

# NILE



ST. AGATHA'S CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC  
TO CELESTE HOTEL + BAR

## HISTORIC ADAPTIVE REUSE

72-ROOM HOTEL, BAR  
& SMALL EVENT CENTER

## THE HISTORY

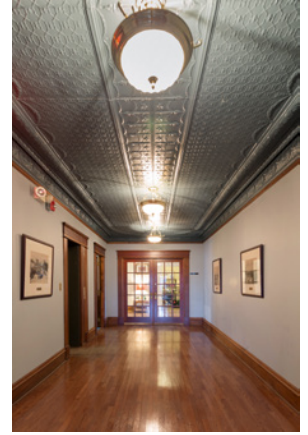
St. Agatha's Conservatory for Art and Music (and Convent) was conceived by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Charondelet, under the guidance of Mother Seraphine (a.k.a. Ella Ireland - sister of Archbishop John Ireland).

The building was designed in the Beaux-Arts style and under the guidance of Mother Celestine Howard, St. Agatha's Conservatory of Music and Art became Minnesota's premier fine arts academy.

Built in 1909, the facility served up to 1,100 students and on the upper floors housed the nuns who served them. The brick exterior was ornamented by pressed copper cornices and featured a rare exterior, curving double staircase to the entrance.

Administrative offices, two parlors, study rooms, a library, community room, and infirmary were located on the first floor with oak and maple woodwork, plaster moldings, and marble baseboards. Each parlor features a brick fireplace with porcelain tiles painted by the sisters, and glass chandeliers. The art classrooms were located on the second floor, along with the chapel in the rear wing of the building. The remaining floors were used by the sisters as a convent. A kitchen, dining room, community hall, and dormitory-style rooms were located on the upper floors and were self-contained from the school. The sixth floor featured a rare four-sided open loggia with iron grillwork railings. Here, the sisters were able to relax in privacy while enjoying summer evenings high above the city in an open-air recreation space.





EXISTING  
CONDITIONS



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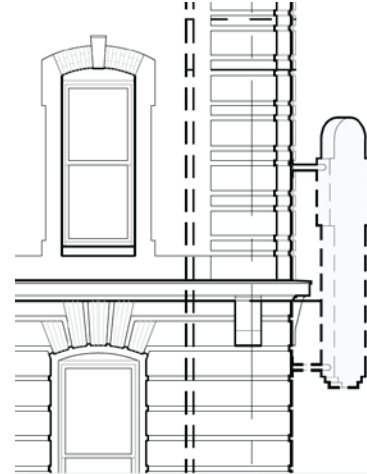
“The soul of hospitality begins with  
a welcome and a sense of purpose.”

CELESTE HOTEL + BAR

WE ARE *storytellers.*



CELESTE ST PAUL  
HOTEL + BAR



NEW SIGNAGE FOR  
EXCHANGE / CEDAR  
CORNER

EXCHANGE STREET  
ELEVATION



CEDAR STREET  
ELEVATION

The exterior walls would have ivy removed from the facade for tuckpointing, brick, and window repairs.

To address handicap accessibility, a new glass enclosed accessible entrance was added to Cedar street.

## A NEW ERA BEGINS

St. Agatha's Conservatory closed in 1962 and in the years since the building has housed offices as well as classroom and administrative facilities for the McNally School of Music. The loggia was sealed to make room for more lease-able spaces and the multi-tenant facility sat unchanged for many years.

In 2017, this National Historic Landmark property was purchased by Rebound Hospitality and the process began to restore the aging structure to its original glory with an exciting new use.

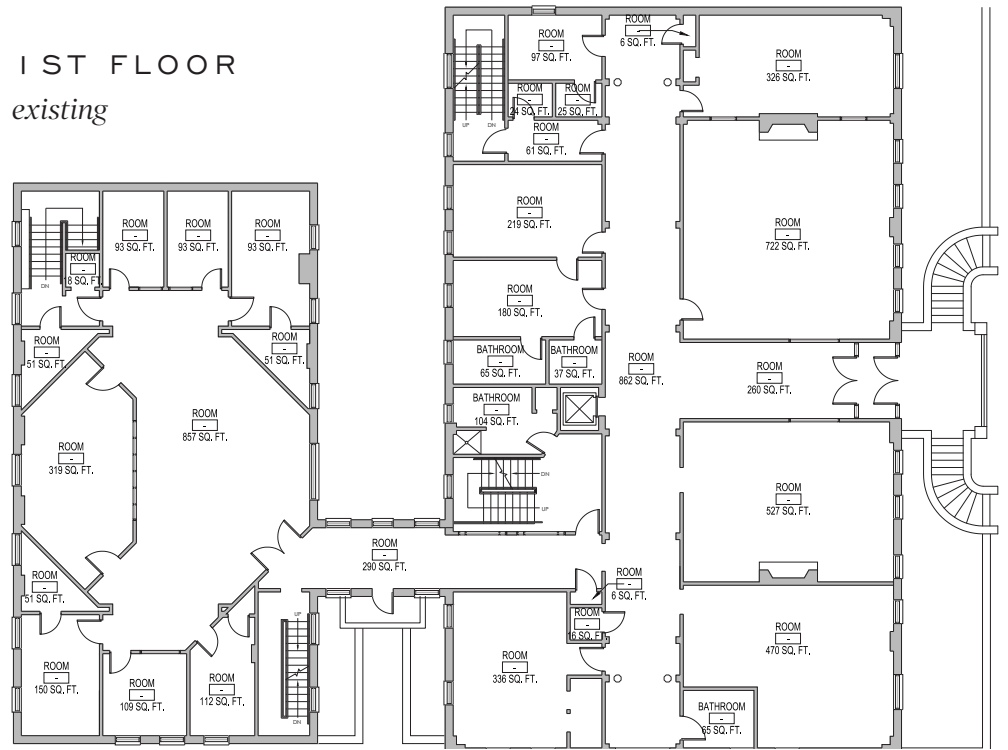
Preserving the architectural character and embracing the history of the building, St. Agatha's was converted to a boutique hotel. Now known as the Celeste Saint Paul Hotel & Bar, this facility now offers 72 rooms including:

- 55 single guest rooms
- 10 double guest rooms
- 7 guest suites

The unique adaptation of this historic structure creates many styles of room, each with their own personality. From executive king suites with views of the state capitol to crash pads with queen size bunk beds, there are rooms in many sizes and configurations.

In addition to office and fitness spaces, the renovated structure offers meeting and gathering niches that include:

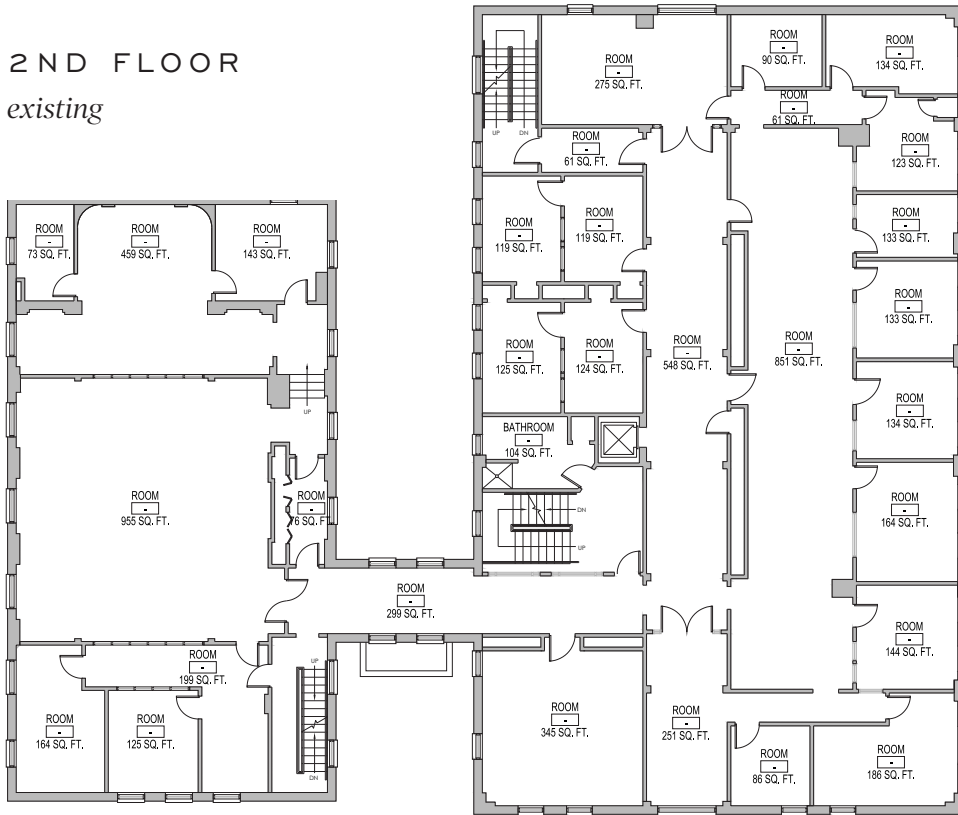
- Chapel - for event activities with adjoining serving kitchen.
- Boardroom - executive meetings
- Bar - open to the public
- Group Confessional - for casual gathering and conversation
- Grand Hallways - for cocktail and social hour events



- Reception
- Bar & Gathering
- Meeting Room
- Admin Offices
- Guest Room - Single
- Guest Room - Double
- Back of House Services
- Restroom

## 2ND FLOOR

existing



## 2ND FLOOR

after



- Serving Kitchen
- Breakfast / Event Space
- Back of House Services
- Restroom
- Guest Room - Single
- Guest Room - Double
- Guest Room - Suite

## DESIGN CHALLENGES

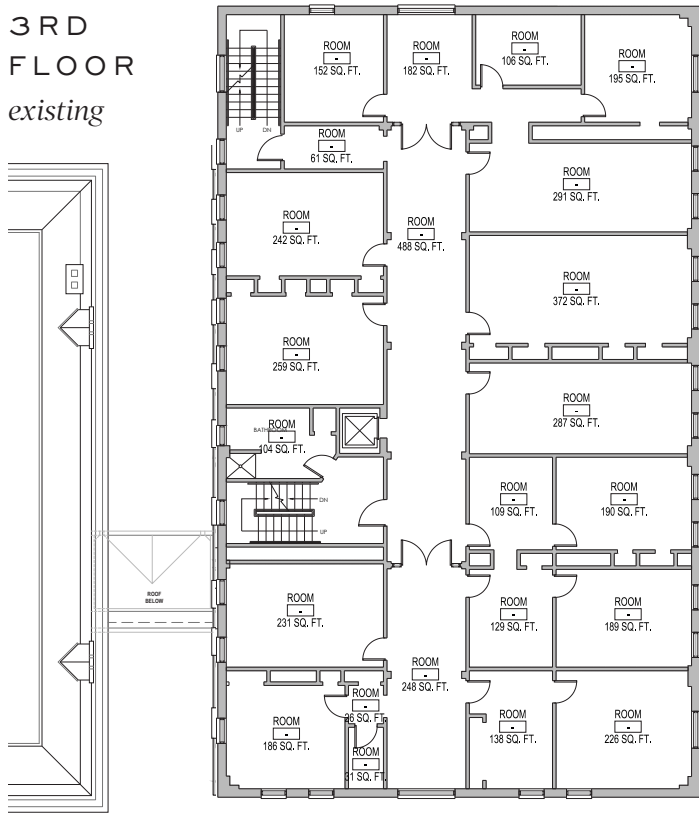
Some of the financing for the project came through state and federal historic tax credits, and from a \$394,000 loan through the St. Paul Port Authority. From start to finish, the project team had to work closely with the State Historic Preservation Office.

The biggest challenges in designing the project were adding bathrooms to the guest rooms and fitting a new elevator into the building. When the Celeste was a convent, residents shared public bathrooms on each floor. To make private bathrooms work, the project team used the 10 to 12-foot ceilings in the rooms to their advantage, hiding pipes and other bath infrastructure in space they created between floors.

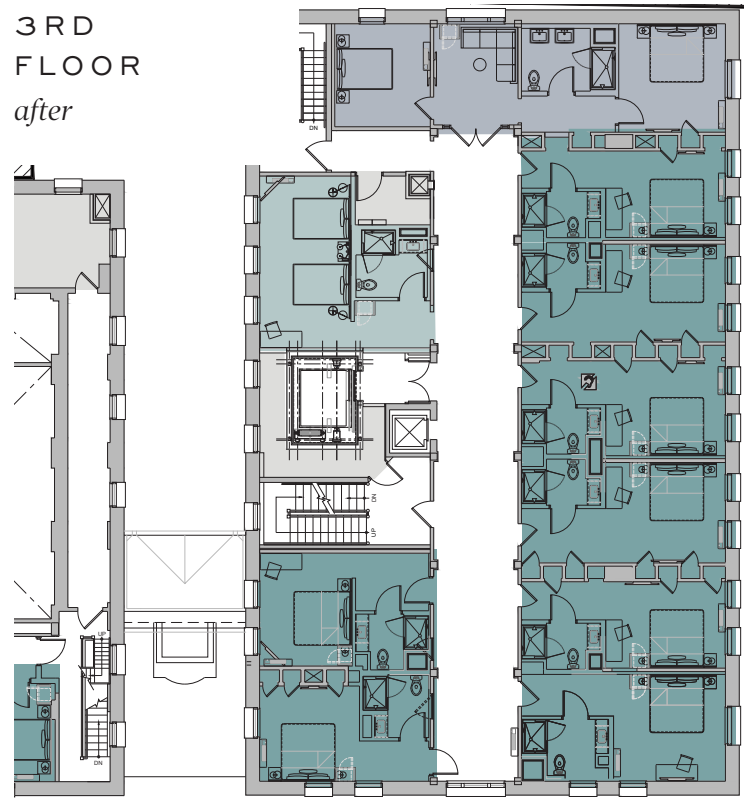
The building did have an existing, turn-of-the-century elevator that was preserved for the hotel (lovingly called 'the friendmaker' by the nuns), but it was too small for efficient guest access. A new, larger elevator shaft was built adjacent to the new public bathroom spaces.

To support the financial needs of the owner, guest rooms were added beyond those in the original floorplan by building out several new garden level rooms in the building's basement, plus a completely redesigned top floor into suites. Special guests suites were also carved out of the former choir loft of the chapel. The chapel space is where the hotel serves breakfast and holds special events such as weddings - making this area perfect bridal suites.

3RD FLOOR  
existing



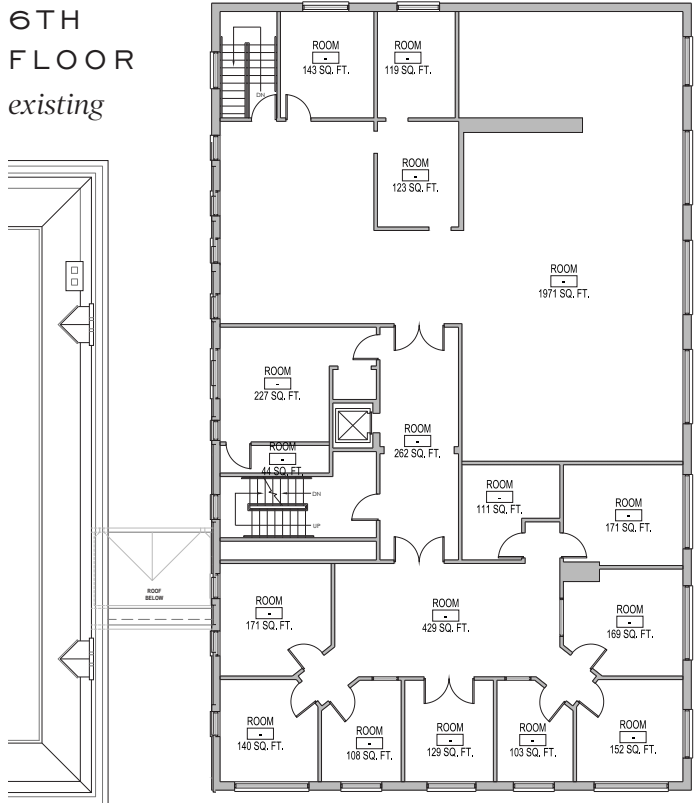
3RD FLOOR  
after



A GLIMPSE AT UPPER FLOORS

- Guest Room - Single
- Guest Room - Double
- Guest Room - Suite
- Back of House Services
- Restroom

6TH FLOOR  
existing

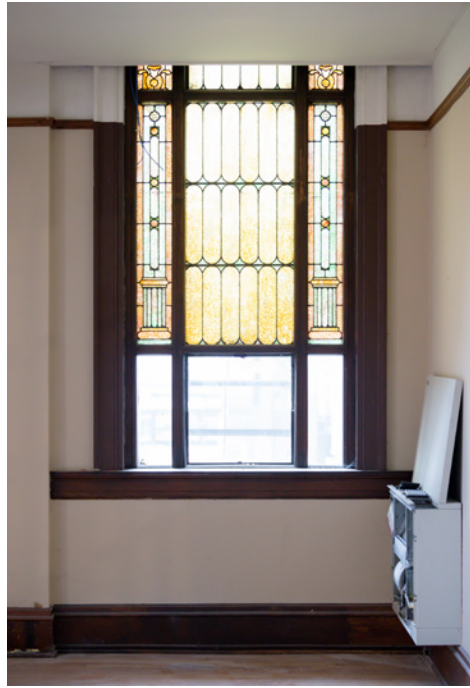


6TH FLOOR  
after

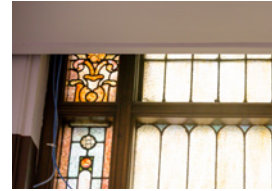




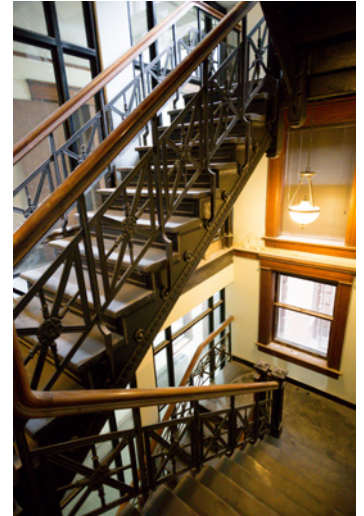
Some historical finds uncovered during renovation (like this beautiful original tile) would need to be hidden again to level and finish spaces properly.



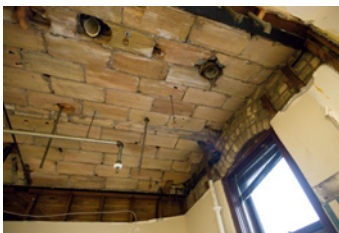
This original stained glass window was split between floors with an opening between floors that did not meet fire codes. To preserve it meant covering it with a floor to ceiling encasement.



## DECONSTRUCTING HISTORY



Despite having a working 2-person elevator (affectionately called the 'friend-maker' by past resident nuns) it was necessary to punch a hole through five floors to meet accessibility needs and codes. The existing elevator remains in place for fun charm and character!



The original building had inconsistent floor heights, requiring the early 1900's builder to number the stair treads individually to ensure the contractor could assemble them accurately.

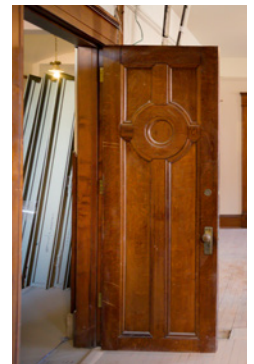


The millwork trim and fireplaces in the new bar and reception area were preserved, including the hand painted tiles that were created by the original residing nuns. The aesthetic of the tiles became inspiration for other interior finishes in the space.



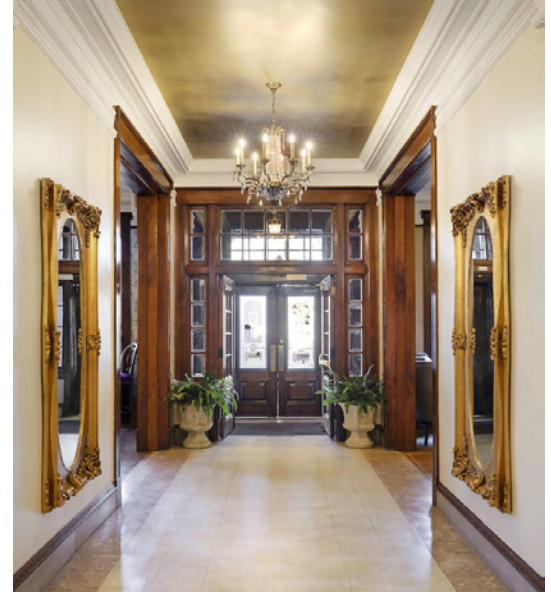
PRESERVING DETAILS

Symbols and wood elements drawn from the historic chapel space doors were carried into the new pub space design, including wood detailing on the bar and liquor wall.



Paintings by the nuns which had present for decades (including some that were permanently secured into the drywall) were carefully removed during construction. After professional restoration by Museum Services of Minneapolis they were returned to places of prominence in the hotel.



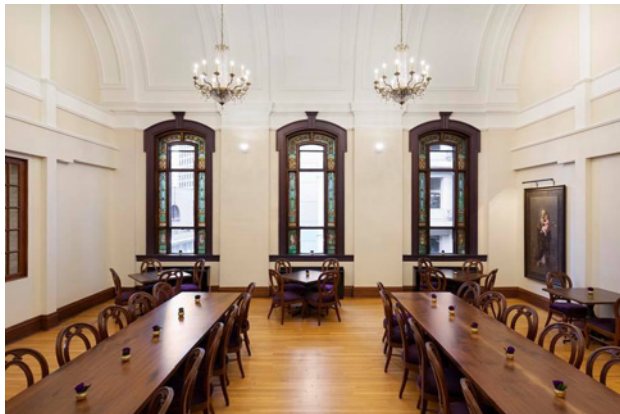


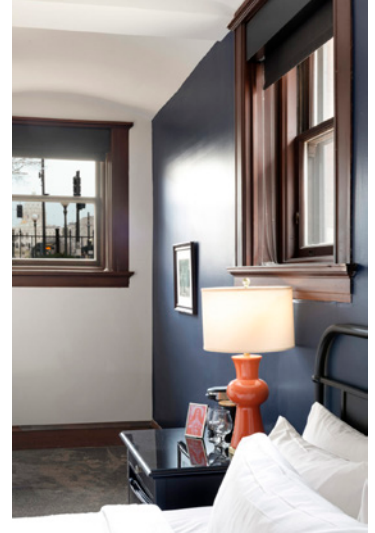
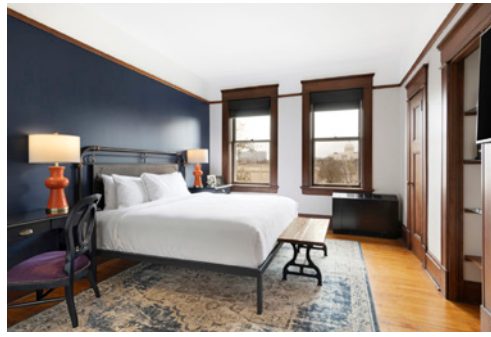
A NEW  
WELCOME



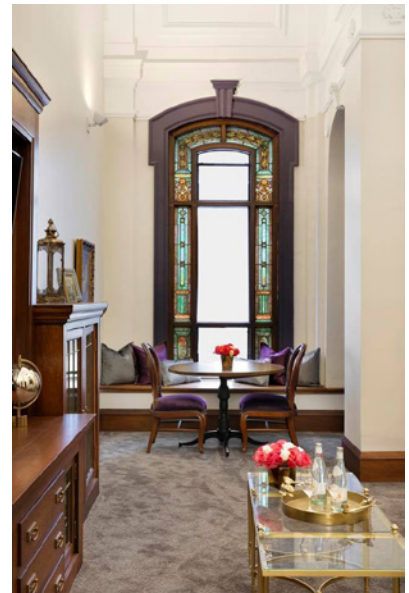
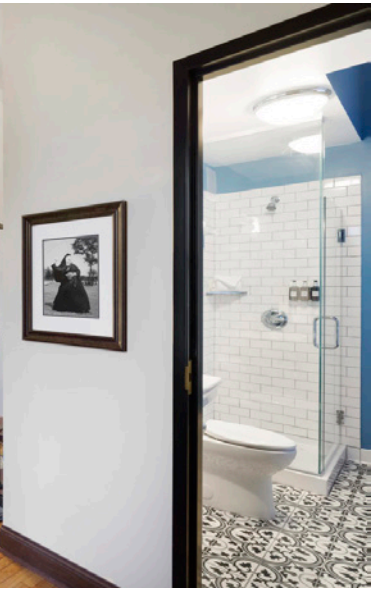


GATHERING SPACES





GUEST ROOMS



## PRESS COVERAGE

### NEWSPAPER

- **Pioneer Press:** Saint Paul Hot Spots for Holiday Guests (*December 18, 2019*)  
<https://www.twincities.com/2019/12/18/st-paul-restaurants-new-hotspots-for-holiday-guests/>
- **Star Tribune:** Former St. Paul Convent is Reborn as a Boutique Hotel (*November 22, 2019*)  
<http://www.startribune.com/former-st-paul-convent-is-reborn-as-a-boutique-hotel/565335592/>
- **Pioneer Press:** Nuns' Former Paintings Return to St. Paul as Convent Becomes Boutique Hotel (*October 22, 2019*)  
<https://www.twincities.com/2019/10/22/nuns-original-paintings-return-as-former-st-paul-convent-becomes-boutique-hotel/>
- **Pioneer Press:** Boutique Hotel Opening Soon Will Include Bar in Historic Parlor Space (*October 16, 2019*)  
<https://www.twincities.com/2019/10/15/st-paul-boutique-hotel-opening-soon-will-include-bar-in-historic-parlor-space/>
- **Star Tribune:** Historic Convent Will Become Boutique Hotel + Bar (*November 26, 2018*)  
<http://www.startribune.com/historic-downtown-st-paul-convent-will-become-a-boutique-hotel-and-bar/501252871/>
- **Pioneer Press:** Historic Convent, Music Conservatory Will Become a Boutique Hotel (*October 31, 2018*)  
<https://www.twincities.com/2018/10/31/former-st-agathas-convent-conservatory-to-become-71-unit-boutique-hotel/>
- **Star Tribune:** Exchange Building Sold, Will Become Boutique Hotel (*October 3, 2017*)  
<http://www.startribune.com/exchange-building-in-st-paul-changes-hands-will-become-boutique-hotel/449088413/>

### TRADE PUBLICATIONS

- **Eater Twin Cities:** St. Paul's Newest Cocktail Bar Focuses on Women-Run Distilleries (*November 7, 2019*)  
<https://twincities.eater.com/2019/11/7/20950866/celest-hotel-st-paul-cocktail-bar-hours-address-menu>
- **Finace & Commerce:** Top Hotel Projects in 2019 (*January 2, 2020*)  
<http://www.startribune.com/historic-downtown-st-paul-convent-will-become-a-boutique-hotel-and-bar/501252871/>
- **Finance & Commerce:** Building Blocks: Celeste Hotel + Bar (*November 27, 2019*)  
<https://finance-commerce.com/2019/11/building-blocks-celeste-st-paul-hotel-and-bar/>
- **Catholic Spirit:** Celestial Space: A St. Paul Convent-Turned-Hotel Celebrates Its Legacy (*November 15, 2019*)  
<https://thecatholicspirit.com/news/local-news/celestial-space-a-st-paul-convent-turned-hotel-celebrates-its-legacy/>

### MAGAZINES

- **Minnesota Monthly:** Winter Things To Do Inside (*December 20, 2019*)  
<https://www.minnesotamonthly.com/travel-recreation/winter-to-do-list-things-to-do-inside/>
- **Minneapolis St Paul Magazine:** Former Convent Opens as Celeste Hotel + Bar (*November 1, 2019*)  
<https://kstp.com/news/former-convent-catholic-school-st-agathas-opens-boutique-hotel-in-downtown-saint-paul-celeste/5539335/?fbclid=IwAR2NMatQiXgDykNKEQA6EtdvcjdWlOnJl5BvNWtCTZuFh55URdPnbbvmY>

### TELEVISION

- **TWIN CITIES LIVE:** Celeste St. Paul (*November 7, 2019*)  
<https://www.twincitieslive.com/explore/8718/celeste-st-paul/>
- **KARE11:** Former Convent in St. Paul Reopens (*October 30, 2019*)  
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=3939729196053034>
- **FOX 9:** Sister Sleepover for Retired Nuns as First Guests in Convent Turned Hotel (*October 30, 2019*)  
<https://www.fox9.com/news/sister-sleepover-retired-nuns-get-to-be-first-guests-in-former-st-paul-convent-turned-hotel>
- **KSTP 5:** Former Convent Opens as Boutique Hotel (*October 30, 2019*)  
<https://kstp.com/news/former-convent-catholic-school-st-agathas-opens-boutique-hotel-in-downtown-saint-paul-celeste/5539335/?fbclid=IwAR2NMatQiXgDykNKEQA6EtdvcjdWlOnJl5BvNWtCTZuFh55URdPnbbvmY>

# PROJECT DATA SHEET

**PROJECT NAME**  
Celeste Saint Paul Hotel + Bar

**BUDGETED COST**  
\$ 7.8 Million

**PROJECT SCOPE**

- X Renovation - existing only.
- Renovation - with new.
- New Construction
- Master Plan / Repositioning Study

**PROJECT NUMBER**  
9201705

**ACTUAL COST**  
\$ 8 Million (const. estimate 12/13/19)  
\$ 3.675 Million (building acquisition)  
\$15 million (total cost, including start up marketing, artwork, FFE, etc)

**LOCATION**  
26 East Exchange Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55101  
651-222-0848  
info@celestestpaul.com

**ORIGINAL CONSTRUCTION**  
1908-1910

**KEY FACTORS / NOTES**

- Close work with the Historic Preservation Office & Consultant to stay true to requirements as a project on the National registry. Historic report can be reviewed at <https://npgallery.nps.gov/pdfhost/docs/NRHP/Text/89000443.pdf>.
- Artwork/paintings by original nuns were permanently glued/drywalled into the facility. These were carefully removed, restored by owner consultant, and returned to hotel.
- Building was originally designed by John Wheeler and constructed in 1908-1910 for \$150,000.
- At its peak, the convent housed more than 90 sisters and 1,100 students studied there.
- The conservatory closed and sold in 1962. When McNally School shuttered in 2017, the office building was then sold to Rebound Hospitality.
- The interior design finishes and FFE were completed by Rebound with effort by hotel manager Carl Deeken.
- Marketing/publicity services for startup provided by Jacqueline Hansen of Hanson Communications.
- There is a unit count discrepancy in the media that states there are 71 rooms (due to a late change). The hotel is confirmed to have 72 rooms.

**REFERENCE CONTACT**  
Todd Byrhe, Chief Operating Officer  
Rebound Hospitality  
527 Professional Drive, Suite 100  
Northfield, MN 55057  
(507) 646-4021  
toddbyrhe@gmail.com

**RENOVATION START DATE**  
August 2018

**RENOVATION COMPLETION DATE**  
October 2019

**FIRM OF RECORD**  
WAI Continuum

**GROSS BUILDING SIZE**

Garden Level	8,700 sf
1st Floor	8,700 sf
2nd Floor	8,700 sf
3rd Floor	8,700 sf
4th Floor	5,600 sf
5th Floor	5,600 sf
6th Floor	5,600 sf
Sub-Basement	<u>8,700 sf</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60,300 sf</b>

**PROJECT MANAGER**  
Scott Koester

**PROJECT ARCHITECT**  
Jude Hallamek

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR**  
Flannery Construction

**BUILDING SIZE**  
*(Compartments w/o Corridors)*

Garden Level	6,680 sf
1st Floor	6,308 sf
2nd Floor	6,538 sf
3rd Floor	851 + 4,146 sf
4th Floor	4,122 sf
5th Floor	4,127 sf
6th Floor	<u>3,943 sf</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36,715 sf</b>

**CIVIL ENGINEER**  
Elan Design Lab

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER**  
ERA

**MECHANICAL CONTRACTOR**  
*(Design/Build)*  
Faicon Service Company

**ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR**  
*(Design/Build)*  
Northern Electric

**INTERIOR DESIGN**  
Rebound Hospitality

**HISTORICAL CONSULTANT**  
Hess, Roise and Company

Room Type	Average Area	Qty
Single King	283-299 SF	45
Single Queen	173 - 231 sf	6
Crash Pad Queens	215-231 sf	2
Double Queen	236-319 sf	9
Handicap King	287-292 sf	2
Handicap Dbl Qn	346 sf	1
HC Guest Suite	335 sf	1
Guest Suites	329-563 sf	6
<b>Total IL Units</b>		<b>72</b>

**AWARDS**

- Submitting to AIA, with intention of others to be determined.

# N I L E

## NORTH DAKOTA

700 Main Avenue  
Fargo, ND 58103  
(701) 293-1350

## MINNESOTA

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Saint Paul, MN 55101  
(651) 227-0644

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