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THE FINAL PHASE OF A LONG-TERM PROJECT TO SERVE VETERANS

A Look at Minneapolis Veterans Home Building #22

The Minneapolis Veterans Home in Minneapolis, Minnesota, has long been known as a cornerstone in the community—as well as a safe haven and key health and wellness service provider to area veterans. Indeed, over the course of the past 130 years, the Home has gone through multiple transformations and updates in order to deliver on the promise of providing state-of-the-art care and service to the heroes it is tasked with serving. However, most recently, the Home underwent an extensive updating process, comprising multiple phases and spanning over the course of eight years. The final phase, which was focused on Building #22, led to the culmination of the project—and W. R. MEADOWS is proud of the role we played in updating and modernizing this important facility, which is depended upon so much by those who have sacrificed and given to our country.

Building #22, as a whole, had a budget of $58 million, and updates to the building included the creation of a new skilled nursing facility, resident great rooms, balconies, gardens, a courtyard, and even a putting green. What's more is the 141,800 square foot building holds 100 private rooms and bathrooms designed to serve veterans.

A High-Profile Federal Project

Significant in size and in scope, the high-profile government project was overseen by the architectural firm, Nelson-Tremain Partnership, and general contractor, JE Dunn Construction. The subcontractor, Exterior Building Services, Inc. (EBS), was in charge of the installation of air barriers through all phases of the project.

Todd Smiley, a project manager at EBS and the professional tasked with overseeing this work, noted that initially multiple air barrier products, including W. R. MEADOWS, were specified by the architect and were considered by his supervisor.

"In the initial stages, EBS had to decide between three or four different products. Ultimately, we were looking for a product that would meet all of the specifications and requirements of the job conditions, as well as be price competitive."

cate things further, the project took place on an established build site, requiring the installation team to navigate around other structures and people, as they serviced and treated this addition. The space, as a whole, was a bit tight and the crew had to work within the confines of a courtyard complex as well as in the midst of occupied buildings that were also currently in use.

"We had used W. R. MEADOWS' MEL-ROL®, a waterproofing product, before, but had not had an opportunity to use W. R. MEADOWS' air barrier products. Nevertheless, we liked what Mike Krulas, our sales representative, had to say and the solutions he proposed. We decided to give W. R. MEADOWS a shot," stated Smiley.

The W. R. MEADOWS products used in the Building #22 project were AIR-SHIELD™ LMP, AIR-SHIELD LSR, AIR-SHIELD THRU-WALL FLASHING, BEM, and MEL-PRIME™ W/B.

The Scope of Work

W. R. MEADOWS products were used on approximately 73,000 square feet of Building #22 over the course of more than 6 months. The air barrier installation on this project was "complex," as the building had many secondary roofs, insets, and corners requiring extensive detailing. To compli-

At any given point in time, there were usually 2-6 EBS installers working on the site. They installed AIR-SHIELD LMP, which is a water-based air/liquid moisture barrier that cures to form a tough, seamless elastomeric membrane and is suitable for both new construction and retrofit applications, behind both metal panel and brick finishes. The backup wall substrates were poured concrete and gypsum

sheathing. Additionally, EBS installed over 11,000 square feet of AIR-SHIELD THRU-WALL FLASHING, a roll-type self-adhering, flexible membrane flashing product that is nominally 40 mils thick, at openings, penetrations, transitions, roof tie-ins, and connections to below-grade waterproofing. The AIR-SHIELD THRU-WALL FLASHING worked well here as it is a concealed flashing made for masonry concrete, wood and steel frames, and roofing applications. It's designed for use as a thru-wall flashing and dampproofing course. Large quantities of BEM and MEL-PRIME W/B were also used.

Oversight by the Air Barrier Association of America (ABAA)

An additional point to note is that the stakes were considerably raised in this project as it was set to receive an Air Barrier Association of America (ABAA) Quality Assurance Program (QAP) Certification. The ABAA is a national, not-for-profit trade association that comprises a wide variety of stakeholders in the building enclosure industry. The organization is focused on improving energy efficiency, creating better buildings, and building healthier communities and as such, has raised quality levels within the industry through the QAP, as well as the delivery of premier training, certification, product evaluations, contractor accreditation, and site quality control audits.

In this regard, an ABAA Field Auditor, who must remain anonymous, offered feedback.

"As a field auditor, I am required to go to the site and audit the entire process that the installer engages in and performs on the air barrier. I look at everything from the paperwork that is completed on a daily basis to the manufacturer information and product data. I also review the safely data sheets and review job site reports to ensure that daily field testing is conducted," stated the ABAA Field Auditor.

Apart from the administrative requirements that are performed, the ABAA Field Auditor is also tasked with reviewing the actual work on site that is available for them to see. Sometimes, and in the case of this project, the brick work actually came up rather quickly behind the professionals who were installing the air barrier, so the ABAA Field Auditor had "to be there at a pretty select time to be sure I would see enough of it!"

They continued, "I would look for anything and everything to ensure quality, from how the actual materials are stored on site to how they are used and handled. I take photos of all phases from pre-installation onward. Also, I bear witness to the testing, which usually comes in three adhesion tests. I am also responsible for measuring temperature of ambient air and the surface temperature. Situations such as this are obviously dependent on the time of year that the project is being conducted—and there were times when this was pertinent with the Building #22 project. In my job, it's important to pay attention to all of the details, including weather conditions and temperature."

With regard to this particular ABAA Field Auditor, it was their first time working with W. R. MEADOWS—and the experience was positive. "Ultimately, I didn't

see Mike too much on site, only because our schedules were a bit at odds of each other. However, we did talk on the phone extensively about an issue that was present where there was a poured concrete area where the substrate had some issues that were not conducive to the installation. He was able to handle this while educating me on product information and more. Now, I usually don't have tons of interaction with the product rep, but Mike was helpful and responsive. We were able to work through the issue—and it took some time and collaboration with the contractor as well as the architect of record, but it was handled."

Ultimately, ABAA's involvement in the Building #22 project was a very big deal as not many of these endeavors are currently underway. W. R. MEADOWS was pleased to have the opportunity to work alongside not only EBS, but also the ABAA Field Auditor and adhere to the ABAA's Quality Assurance Program. Throughout the project, the ABAA performed site audits and provided support. At project completion, ABAA certification was realized by Building #22.

air barrier could be applied, but when the surface prep concerns were addressed, the concrete was coated. The situation was handled, and progress was made.

Customer Support Coupled with Ease-of-Use

Smiley commented that one of the primary drivers for working with W. R. MEADOWS is the company's commitment to service.

"The local representation in Mike Krulas is second-to-none. He is a fantastic rep who possesses a wealth of knowledge. He was consistently efficient with documentation and always very responsive. He helped us prepare for jobs and was around when issues came up, details were wrong, or something needed to be changed. He was a big part in making sure modifications, changes, and issues were handled the way they needed to be. He made regular site visits and was sure to sit in pre-project meetings," stated Smiley. "Our entire team appreciated that level of dedication and service."

"I feel the products from W. R. MEADOWS were a good fit for this multi-story building that involved a variety of materials and many window openings," noted the ABAA Field Auditor. *"Everything passed the audit and was approved by the ABAA. I submitted my report and there were no negative comments or demerits received. It was all good."*

Challenges—Presented and Handled

Of course, as with any project, there is always the potential for challenges and issues to arise. The Building #22 project was no different. When the project began in late 2017, Smiley stated that there were some issues early on as there were some poured walls that were not in good shape and it was not acceptable for EBS to apply the air barrier without these issues being addressed first. However, W. R. MEADOWS rep, Mike Krulas, rose to the challenge and was visible around the site. He collaborated with and coached the concrete installation team on best practices and what needed to be done to realize project success. The concrete contractor had to make some repairs before the

In addition to the best-in-class customer service, EBS is also pleased with the W. R. MEADOWS products themselves.

"We have been consistently happy with the products. Ultimately, we are always looking for something that is easy to install and that also comes with a competitive price point. In this regard, we have had a positive experience with W. R. MEADOWS. The air barrier product was easy to work with. It is a single component, which is far more straight forward than a two-component system. This leads to easier upkeep and maintenance. While there are multiple steps in the preparation to spray, it's not an overly complicated process. What's more is we like the consistency and the way the material handles," said Smiley.

To conclude, Smiley was happy to offer his endorsement of W. R. MEADOWS. “There is a good record of performance and experience here. The products performed well, and we will continue to bid on W. R. MEADOWS products going forward based on the results from this project.”

PROJECT SPECS

Architect: Nelson-Tremain Partnership

Contractor: JE Dunn Construction

Subcontractor:

Exterior Building Services, Inc.

Salesperson: Mike Krulas

Products:

AIR-SHIELD LMP

AIR-SHIELD LSR

AIR-SHIELD THRU-WALL FLASHING

BEM

MEL-PRIME W/B

Scope: 73,000 square feet

Contact W. R. MEADOWS Today

For more information about the Minneapolis Veterans Home Building #22 project or to get in touch with a local W. R. MEADOWS representative, please click here. If you need immediate assistance, please call (800) 342-5976. Thank you!

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About W. R. MEADOWS

Since 1926, W. R. MEADOWS has been a leader in developing products that protect structures from moisture infiltration. From below-grade installations to rooftops and in-between, issue-specific products target and prevent potential, costly problems. Today, patented technologies enable more environmentally effective, efficient designs, and many of our products contribute LEED-certification "green" credits. With nine manufacturing facilities throughout the U.S. and Canada, the materials you need are within easy reach. For additional information, call 800.342.5976 or visit www.wrmeadows.com.

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