

CASE STUDY



PROJECT DETAILS

Project Name:

Rib Mountain Drive
Retail Center

Location:

Wausau, WI

General Contractor:

Firkus Masonry

Product Manufacturer:

County Materials
Corporation

Date:

2019

Key Products:

Heritage Collection™
Designer Concrete Brick:
Utility size in Sable,
Harvard and Winter
Smooth; Splitface CMUs
in Blackened Ash;
and, Horizon™ Block in
Blackened Ash.

Concrete masonry affords upscale aesthetics and value engineered product

Solutions: Concrete masonry affords upscale aesthetics and value engineered product.

When business growth necessitated an addition for this multi-use retail center, the owner and architect specified decorative concrete masonry units to meet several challenges. First, they wanted construction materials that provided an upscale appearance to attract walk-in customers and create unique identities for their tenants that currently includes Kay Jewelers, Five Guys Restaurant, and U.S. Cellular.

Both thin and full veneer decorative concrete masonry units, manufactured by County Materials, were utilized for this project. More than 3,100 Splitface CMUs in Blackened Ash form the base coursing around the perimeter to anchor the building to the site. Additionally, nearly 5,700 utility units of Heritage Collection Designer Concrete Brick in Sable Smooth, Harvard Smooth and Winter Smooth, each in a non-flashed monolithic color, impart distinct and visually interesting sections of the building to differentiate between the three tenants.

The predominant portion of the building utilizes double wythe cavity wall with decorative masonry laid on a four-inch brick ledge. The building owner chose concrete masonry for the original structure because he preferred the look and feeling of strength masonry affords. As a result, it was an easy decision for him to request decorative concrete masonry as the material of choice for the addition.

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Another advantage was that County Materials was able to manufacture and supply Heritage Concrete Brick in thin veneer units to match the full veneer units originally specified on the building. This was essential because the owner requested to add additional masonry after construction began to sections of the building that did not include a brick ledge. After consulting with County Materials representatives, the architect and mason realized they could install thin veneer units and achieve the aesthetics of masonry even without a brick ledge. In areas where thin veneer masonry was added after initial design, a "thick set" method application was used which entailed the use of drywall rainscreen, metal lath, scratch coat mortar, and final bonding mortar.

By using decorative concrete masonry, the owner achieved an appealing, upscale presence for the retail center that is also cost effective and long-lasting.



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An upscale appearance was created to attract walk-in customers and create unique identities for the building's tenants.

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