

# Blue Rock

November, 2009

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## Blue Rock Begins Second Phase for Urban Outfitters' Headquarters

Blue Rock Construction, Inc., continues to preserve the past while moving Urban Outfitters, Inc., into the future at the national retailer's new headquarters and corporate campus at the Naval Business Center in Philadelphia, Pa.

After completing its award-winning renovation and tenant fit-out project of six historic buildings in 2007, Blue Rock, based in Burlington, N.J., returns to the Navy Yard to renovate Building 25, a 53,000-square-foot structure that will provide much-needed space for the fast-growing company.

And like the 2007 project, Building 25 includes the same high standards of sustainable design, adaptive reuse and historic preservation that earned accolades from the Urban Land Institute, Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia and many others.



"Urban Outfitters likes to come in and take over an exciting space that is pretty much the way it was 100 years ago when it was erected," said John Byrne, project superintendent for Blue Rock. "This project is very unique in regards to you're opening up a 100-year-old building and you never know what you're going to run into. You're not doing the same cookie-cutter tenant improvement to a 25-year-old office space."

Originally, Building 25 was designed as a plumbers' shop in the Renaissance Revival style in 1904, with additions in 1915 and 1940, according to Powers & Company, Inc., a national consulting firm specializing in the preservation, conservation and restoration of historic structures. The two-story building is clad in red brick with a stone (granite) base and includes two mezzanines.

"Your high point on the ceiling on the second floor is close to 60 feet off the ground," said Byrne. "We will have this clear story window going around the entire top of the building letting in all the natural sunlight. It really is an amazing space."

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Along with the clear story window, plans for Building 25 include turning an existing elevator pit at the southeast corner into a planting bed for a tree that will span from the first floor to the second. A second elevator pit at the grand entry will feature a metal bridge with wood decking, crushed concrete and plantings. The ceiling will include eight skylights, and a green garden will be featured on the roof. There will be a major window restoration package for all wood windows. Also, each floor will house two kitchens.

In conjunction with the office space, Urban Outfitters has plans for a beautification project for Dry Dock 1, which sits next to Building 25. The 500-foot inlet will be turned into an attractive park for all Navy Yard tenants and visitors to enjoy.

"There are some very unique projects being done here," said Byrne. "It's a very creative environment."

With a completion date of May 1, 2010, Blue Rock looks to blend the history, character and aesthetics of Building 25 with Urban Outfitters' style of transcending time and creative trend. Urban Outfitters, Inc., a national retailer of clothing and home furnishings, is the parent company of Anthropologie, Terrain, Free People and Urban Outfitters.

Decommissioned as a navy base in 1995, the gritty, industrial buildings had been vacant until the site was converted to an office use by the City of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation

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