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Investing in Sustainable Building

Three years ago, when Jim Adams of Blue Rock Construction approached clients about creating an environmental sustainable building, they immediately tossed a few questions his way: What's the cost? What's the impact? Does it take more time?

Today, it's a different story.

"Now our clients are asking us about sustainability before we even put it on the table," said Adams, Vice President of Blue Rock. "It has become that well-known and the ball is rolling now."

Thanks in part to the U.S. Green Building Council, there's an increased popularity over a voluntary movement toward new "green" building standards. In 1998, the Washington, D.C.-based organization established LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), which provides a set of standards for environmentally sustainable construction.

A building receives LEED certification based on earning credits for specific green building criteria. The LEED rating system offers four certification levels for new construction - certified, silver, gold and platinum.

Quick to recognize the in-

creased need for "green" buildings, several members of Blue Rock's staff pursued and achieved LEED accreditation. As a result, Blue Rock



*Urban Outfitters, Inc.
5000 South Broad Street Philadelphia PA*

has developed a strong portfolio of projects that promote various approaches to environmental sustainability.

Recently, Blue Rock achieved a LEED Silver Certification for its 362,000-square foot DP Partners multi-tenant warehouse flex building at "LogistiCenter at Logan" Industrial Park in Swedesboro, N.J. Tenants include Sears, UPS and Brighton-Best.

Currently, Blue Rock is pursuing a LEED Gold Certification for its Kimberly-Clark Distribution Facility, a 599,500-square foot, build-to-suit distribution center also in LogistiCenter. Also, Blue Rock will be pursuing LEED Certification on the

upcoming office buildings planned at SEI Investments in Oaks, Pa.

By constructing LEED certified buildings, Blue Rock enables their clients to lower their carbon footprint and reduce the ever-increasing cost of energy by improving energy efficiency.

"When we started with (LEED), it was a way to capture a niche market because we thought it

was the way things were going to go," said Adams, one of Blue Rock's LEED accredited professionals and Principle overseeing Blue Rock's Sustainable Building and Design program. "Now, if you don't have a portfolio for sustainability I think you are way behind."

The LEED rating system addresses six major areas:

- Sustainable sites
- Water efficiency
- Energy and atmosphere
- Materials and resources
- Indoor environmental quality
- Innovation and design process

To Read the rest of this article, and learn more about Blue Rock, Click here, or visit us online at www.blrck.com

Investing in Sustainable Building (cont)

“There’s no one road map for LEED certification,” said Adams. “Rather, there are a variety of different paths to achieving certification.

“One of the things we do on all of our LEED certified buildings is we recycle most, if not all, of our material waste. We don’t have one big dumpster for all the trash. We have up to five dumpsters. For example, one just for our metals.”

“You have to be knowledgeable about what are considered standard sustainable practices,” said Adams. “One of the biggest keys of sustainability is how energy efficient can you make your building in order to minimize your operational carbon footprint.”

Along with the LEED program, Blue Rock promotes sustainability through historic renovations and adaptive reuse.

The company recently rescued the historic Finlaw Building in Salem, N.J., by historically renovating the building’s 1891 facade while constructing a 55,000-square foot office building within the existing footprint of the original building.

All projects can benefit from Blue Rock’s knowledge of the principles of sustainable design. At the Philadelphia Navy Yard, Blue Rock converted six turn-of-the-century industrial buildings into Urban Outfitters’ Corporate Headquarters totaling 275,000 square feet. While LEED certification was not pursued for these facilities, many of the principles were employed during the design and construction of the facilities and therefore serve as an ex-



Terrain at Styers - 914 Baltimore Pike Glen Mills, PA

cellent example of sustainable construction.

By applying very creative adaptive reuse concepts, including extensive reuse of existing building materials to the renovation process, Blue Rock was able to set a very high standard for sustainability without applying the formal measures that are required for LEED or other certifications.

Other excellent examples of Blue Rock’s adaptive reuse expertise include Terrain at Styers in Glen Mills, Pa., and the RV Professional Building in West Deptford, N.J.

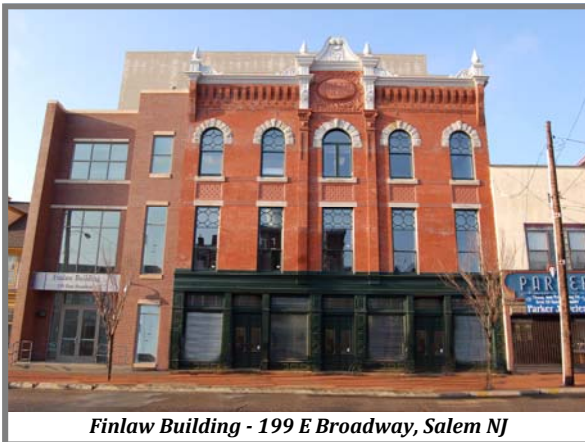
If Blue Rock’s project portfolio doesn’t make a clear enough statement about their commitment to sustainability, then just look at where they live! In Burlington Township, a 150-year-old farmhouse, was creatively renovated and adapted for office use by Blue Rock to serve as their main office in New Jersey.



*RV Professional Building
105 Jessup Road, Thorofare NJ*

A few other examples of LEED credits that Blue Rock has utilized to achieve certification include:

- Minimizing the “heat island” effect by using a light-colored roof that reflects a larger percentage of sunlight than a similar dark-roof system.
- Using regionally-produced or manufactured materials to construct the building, thereby reducing the transportation cost of those materials. This in turn reduces the total energy used in the construction process.
- Supplying buildings with Forest Stewardship Council-certified wood. This ensures the wood comes from an environmentally responsible source of lumber.



Finlaw Building - 199 E Broadway, Salem NJ