed, though, when Rocco Termini of Signature Development took ownership of the property. His vision was to return the Hotel Lafayette to its former glory and transform it into a singular destination for wedding parties looking for the utmost in luxury and convenience. To achieve this, Mr. Termini reached out to the architecture firm, Carmina Wood Morris.

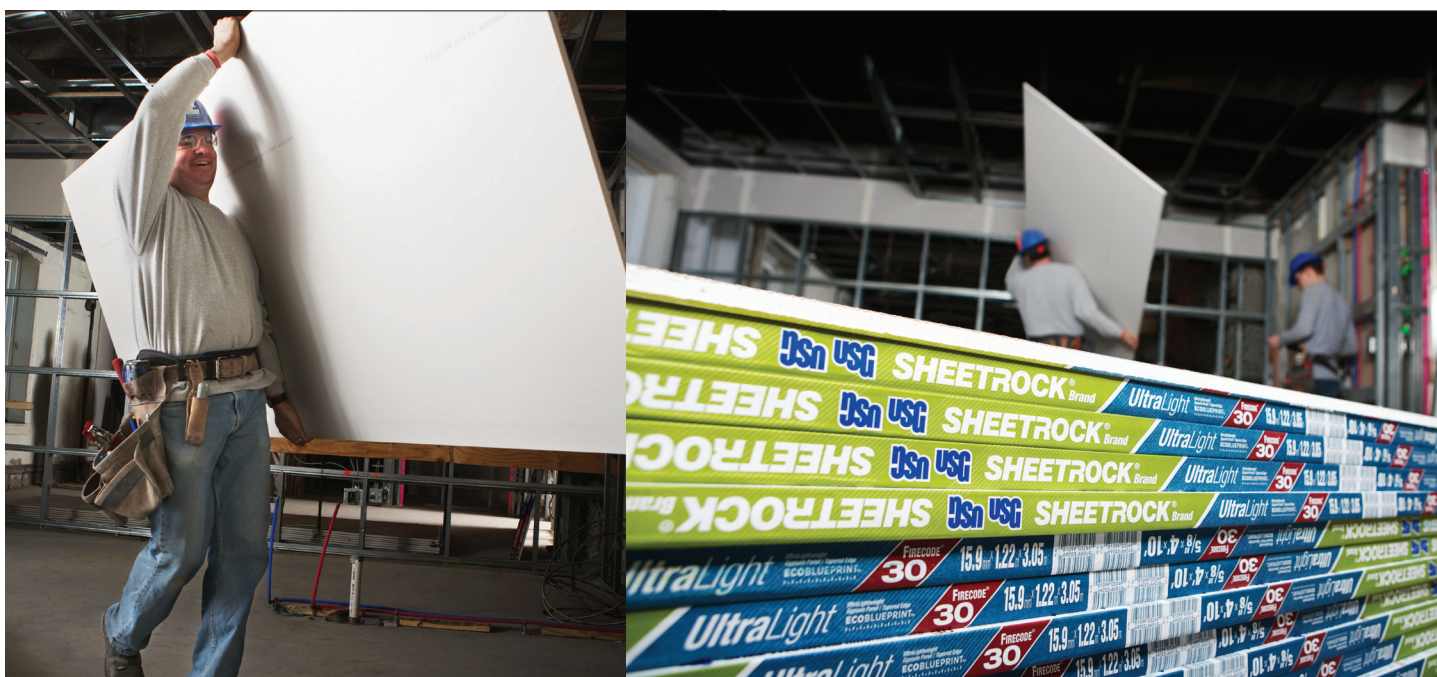
With a flower shop, bakery, catering facilities, banquet halls, live-music stages, multiple bars and restaurants, a grand lobby, luxury hotel rooms and 115 apartments, Carmina Wood Morris designed a mixed-use space that achieved Signature Development's vision, while also creating a new hotspot for Buffalo locals and visitors alike.

Work on the project began in May of 2011 and is scheduled to be completed in May of 2012, which is by all accounts an ambitious timetable for this \$42,000,000 project. With events already booked at the hotel, every consideration has to be made to ensure the job stays on schedule. That is why R&P Oak Hill, the contractor, and Gypsum Systems, the drywall subcontractor, approached the architect to request a specification change to the newly released SHEETROCK® Brand UltraLight Panels FIRECODE® 30.

Optimized for non-rated and 30-minute fire-rated partitions, SHEETROCK® Brand UltraLight Panels FIRECODE® 30 are up to 30% lighter than standard 5/8" drywall. With up to 300,000 square feet of non-rated wall space and a tight deadline, SHEETROCK® Brand UltraLight Panels FIRECODE® 30 could save time while enhancing job-site safety. The architect approved the change on the spot.

In addition, SHEETROCK® Brand UltraLight Panels FIRECODE® 30 require fewer resources to produce, contain up to 98% recycled content and qualify as a low VOC-emitting material. Plus, their lighter weight means that up to 33% more panels can be transported on a single truck, resulting in up to a 25% savings in transportation energy.

The specification change paid off. SHEETROCK® Brand UltraLight Panels FIRECODE® 30 are used on 100% of the non-rated partition walls in the building. With a board that's easier to maneuver and carry, all the drywallers working on the project have seen an increase in their productivity—hanging eight to 10 more sheets per installer. Plus, workers are saying it's easier on their arms and backs, which can mean fewer injuries on the job site.



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In addition to SHEETROCK® Brand UltraLight Panels FIRECODE® 30, a number of other USG products were used during the construction, including SHEETROCK® Brand FIRECODE® Core Gypsum Panels, SHEETROCK® Brand PLUS 3® Lightweight All Purpose Joint Compound, SHEETROCK® Brand UltraLightweight All Purpose Joint Compound, STRUCTO-LITE® Basecoat, Red Top® Gauging Plaster and traditional lime plaster.

On track to reopen its doors in May, the newly reborn Hotel Lafayette is a celebration of Buffalo's past and future. As USG Account Representative Bryan Asci says, "What makes me proud is that USG can be involved in one of the first major old buildings in Buffalo to be completely renovated. This job is a amazing symbol of the revitalization the downtown area of Buffalo is beginning to experience."