STEEL COLUMNS: Satisfying Results

Take steel, add a judicious amount of construction experience and salesmanship—and the result can be architectural bliss and financial happiness.

That’s the combination that spelled success for Robert J. Russell, of Russell Plastering Company, 3300 E. Warren Ave., Detroit, Michigan, on the recent Somerset Plaza in Troy, Michigan. Until Russell came on the scene with an aggressive bit of construction marketing, the architects and owners were in a sort of dilemma: they wanted precast concrete columns going up the exterior of the building but the high costs involved were something else.

So, Bob Russell proposed the alternative of prefabricated metal framing with portland cement plaster which cost half the price of precast. To be certain, Russell even went to Texas to observe some prefabricated metal curtain wall applications.

The result? Russell Contracting not only got the job but the installation has been problem-free since 1972.

The photos on this page show the application.

On the base board covering, a light coat of pot-hand cement plaster modified with Acrylic Admix 101 was applied. No metal lath was used.

A finish coat for a textured appearance was then spray applied, for a total thickness of ¼”.

The metal frames were site fabricated.

The fabricated columns as they appeared ready for placement.

Each column section was pulled into place and welded by Russell’s crew.

Finally, a satisfying job of prefabbded columns with the appearance of precast concrete—and at a considerably reduced cost.