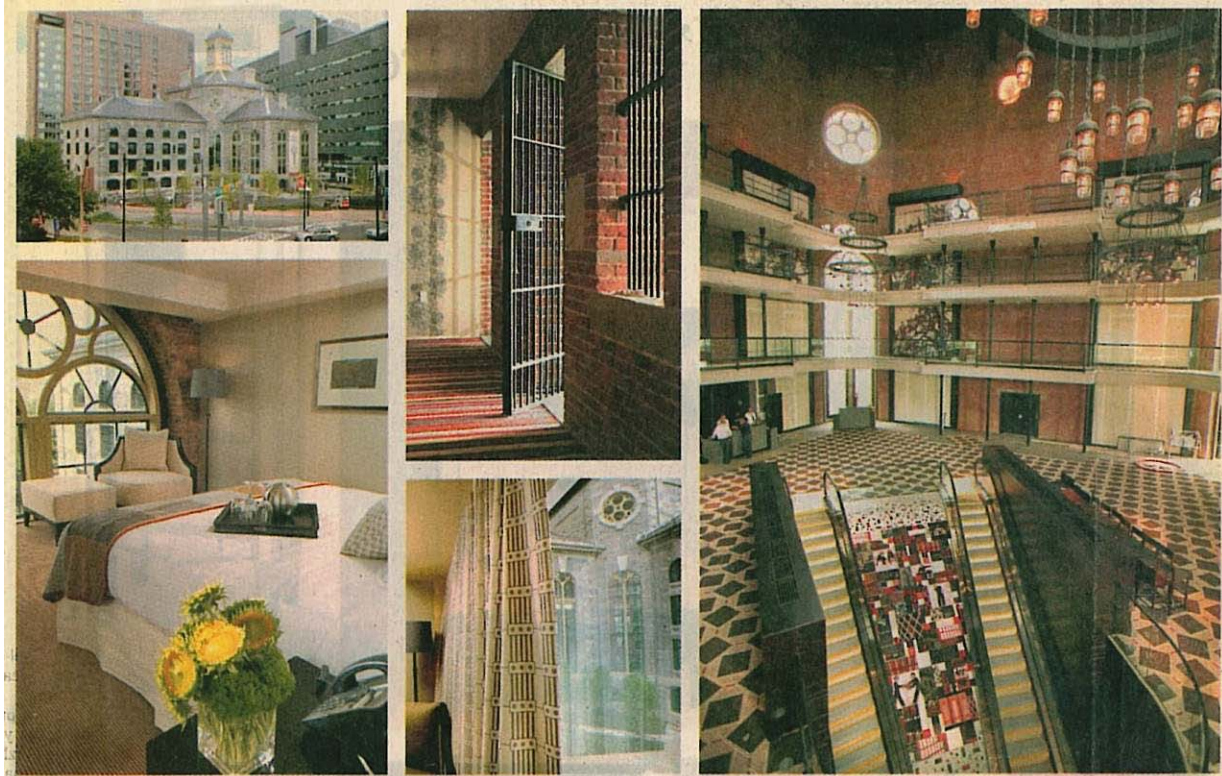


The New York Times

August 30, 2007



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INTERIORS

Luxury Living, Where Once the Residents Were Felons

The old Charles Street Jail in Boston will be reborn next week as the luxurious Liberty Hotel. And while the 100-foot ceiling and arched windows at the entrance of the building, above right, may be impressive, there's no chance of anyone forgetting its roots, or what Richard L. Friedman, right, the Boston developer responsible for reinventing the jail, likes to call its "jailiness."

There will be iron bars on the first two floors of the building, including the ballroom. The prison guards' catwalks, which once flanked the cell blocks, now overlook the lobby. "It will be a great place for people-watching," Mr. Friedman said. (But frankly, wasn't it always?)

The hotel restaurant will be called the Clink, and the bar Alibi.

"We could have overplayed it," said Mr. Friedman, who worked on the \$150 million project with Kennedy Associates of Seattle. "We could have put



waiters and waitresses in striped suits, and handcuffs in all the rooms." Instead, he said, they kept "the essence, little fun things: the waiters and waitresses will have numbers on their shirts."

Completed in 1851 by the architect Gridley James Fox Bryant on a site at the foot of Beacon Hill, the Charles Street Jail, top left, is a national,

state and city landmark. The designation obligated Mr. Friedman to keep such details as the bars, top center, on the first and second floors. Sleeping in an authentic jail cell, however, will not be possible. Most of the 300 guest rooms, which will cost about \$300 to \$350 a night for a standard room, will be in a new tower adjoining the jail. Those who book one of the 18 rooms in the old building, above left, will find themselves in units much larger than the original 7-by-10-foot cells.

Is there anything in the rooms themselves that says jailiness? "The rooms in the old jail have exposed brick and bars," Mr. Friedman said. "The rooms in the new towers are not reflective of the jail except for references in interior design. The custom draperies have beautifully and elegantly done imprints of jail bars," above center, he added. "And our Do Not Disturb signs will read: Solitary."

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