

'A PERFECT BLEND OF A MODERN LOOK WITH AN HISTORIC FEEL' CASE STUDY

HOTEL DROVER
FORT WORTH, TX





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Ray Mabry, AIA, LEED AP, BD+C,
VP and Project Manager, HKS Architects

+ PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Architect
Ray Mabry, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, Project Manager, HKS, Inc.

Developer
Majestic Realty Co.

General Contractor
Commerce Construction

Installer
DFW Glazing

Product
SR6700 Steel Replica Windows and GT7700 Doors

+ CHALLENGE

Providing a window for new construction that would fit seamlessly within the historic context of the surrounding buildings.

+ ‘A PERFECT BLEND OF A MODERN LOOK WITH AN HISTORIC FEEL’

Fort Worth, Texas, was the last stop on the Chisholm Trail for drovers seeking rest and supplies by the Trinity River as they led cattle north to the railheads in Kansas. More than four million head of cattle passed through the city from 1866 to 1890. In the 1870s, the railroad arrived, and the city became a major shipping point for livestock. By 1917, the Fort Worth Stockyards was the largest horse and mule market in the world.

Today, the Fort Worth Stockyards National Historic District honors that heritage. Boosted by a \$175 million master plan for redevelopment unveiled in 2018, it is a major tourist destination. Mule Alley, formerly a parking lot between two horse and mule barns, is now lined by local eateries, retail shops and entertainment venues and serves as the District’s heart and soul.

Hotel Drover, a 4-Star Autograph Collection hotel which opened in March, is, as one publication put it, Mule Alley’s “crown jewel.”

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According to its website, Hotel Drover offers “a rustic-luxe guest experience in the heart of the historic Fort Work Stockyards.” After percolating on several “Most Anticipated” lists (including Forbes and Travel + Leisure), the hotel’s unique class-and-cowboy blend has delivered on those lofty expectations. It features 200 rooms and suites (no two are alike), five bars, a chef-driven restaurant, a sprawling backyard entertainment area and tons of Texas touches.

It also features more than 600 of Graham’s SR6700 windows and 18 of Graham’s GT7700 doors. That makes it unique in another way, since Graham rep Greg Dalton had never sold Graham’s SR6700 window on a new construction project. Several times, he had sold the popular steel replica (SR) design on replacement jobs. He mentions the United States Courthouse renovation project in downtown Austin, where the Graham window provided the desired aesthetics and performance, while saving the county approximately \$800,000 relative to steel windows.

Hotel Drover, a stone’s throw away from Mule Alley’s renovated horse and mule barns, presented Dalton with the perfect opportunity to bring the SR6700 to new construction.

“The Graham windows provided an energy efficient product that fit in well with the historic context of the surrounding buildings, but gave all the modern comforts of new construction,” says Ray Mabry, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, vice president and project manager for HKS Architects. “Graham provided a seamless system that allowed for the window details to be translated throughout the project and to the doors.”

“The main thing is, we were able to give them a look that was similar to the historic buildings in the design of the windows on new construction,” says Dalton. “We were able to meet their design requirements, meet their budget, and meet their schedule.”

Dalton agrees that the GT7700 style doors complement the SR6700 windows well. “We were able to do round radius heads to give them that look where they wanted them. And we were able to provide the same grid to the glazing contractor to put on the storefront to maintain that look. They all turned out really nice,” he says.

Simon Guyett, senior project manager for the installer, DFW Glazing, says, “The radius frames really add a different dynamic that stands out for me. They stand out against the façade providing a striking aesthetic, creating a perfect blend of a modern look with an historic feel.”

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“From the beginning of the design process, Graham was looked at as an excellent option to complement the style of the stockyards,” explains Clayton Smith, project manager for Commerce Construction, the construction branch of project developer Majestic Reality. “When the initial model rooms were constructed, a side-by-side comparison was done between Graham and another manufacturer. The Graham window product was ultimately selected by the owner and used throughout the hotel.”

He adds, “We appreciated having a window system that could be trusted to perform well not only during the final push for interior finishes, but also in turnover to the owner. The Texas climate can be harsh and you can see that the windows were constructed correctly based on us not experiencing any moisture related issues with the windows.”

Guyett adds, “(Graham’s) quality was exemplary and relatively easy to install. We have had zero issues to date on integrity and performance.” The partners readily agree they would join forces again. Asked why, Smith says, “Graham delivers a great product in a timely manner.” And Mabry adds, “Graham provided great service throughout the detailing and installation process. It was great having them in our corner when we needed them.”

How well did this first partnership go? Mabry sums it up, saying, “I’ve already overheard many people say, ‘This old place looks great!’” The versatile and timeless SR6700 plays a key role, since, like the Hotel Drover, it is inspired by the past, but designed and manufactured for a long and beautiful future.



Photography courtesy of Dixie Dixon



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