

UNIT CURTAIN WALL

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The present invention relates to a unit curtain wall composed of a plurality of curtain wall units, particularly (but not solely) one in which the wall units are adjustably connected to and hung by fasteners on the exterior structural frame of a building.

Known unit curtain walls have curtain wall units including lateral vertical frame members attached by fasteners to a building skelton frame. Non-load-bearing curtain walling tends to be displaced between building floors when the building is subjected to an earthquake, for example. Since the curtain wall units are mounted individually to the building frame, they are liable to move through different intervals dependent on how they are attached and on their varying inertial forces. Safety requires that the curtain wall units be installed on the building frame by connector arrangements which take up such different displacements of the curtain wall units to cancel out any unwanted impact forces which would otherwise damage the curtain wall units. Conventional such connector arrangements however have been quite complex in joining the building skelton frame and the fasteners, and the fasteners and the vertical frame members of the curtain wall units.

According to the invention there is provided a unit curtain wall comprising:

- 25
- (a) a plurality of curtain wall units;
 - (b) a pair of brackets attached to horizontally confronting vertical edges of each pair of adjacent curtain wall

units; and

(c) a fastener adapted to be adjustably mounted on a building frame and having a slot receiving one of said brackets and a movable bearing element supporting the other bracket for allowing the latter to
5 move in a direction substantially parallel to said curtain wall units.

It is believed to be possible by means of the present invention, to provide a unit curtain wall having curtain wall units connected to a building frame by relatively simple fasteners capable of quickly absorbing displacements of the curtain wall units between
10 building floors

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thereby cancelling out undesirable impact forces on the curtain wall units, and that the curtain wall can be attached to a building skeliton frame through a simple procedure.

5 The invention will be described by way of examples with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:-

10 FIG. 1 is a fragmentary rear elevational view of a unit curtain wall embodying the present invention, the view showing the unit curtain wall as viewed from the interior of a building;

 FIG. 2 is an enlarged cross-sectional view taken along line II - II of FIG. 1;

 FIG. 3 is an enlarged cross-sectional view taken along line III - III of FIG. 1;

15 FIG. 4 is a fragmentary perpsective view of a portion of the unit curtain wall having a fastener;

 FIG. 5 is a fragmentary side elevational view of a connector;and

20 FIG. 6 is a fragmentary perspective view of a bearing element according to another embodiment of the present invention.

25 Throughout the specification, the terms "inner", "outer", "inwardly", and "outwardly" are used with reference to the geometric center of a building to which a unit curtain wall is to be attached.

 As shown in FIG. 1, unit curtain walling comprises a plurality of curtain wall units 10 connected to and hung on building skelton frame members 11 by a plurality of

fasteners 12. The building skelton frame members 11 are spaced vertically and serve as bases for building floors. Each of the curtain wall units 10 is composed of a pair of lateral vertical members 13, 14, a pair of upper and lower horizontal members 15, 16 extending between and interconnecting the lateral vertical members 13, 14 to provide a square frame, and a thermal insulating panel or a pane of glass 17 mounted in the square frame. Horizontally adjacent curtain wall units 10, 10 have their vertical members 14, 13 supported by the fastener 12 shared thereby and positioned between the adjacent curtain wall units 10, 10. Vertically adjacent curtain wall units 10, 10 are interconnected by a pair of connectors 18, 18 attached to the upper and lower horizontal members 15, 16.

As shown in FIGS. 2 and 3, each of the building skelton frame members 11 is in the form of an I section steal beam 20 including a pair of upper and lower flanges 21, 22. On the upper flange 21, there are stacked a deck plate 23, a slab of concrete 24, and a flooring 25 composed of a layer of mortar 26 and a floor panel 27. The mortar layer 26 and the concrete slab 24 are interconnected by an L-shaped bracket 28 with a partition strip 29 secured to the underside of the mortar layer 26. The partition strip 29 includes a vertical flange 30 extending downwardly in alignment with an outer end of the flooring 25.

A transverse frame member 31 (shown in FIG. 2 only) extends between the vertical frame members 13, 14 and

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is attached thereto, the panel 17 being disposed against an exterior face of the transverse frame member 31 with a gasket 32 interposed therebetween. An inverted L-shaped bracket 33 is secured to an inner lower marginal edge of the transverse frame member 31 and includes a vertical leg 34 extends parallel to the vertical flange 30 of the partition strip 29. A gasket 35 is interposed between the vertical leg 34 and the vertical flange 30, and a backup material 36 is disposed between the outer end of the mortar layer 25 and the vertical leg 35. A caulking material 37 is placed between the floor panel 27 and the vertical leg 35.

The fastener 12 is composed of a first channel-shaped fastener member 40 (FIGS. 2 through 4) secured to the lower flange 22 of the I section beam 20 by means of bolts 41 and nuts 42. The lower flange 22 has slots 43 extending longitudinally of the beam 20 parallel to the curtain wall units 10, and the first channel-shaped fastener member 40 has slots 44 extending transversely of the beam 20 perpendicularly to the curtain wall units 10. The bolts 41 extend through the slots 43, 44 with the nuts 42 threaded over the bolts 41. Before the nuts 42 are tightened, the first fastener member 40 is positionally adjusted so that it will be located across the vertical frame members 13, 14 of the adjacent curtain wall units 10 and spaced properly from the vertical frame members 13, 14. After the first fastener member 40 has thus been positioned, the nuts 42

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are tightened on the bolts 41.

An end plate 45 is welded to an outer surface 46 of the first fastener member 40. The fastener 12 also includes a second plate-shaped fastener member 47 fixed to 5 the end plate 45 by bolts 48 and nuts (not shown), the bolts 48 extending through vertical slots 49 defined in the end plate 45. The second fastener member 47 can be vertically adjusted in position along the vertical slots 49. The second fastener member 47 has in its upper surface 10 50 a slot 51 defined closely to one end thereof and a recess 52 defined closely to an opposite end thereof. There is a bearing element 53 in the form of a roller disposed in the recess 52, the roller 53 having a shaft 54 journaled in bearing grooves 55 defined in the second 15 fastener member 47. The roller shaft 54 extends in a direction normal to the second fastener member 47 so that the roller 53 is rotatable in a plane parallel to the second fastener member 47 and hence the curtain wall units 10. The roller 53 has an upper peripheral surface 20 projecting upwardly beyond the upper surface 50 of the second fastener member 47.

As best shown in FIG. 4, a pair of brackets 58, 59 is attached by bolts 60 to side surfaces 56, 57, respectively, of the adjacent vertical frame members 14, 13. Each of the 25 brackets 58, 59 has a lower horizontal flange 61 (one shown). The bracket 59 includes a hooked arm 62 engaging in the slot 51 in the second fastener member 47, while the

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other bracket 58 has a hooked arm 63 placed on the roller 53. Thus, the vertical frame member 13 is fixedly hung by the second fastener member 47 against any movement perpendicular and parallel to the curtain wall units 10, and the vertical frame member 14 is hung by the second fastener member 47 against any movement perpendicular to the curtain wall units 10, but is allowed to move in a plane parallel to the curtain wall units 10 through the roller 53.

An attachment plate 65 is welded to the underside of the 10 lower flange 22 of the I section beam 20 in engagement with one of the ends of the first fastener member 40. An inner partition strip 66 is by a screw 67 affixed to the attachment plate 65 and extends horizontally between the opposite ends of adjacent first fastener members 12. An outer partition strip 68 is affixed by 15 a bolt 69 to the lower flange 61 of the bracket 58 and extends horizontally between the side surfaces 56, 57 of adjacent vertical frame members 14, 13. The inner partition strip 66 includes an outer downward flange 70, and the outer partition strip 68 includes an inner upward flange 61, there being a dry 20 gasket 72 interposed between these flanges 70, 71. The outer partition strip 68 also includes an outer upward flange 73 facing the panel 17 with a dry gasket 74 disposed therebetween. These dry gaskets 72, 74 serve to prevent flames and smoke from passing through the gaps between the panel 17 and the I section 25 beam 20 when a fire breaks out in the building.

As illustrated in FIG. 2, the upper end of the panel 17 of each curtain wall unit 10 is secured to the upper frame member

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15 by a holder bar 75 fixed to the upper frame member 15 by screws 76 (one shown) with a thermally insulating connector 77 placed between the holder bar 75 and the upper frame member 15. The upper end of the panel 17 is sandwiched between lower edges 5 of the holder bar 75 and the upper frame member 15 with gaskets 78, 79 interposed therebetween. Likewise, the lower end of the panel 17 is secured to the lower frame member 16 by a holder bar 80 fixed to the lower frame member 16 by screws 81 (one shown) with a thermally insulating connector 82 placed between the 10 holder bar 80 and the lower frame member 16. The lower end of the panel 17 is sandwiched between upper edges of the holder bar 80 and the lower frame member 16 with gaskets 83, 84 interposed therebetween.

Between the upper and lower frame members 15, 16, there is a 15 weathering board 85 attached by gaskets 86, 87 retained in slots 88, 89, respectively, defined in the lower and upper frame members 15, 16, respectively.

A ceiling panel 90 is secured at its outer edge to the upper frame member 15 by a bracket 91 attached to an inner edge of the 20 upper frame member 15.

A stop 92 is fastened to an inner side surface 93 of each of the vertical frame members 13, 14 and positioned in confronting relation to a lower surface 94 of the second fastener member 47 for limiting upward movement of the vertical frame member 13, 14 25 to a certain interval. The stop 92 is attached to the vertical frame member 13, 14 after the curtain wall 10 has been mounted on the fastener 12.

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As illustrated in FIG. 5, each of the connectors 18 is composed of an upper female member 96 including a base 97 fastened to the lower frame member 16 by bolts 98 and having a central slot 99, and a lower male member 100 including a base 101 fastened to the upper frame member 15 by bolts 102 and inserted in the central slot 99 for slidable movement therein parallel to the curtain wall units 10.

According to another embodiment shown in FIG. 6, a second fastener member 103 has an upper surface 104 with a partly spherical recess 105 defined therein, and a ball 106 is partly received rotatably in the recess 105. A bracket 107 which is fastened to a vertical frame member of a curtain wall unit has an arm 108 having a groove 109 defined in a lower surface thereof, the groove 109 having a segmental cross section and extending parallel to the second fastener member 103. Thus, the bracket 107 and hence the vertical frame member attached thereto are allowed to move in a direction parallel to the curtain wall units.

With the foregoing arrangement, the vertical members 14 are horizontally movable through the rollers 53 (FIGS. 2 and 4) or the balls 106 (FIG. 6) with respect to the fasteners 12 for taking up any unwanted individual displacements of the curtain wall units 10 at the time of an earthquake, for instance, to thereby eliminate impact forces which would otherwise damage the curtain wall units

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10. The fasteners 12 can be adjustably positioned on the building skelton frame for proper alignment with the vertical frame members 13, 14 of the curtain wall units 10. Since each fastener 12 is shared by the adjacent
5 curtain wall units 10, the overall number of fasteners 12 used is relatively small. The curtain wall units 10 can simply be mounted on the building frame through a relatively simple attachment construction including the fasteners 12 and the brackets 58, 59.



Claims:-

1. A unit curtain wall comprising:
 - (a) a plurality of curtain wall units;
 - (b) a pair of brackets attached to horizontal confronting vertical edges of each pair of adjacent curtain wall units; and
 - (c) a fastener adapted to be adjustably mounted on a building frame and having a slot receiving one of said brackets and a movable bearing element supporting the other bracket for allowing the latter to move in a direction substantially parallel to said curtain wall units.
2. A unit curtain wall according to claim 1, each of said curtain wall including a pair of horizontally spaced vertical frame members, said brackets being secured to said vertical frame members of the adjacent curtain wall units.
3. A unit curtain wall according to claim 1 or 2, said brackets have arms extending in a direction normal to said curtain wall units, and fitted in said slot and engaging said bearing element, respectively.
4. A unit curtain wall according to claim 1, 2 or 3, said fastener including an upper surface having a recess defined therein, said bearing element comprising a roller received in said recess for rotation in a plane aligned with said direction.
5. A unit curtain wall according to claim 1, 2 or 3, said fastener including an upper surface having a partly



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spherical recess defined therein, said bearing element comprising a ball received in said recess for rotation in a plane aligned with said direction, said other bracket having a groove extending in said direction and partly receiving said ball.

6. A unit curtain wall according to any preceding claim said fastener comprising a first fastener member adapted to be mounted on the building frame for positional adjustment in said direction and a direction perpendicular thereto, and a second fastener member mounted on said first fastener member for vertical positional adjustment, said second fastener member having said slot and said bearing element.

7. A unit curtain wall according to any preceding claim, including connectors interconnecting said curtain wall units vertically, each of said connectors having a female member fastened to one of each pair of vertically adjacent curtain wall units and a male member fastened to the other of the vertically adjacent curtain wall unit and inserted in said female member for slidable movement therein along said direction.
